

Check It Out! Podcast Transcript
Episode #17
The 'community' in Community Transit with Emmett Heath
Sno-Isle Libraries, April 5, 2019



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| Ken Harvey: | 00:00:00 | In this episode, we're going to spend time with two leaders from Community Transit with a new mission mantra of getting you where you are to where you want to be. We're going to turn the car versus bus debate on its head and talk about how transportation choices affect our quality of lives in our neighborhoods and across the region, and why there's no reason to feel guilty if we choose to drive our cars. Instead, we can feel thankful for anyone who chooses to use public transit or any other way of getting around. All that and more, up next on Check It Out. |
| Ken Harvey: | 00:00:30 | Welcome to season two, of episode 17 of Check It Out, the Sno-Isle Libraries podcast for lifelong learners with inquiring minds. |
| Speaker 2: | 00:00:49 | The views and opinions expressed on this podcast may not necessarily reflect the official position of Sno-Isle Libraries. |
| Ken Harvey: | 00:00:57 | We're in the studio today with two special guests and Jim Hills and I are pleased to have the opportunity to interview two representatives from Community Transit, which is the public transportation agency that serves Snohomish County. Directly across from us is Emmett Heath, who is the chief executive officer for Community Transit and sitting next to him is his ... |
| Martin Munguia: | 00:01:23 | Communications manager. |
| Ken Harvey: | 00:01:24 | Yes. I just pause because I couldn't remember what the title was these days, I know it has changed. I knew it as corporate communications manager, but he decided to take one of the words off of that, that three word title. |
| Jim Hills: | 00:01:38 | This is a weird dynamic because we've got Emmett, who is Martin's boss, but then Martin is the president of the board of trustees for Sno-Isle Libraries so he's kind of like boss of our boss. I don't know, we have like bosses all around the table. You are my boss, I'm nobody's boss. |

(Continued)

Martin Munguia: 00:02:00 And Ken used to be my boss.

Ken Harvey: 00:02:00 Martin mentioned this, weirder even in that because years ago I worked at Community Transit, had the pleasure of working with both of these fine gentlemen and I was Martins boss back then.

Martin Munguia: 00:02:12 There you go.

Ken Harvey: 00:02:14 Community Transit, great agency, we get to ... I'm thrilled to give our audience an opportunity to get to know the organization better, and also these two gentlemen who are with us today. Hey, just a little bit of information about Emmett as we get going. Emmett has been serving as the chief executive officer for Community Transit since August 2014 and he had a previous to that, served the Organization for 10 years as their director of administration. He actually comes with a long career in public transportation in the electric utility industry here in the Puget Sound region of Washington and served executive leadership positions in both King County Metro and the Snohomish County PUD before joining Community Transit back in 2005. Emmett, delighted to have you, Martin, great to see you again.

Emmett Heath: 00:03:05 Thank you.

Ken Harvey: 00:03:05 We really appreciate spending the time with us.

Emmett Heath: 00:03:08 It's a pleasure to be here, thank you very much.

Jim Hills: 00:03:10 It's wonderful to have you here.

Ken Harvey: 00:03:11 Why don't the two of you help set the stage. Community Transit, the public transportation agency for Snohomish County, what does that mean and who are you serving?

Emmett Heath: 00:03:25 Community Transit's been around for a long time and I don't think people probably really appreciate or fully understand our 42-year history here. Community Transit was created by a vote of the people in Snohomish County back in the mid 1970s, the way the urban legend goes around, our agency when we started with just a handful of routes and 17 buses. I love the urban legend that our coach operators used to drive around looking for people who looked like they needed a ride and if they saw a suspect, they'd stop and opened the door and say, "Hey, you want a ride?" That's how our ridership started. Just a handful of riders in the early days and I think just last year we probably will

have exceeded 11 million riders on our system, so been tremendous growth in the agency over the years.

Ken Harvey: 00:04:19 Wow, 11 million over time or 11 million last year, what does that number mean?

Emmett Heath: 00:04:26 I can break that down so it's more meaningful to people, that's 11 million people getting on and off the bus in a year, if you break that down, that's about 35, 36,000 people every day. Our most productive route, our bus rapid transit Swift Blue Line, on Evergreen Way carries about 6,000 people a day, so we operate now probably close to 30 routes, all throughout Snohomish County. Initially our history was that those routes tended to serve people within their communities in Snohomish County, it connected those communities within Snohomish County, but it was very much a local system, and over time we've expanded to be a major regional partner with areas south of Snohomish County, principally Bellevue, UW, city of Seattle. Small, very small to begin and today a regional partner in the public transportation network.

Jim Hills: 00:05:32 I find that really interesting when you talk about Blue Line and the history of being community oriented. I live in South County and I'm familiar with this-

Ken Harvey: 00:05:45 When you say South County, you mean?

Jim Hills: 00:05:47 South Snohomish county. There's only one South County, South Snohomish County.

Ken Harvey: 00:05:50 Unless you live in south King County.

Jim Hills: 00:05:53 They should move to South Snohomish County and they get it right. But the idea that there were route buses within communities, especially in south Snohomish County, and then ... how long has Blue Line been going?

Emmett Heath: 00:06:08 November of 2009, so-

Jim Hills: 00:06:10 Wow, longer than I would have guessed.

Emmett Heath: 00:06:12 We're coming up on our 10th birthday, November.

Jim Hills: 00:06:14 Which is really more of a spine up and down 99 and Evergreen, Evergreen Way, right?

- Martin Munguia: 00:06:19 The bus rapid transit story for us, it's really a cool story. Bus rapid transit was just becoming known in the United States as a specialized mode of transportation in the mid 2000s. We brought our Blue Line into service in November of 2009, at that time it was the first bus rapid transit line and the state of Washington. It's designed to provide very frequent service, faster than average service, kind of a trunk line that allows people to get over larger distances with higher travel speeds and with more predictability. That line starts at Everett Station, and operates south mostly on Evergreen Way, through the city of Everett, into Snohomish County, and terminates at the Aurora Village Transit Line, just over the county line in King County.
- Martin Munguia: 00:07:12 We operate that, there's a partnership with the city of Everett. About half of the geography of that line is in the city of Everett, so we haul a lot of Everett's citizens and county citizens. It's been a great line, tremendous success for our system.
- Jim Hills: 00:07:28 The concept to me has just seemed to make so much sense. You called it a trunk line, I'd call it a spine, but this idea that transit is moving up and down in a corridor that's already well used, people are going there anyway, and people come to that trunk or that spine to move along quickly. In fact, I have a quick little anecdotal story, I saw a good friend of ours the other day at the QFC on 176th and 99, in ... actually, I don't know if it's Lynnwood or Edmonds, it's really close down there in south Snohomish County, and she was telling the story of how awesome it was. She lives pretty close by, at bottom block off of 99, jumps on the bus, goes to South Everett for a job, lets her off about a block and a half away from her job and then jumps on and gets back down and she just loves it. She loved the experience of the Blue Line and how that ... makes her life work.
- Martin Munguia: 00:08:19 Another story about Blue Line that's kind of gotten forgotten over the years since we've been in operation, prior to the Blue Line starting up and bridging that gap from Everett to south Snohomish County, if you wanted to travel that corridor, you had to ride Everett transit to Airport Road along Highway 99 right by the Home Depot, get off an Everett transit bus, cross two streets across this major highway right there, and then board a Community Transit bus to go further south and vice versa. A lot of people were making that commute and it was just an arbitrary jurisdictional city line, but for the people who traveled that corridor, it was a major impediment in their travels every day.

Martin Munguia: 00:09:04 Suddenly Swift came along and just provided this one seat ride up and down that corridor every 10 minutes and people loved it. Now, we're just saying, "Oh, this has been there for 10 years," and people who have kind of forgotten about that exodus that people made every day, getting off these buses onto another bus. That was a major commuter problem in those days before then.

Jim Hills: 00:09:27 You're replicating Blue Line, right? There's green line coming.

Emmett Heath: 00:09:31 Oh, we have all kinds of colors coming.

Jim Hills: 00:09:32 Yeah, he's going to say how many. Are you're gonna run out of colors?

Ken Harvey: 00:09:34 When the audience hears this podcast, it may have already happened. Tell us about the next line that people can enjoy.

Emmett Heath: 00:09:43 There actually is a series of lines that we're fully committed to building in time to help serve Link light rail in 2024. Let me sketch this out for you. If you want to come back and we'll fill in some details, that'd be fine. We have our Blue Line, the next line that will open we call our Green Line. It starts at Canyon Park Park & Ride in Bothell at 405, operates north on the Bothell-Everett Highway, and then west across 132nd, 128th Airport Road, and then north up to the Boeing company and our new regional transit center, the Seaway Transit Center, which is right at the front door of the Boeing company. That's the Green Line and there's a lot of really cool features that start to make transportation easier for citizens when two lines intersect and they have a transfer point.

Emmett Heath: 00:10:38 Our third line, we call our Orange Line, we're in the design phase for that project right now. That will provide the first east west connectivity across the I-5 Corridor. The plan for that is to start on 196th, in the vicinity of Edmond's Community College. Then it would travel eastbound on 196th and serve our Lynnwood Transit Center. We'll also talk about Link light rail, but the northern terminal of Link light rail will be at our Lynnwood Transit Center in 2024. That Orange Line will serve that rail station, but then it turns north and goes up to 164th where it ties into our existing transit center at Ash Way and then east out to tie in to Mill Creek. Now we've got a Blue Line, a Green Line and an Orange Line, and we're serving people at the northern terminal of Link light rail. But there's more-

Jim Hills: 00:11:33 Let's stop you there. [crosstalk 00:11:34]

- Emmett Heath: 00:11:34 But wait, we have to be vegematic for every new rider. Then, our next project is to extend our existing Blue Line. I mentioned earlier, it stops right now just across the Sno-King line at the Aurora Village Transit Center. But again, just to help serve Link light rail in 2024, we're going to extend that south into King County and then east on 185th in Shoreline to tie into the Shoreline, north 185th street, Link light rail station. Now at by 2024, we'll have a network of three bus rapid transit lines with two of those lines directly connecting to Link light rail and the Green Line, which won't directly connect to Link light rail will connect at the Canyon Park Park & Ride, to other BRT lines under construction by Sound Transit.
- Emmett Heath: 00:12:31 People could connect to Sound Transit's BRT line at Canyon Park, that BRT line goes further west and connects to Link light rail at their 145th street station. Our customers can go online, they can find maps of the plans for building out these lines, but 2024 is an amazing milestone date for transportation in Snohomish county. When Link light rail gets here, there'll be any number of combinations that people can use. A bus rapid transit running every 10 minutes, you don't need a schedule, you never late for a bus, you're just a little bit early for the next one, and they can get just about anywhere in the county on a bus rapid transit with 10 minute frequencies. It's going to be a fantastic network.
- Jim Hills: 00:13:21 That really does sound fantastic.
- Ken Harvey: 00:13:23 Emmett, that sounds like the realization of a vision for a user experience that becomes ... that makes it just so convenient for individuals to travel around the region in ways that now really are problematic and inconvenient.
- Emmett Heath: 00:13:44 Our vision has evolved over the years. I said when we started, it was a handful of routes in a handful of buses and it was mostly providing transportation within communities and connecting communities within Snohomish County, but we've really become that regional transportation provider, even our mission statement. We used to be focused on getting riders on fixed route transit, our current mission statement is to help people get from wherever they are to where they want to be. If you think about a lot of the trips that people take these days, they're using multiple modes of transportation, oftentimes those modes are provided by different providers and it's a complex trip. You might walk a piece of it, maybe bike a piece of it, maybe use a car for a piece of it or a bus or a train, and all those modes are provided by a different provider.

- Emmett Heath: 00:14:38 That has forced a degree of cooperation and integration between all the providers so what the customer sees is a cohesive, easy to navigate system, and that's our goal. We need to make system easy for them to access it, it needs to have travel speeds and give them advantage overriding alone in their car, and the trip time needs to be predictable. That will attract people to a fantastic network, Transportation Network in the county.
- Martin Munguia: 00:15:07 What that mission statement forces and this vision that Emmett was talking about is we have to work together with our partners because we're only one part of that transportation journey that a customer is taking. We need to make sure that the roads are adequate for people to access, our transit system, we need to make sure that for instance, the Green Lines are going to connect to Paine Field where they're going to be offering passenger service very soon and people are going to be traveling there. Your journey might be starting out in Mill Creek, but ended up in Denver and taking transit is going to be one part of that journey. Another part might be one of the airlines, and then however you're going to get from Denver to where you're going to, but we have to coordinate on schedules, on roadways, on pedestrian pathways, and making sure that they're all user friendly because that's all part of the overall customer experience.
- Martin Munguia: 00:16:04 As we often say, the weak link in that experience is going to be what stands out to the customer. We don't want to be that we click, but we also want to eliminate whatever that other weak link might be so by talking to our partners, we can work together to make sure that it's a pleasant experience for everyone.
- Jim Hills: 00:16:22 It's funny you should mention, sorry.
- Ken Harvey: 00:16:24 No, go ahead.
- Jim Hills: 00:16:24 Funny you should mention that, start in Mill Creek end up in Denver and I wanted to share another anecdotal story from my life. My sister lives in Fairbanks, so her transit story was starting in Fairbanks and ending up in Edmond's at my doorstep. She went to CT link light rail north, to, I don't know if it was metro or sound transit to Ash Way, from Ash Way took CT over to Meadowdale, got off Meadowdale, she was about three blocks from my house and she shows up on the doorstep. I was like, "How did you do that? I didn't even know that was possible." "No, no, it was easy. I actually..." she goes, "Actually, I just went online, told them where I wanted to go and then they said

here's the deal, do this." She did, "I thought I'd give it a try, this was awesome."

Emmett Heath: 00:17:07 That's a great story.

Ken Harvey: 00:17:08 Well, I'll tell you, the different parts of making all of this happen remind me of a multi syllable word that I think I can say interrupter operability or something like that.

Jim Hills: 00:17:20 Close.

Martin Munguia: 00:17:21 Yeah, pretty close.

Jim Hills: 00:17:22 We'll give you a break on it.

Ken Harvey: 00:17:23 All right, thank you. Well, it reminds me of friends of mine who are knitters are quilters where they will come together and they'll all be working on the same different parts of the same product, which I think is a better way of saying a number of spiders all doing their part to spin one web, different strands one web. Some people don't like spiders in our audience so I won't bring that up. We'll use the knitters, knitters working together to build a full garment, and there are a number of organizations that Community Transit works with to make all this happen and to bring this vision to play. What are some of those organizations and agencies?

Emmett Heath: 00:18:09 Too numerous to list all of them, but I'll give you a good example that comes to mind. We're in the 11th day of this a snow event, during the snow event, I participated in a conference call several days with all of the general managers for our major transit partners and road construction and maintenance entities in Puget Sound, half a dozen transit agencies, the State Department of Transportation, the Seattle Department of Transportation, even in Washington state ferries. These were all CEOs and general managers, assistant secretaries of state getting together on a conference call every day to talk about how we could coordinate our services for a better customer experience, how we could help each other, if somebody had a need and somebody else had a resource, how could we provide mutual aid to each other where we were in a position to do so. That's just one illustration, that's just the transit companies.

Emmett Heath: 00:19:11 There's another set of partners, all the businesses that we work with. Just think about the pedestrian network that's out there and how important that pedestrian network is for people to get

from where they are to where they want to be. Maybe you want to walk there, maybe you want to walk part, bike park, catch a bus. A great example I think is the work we do with the cities in Snohomish County, to identify ... work with them and identify where those pedestrian networks are sidewalks and where there are gaps in the sidewalk that that make it difficult for customers to navigate. Then we look for opportunities to work together to close those gaps. We're not responsible for building sidewalks, but sidewalks are an important component in the overall transportation networks so we have a vested interest in working with the people who are responsible for the sidewalks, to make sure that the sidewalk network integrates well with a bicycle network, integrates well with a bus network, with the train network.

Emmett Heath: 00:20:08 Martin mentioned going to Denver, I thought he was going to say that's because Brett Smith's new propeller airport, commercial air terminal at Paine Fields, includes United Airlines and two flights a day to and from Denver and our Green Line, goes right by and has a station right at the front door to the new Paine Field terminal. Now we're integrating in Washington state ferries, if you have my picture, we're integrating marine activities with airline activities, with train activities, with bus and peds and bikes, all of the entities involved in designing, building, operating, maintaining, improving each of those parts of the transportation system. We got to work together to make that seamless network for the people of Snohomish County.

Ken Harvey: 00:20:57 As you were talking at the ... I think you had mentioned the assistant secretary of transportation earlier and so there's that whole road network too. I think that not only do individuals who are ... they're just essentially commuting to work, driving their own vehicles, often forget about the importance of sidewalks in the whole system. Bus riders can often forget about the importance of roads in this whole system of making it work because the community transit essentially uses the same roadways in many cases and the bridges and overpasses and things that make up part of that system, right?

Emmett Heath: 00:21:44 No question about it. One of the most robust national conversations right now it's about infrastructure generally and oftentimes about transportation infrastructure. That's designing and building and operating and maintaining, improving the road system, adding capacity to it, doing things to help manage it in a way that allows us to use it more efficiently. Increasing the average occupancy in a vehicle, for example, is a way to carry more people with the same infrastructure. You asked about I mentioned assistant secretary, that was a phone call where the

Washington state ferries were represented by the secretary responsible for the ferry system.

- Emmett Heath: 00:22:28 Another group that I meet with on a regular basis, we call them mobility partnership, it's the senior leaders of all of the major transportation agencies in the region. The State Department of Transportation is also represented on that committee, either with secretary of the DOT, Roger Millar, or his urban mobility secretary Patty Rubstello from their Seattle office. There's an incredible collegiality and professional partnership between all the entities that are trying to help people get around.
- Jim Hills: 00:23:01 You were talking about, you've been talking about other partners, government and private partners on the transportation grid, but I'm also thinking about just growth in general and residential growth and commercial and growth. My commute takes the east west across 164th, and I'm seeing a ton more ridership at the stops on one 64th or to Ash Way and a ton more development along those areas. Earlier you were talking about the northern terminus, well at least now for funding, of Link light rail at Lynnwood and how that's going to come at your transit center but Lynnwood is planning. They're planning growth, they're looking at that. How do you interact with agencies like Lynnwood, Snohomish County on future growth plan so that you can help those? How do you coordinate those pieces?
- Emmett Heath: 00:23:57 We are in each other's offices pretty much every day. We have staff down in the city of Lynnwood, Lynnwood's up meeting with us, we're meeting with Sound Transit, with King County Metro, with Snohomish County public works. I'm really, really proud to be able to say that our staff has, has visited with the planners and public works officials in every jurisdiction in our service area in Snohomish County. The reason we do that is because they are constantly updating their comprehensive plans work, which includes a transportation component, we're constantly updating our transportation plans and our goal is to work closely enough together that we know what each other is planning for many years out into the future and we can look for opportunities to work together.
- Emmett Heath: 00:24:43 You will find, if you study the comp plans and the transportation plans as we do, you'll see language from our plan actually embedded in their plan and vice a versa. There's some great examples out there where topics that came up for discussion five and 10 years ago, an opportunity finally presented to act on it because we had identified it as an opportunity. We were watching for it and when the opportunity presented, we worked

together to build a project that helped. I'm really, really ... I would hope people would say a champion and advocate for the importance of partnering with all the agencies that contribute to the transportation network.

Martin Munguia: 00:25:27 Another great story that comes to mind, you mentioned 164th down in south Snohomish County, in 2008, the government of Snohomish County declared that corridor at maximum congestion and they imposed moratorium on new growth, new development along that corridor because it was just, it was congested maximally. People, cars couldn't get around it and they decided that they weren't going to expand the roadway anymore, build more lanes. What they did at that time was actually contracted with Community Transit to start a new program to try to lure people out of driving themselves alone along that corridor into other modes of transportation.

Martin Munguia: 00:26:11 We began a program, what was called at that time, curb the congestion and its sole focus was to try to educate people about other ways that they could travel, whether it was on the bus, whether it was walking, whether it was biking, carpooling, but getting out of driving themselves alone. Over the years, that program actually just ended last year over the nine, 10 years of that program, they got something like 2 million trips reduced along that corridor. You mentioned that a lot of people are waiting at the bus stops now, one of the reasons is of that is all the education that went on specifically along that corridor. Over the course of the curb, that congestion program, they expanded it to other congested corridors in the county, 20th street heading up to Lake Stevens, 196th and some others.

Martin Munguia: 00:27:05 But took that same approach of going into apartment complexes, going to major business centers and just taking flyers around, offering to do what we called concierge treatment, which is, hey, you tell us about what your commute is like, where you're trying to go every day, and we'll come up with a personal travel plan for you that doesn't involve you driving your car everywhere. We got a lot of people to actually do alternative commuting and we found that once you, once you get people to try it and they see that, hey, I can do this, they might not do it every day, but that's ... you don't need people to do it every day, you need them to do it a couple times a week or just build it into their habits and it can really make a difference on a major corridor like that.

Ken Harvey: 00:27:54 I was a previous a bus rider and a carpool a participant and tried even biking to work a few times, and I will tell you that I miss the experience. You're talking about, you and Jim and Martin,

were talking about the people standing waiting at stops for the bus along 164th and in other areas, let's talk a minute about, in a society that seems to be so car conscious and so skewed towards car ownership Ann using your own vehicle to get where you want to go. Let's talk about who chooses to ride transit 'cause you'd have different types of transit available, 'cause you have kind of local service that is really kind of within cities and then services connecting city centers and long range, long commuters and bus rapid transit, who's using transit these days and why?

- Martin Munguia: 00:29:02 One of the things that I take to even make that a more basic question is what do we consider transit? We have Vanpools, one of the largest Vanpool fleets in the country, we just launched our 400th vehicle in active service, which is a new high for us. There are about, I believe close to 5,000 people a day from Snohomish County who get into one of our vehicles, these Vanpool vans and commute basically like a car pool to wherever it is that they're going, some of them in Seattle, a lot of them over to Microsoft or Boeing. It's not taking a bus. it's not waiting out at a bus stop, they meet or the driver of the Vanpool, who is one of the people participating in the Vanpool might go house to house and pick people up, it's a different way of looking at transit.
- Martin Munguia: 00:29:53 We're exploring other alternative modes of providing services to people to be able to get them around, as Emmett said, to get them from where they are now to where they need to go whether we're part of the journey or the whole journey. Definitely our biggest mode of transportation, our buses, I will be called the fixed route buses, it's the 101 that goes up and down Highway 99 in south county. You know what the route is, you know where the stops are, and we publish a schedule that hopefully is when the bus will come by there. A lot of people who-
- Ken Harvey: 00:30:32 Let me jump in for a second because you say, hopefully because buses essentially can get caught up in the same traffic that cars and trucks can.
- Martin Munguia: 00:30:42 The same traffic, the same accidents and other obstructions, but unlike-
- Ken Harvey: 00:30:48 Or snow.
- Martin Munguia: 00:30:49 Or snow, yeah. Unlike if you were riding a train that's got a fixed rail, if there's an accident along the roadway, the buses can take a detour and get around that and continue. They may not serve

the stop that's impacted by that accident, but they can still get around. There's that, but I think that the people who use transit, what we're finding, and we have a lot of statistics on that, are daily commuters. Their homes or their workplaces or both are usually within about a quarter to half a mile of one of our bus routes. They usually will take one ride, they prefer to take one ride, but they'll take up to two transfers, so three different bus trips to get where they need to go and then do the reverse in the evening but they are those typical weekday commuters.

Martin Munguia: 00:31:44 In fact, our weekday peaks in the AM and PM, see about 70% of our bus ridership is in those weekday peaks. That can tell you right there who a big picture of our riders are. There are certainly a lot of people who go to work who don't ride the bus and like you said, there are people who are married to their cars, but they may eventually become bus riders or they do sometimes when their car breaks down or their kid comes home from college and needs the car and they've got to find another way to get to work. That's one of the statistics that we know about bus riders, but we're doing a lot of research also into who our customers are.

Emmett Heath: 00:32:24 We're talking an awful lot about buses, but buses ... this has been a theme of mine in this conversation, buses or just one mode of transportation in an integrated transportation network. In as little as 10 years ago, our company was focused on getting more riders on a fixed route bus system. I said that our mission has changed now, help people get from where they are to where they want to be. Even to the point that if we can help make it easier for that person who chooses to stay in their single occupant vehicle, get from where they are to where they want to be, that's part of our mission. Here's an example that I love to illustrate that a couple of years ago the State Department of Transportation, watched the morning commute, AM commute in the peak of the peak at the King Snohomish County line.

Emmett Heath: 00:33:10 25% of all of the people going south on I-5, were in 1% of the vehicles, and most of those were buses, 25% of the people in 1% of the vehicle. To my single occupant vehicle point, here's my point, if you were driving that day in your single occupant vehicle, you should really be thanking all those people who were on the bus because they made room for you and your car on I-5. I think that's a legitimate part of our mission, if we get beyond the parochial constraint of we're about buses and we want people on buses, to, we want to help people walk, bike, ped, Uber, Lyft, train, airplane. Stay in your SUV if you have to. A bus doesn't work for everybody, but it works for a lot of

people. I would like people to think of us more in terms of helping to facilitate mobility, not just bus zealots, get everybody on the bus.

Jim Hills: 00:34:14 You said as little as 10 years ago, it was about getting people on fixed routes, where did that change in thinking, that cultural change, within transit agencies, transit advocates like yourself, how did that happen? Where did that come to move toward where they are, to where they want to be? That's a significant cultural change.

Emmett Heath: 00:34:40 Good for you, absolutely, a significant cultural shift. On a personal note, I'm born and raised in this region, I've worked almost 40 years for three really premier agencies in the region, the former municipality of Metropolitan Seattle Metro before it became King County government, the Snohomish PUD, and Community Transit. I didn't grow up with the parochial constraints of I'm from Everett or Snohomish County or Seattle or renting, all places that I've lived. I personally had this very regional perspective. To this day, people ask me where I'm from, I'm likely to tell him the Puget Sound region. I personally have made it an advocacy point in my chief executive role to try to transition the agency from thinking about bus rides in Snohomish County, to regional transportation. It's a cultural shift that is in progress, and we have made tremendous progress becoming a regional player in the trend in the transportation network in Snohomish County.

Jim Hills: 00:35:55 That's amazing. That kind of shift is as significant, I think, as anything else, just the way you think about it. That's awesome.

Martin Munguia: 00:36:03 It's not just us and thinking about our mission, but other partners thinking about how to use transit. Emmett talks about 10 years ago, 10 years ago, city planners who were designing their street networks weren't thinking about, is this going to fit the transit network or the transit service that we want to see in town. They were building for cars, they were building for their residents and how to get their residents in and out of their city, in their own vehicles but that shift has changed too as the county government, other cities have said, you know what, transit can be a partner to us to move people in and out without us having to continue to expand the roadway system, maximize the roadway system that we have. They started including us in the conversation as well and so I think that you saw it all around that we were looking at how do we expand the way we think about our transit system and other people were thinking about how do we include you in what we're doing as well.

Ken Harvey: 00:37:01 the beauty of, of I think, that type of thinking and the opportunities that come from it seemed to be that rather than just a single perspective, coming up with a vision and then following that vision, working to build that vision out and inadvertently creating congestion, inadvertently creating the problems, the future problems that then have to be solved, it seems like it brings a lot of those perspectives together and so holistically you can step back and say, what's the desired outcome or vision for the experience of living here?

Emmett Heath: 00:37:36 Well, Ken, you asked about vision-

Ken Harvey: 00:37:37 And moving around?

Emmett Heath: 00:37:40 Let me slip this in, I've talked to a couple of times about updating our mission, make it easy for people to get from where they are to where they want to be. We take that another step and we say, if we are successful with that over the long term, where does that lead in terms of a vision? This may sound awfully simple, but it is, that vision is travel made easy for all. Now I can take that and go ahead and ask me, why is that so important? Because travel in this context, mobility, the ability for someone to get from where they are to where they want to be, is fundamental to their quality of life. Think about your own life, if you're in your own home, you want to be able to walk from one place to another. If you need to leave your home and go someplace to work, to school, to services, to recreation, the ability to travel there and the easier it is, contributes to the quality of your life.

Ken Harvey: 00:38:36 Absolutely, yeah.

Emmett Heath: 00:38:37 Sometimes I will quiz people, if they're having troubles getting that concept, think about the last time that you were really, really, really enjoying what you were doing and where was that and how did you get there? Well, I was in Paris, well, I was in Leavenworth, well, I went to visit my grandkids, I went to see my doctor, I went to deliver my PHD thesis. Everybody had to travel to get there, so if we can contribute to a transportation system that makes travel easier for all, that's a great vision for the future. Our focus to help people get there is to broaden the opportunities for travel, just to make it simple for people to get from where they are to where they want to be.

Jim Hills: 00:39:27 That makes a ton of sense to me. I'm struck by what you said earlier about describing yourself as a resident of Puget Sound, of the Puget Sound region. You can't really be a resident of the

Puget Sound region unless you can move around in it, take advantage of it. If you can't do that then-

Emmett Heath: 00:39:47

And enjoy it.

Jim Hills: 00:39:48

Yeah, then you live in Seattle or you live in Edmond, so you live in Everett or you live in Stanwood, because that's where you can get to and that's your sphere, that you have to live inside. If you can move around easily. Uh, and it can't always be a private car because we've all been stuck in those traffic jams, if you can move, then you can be a resident of the Puget Sound region and you can enjoy everything that we have around us to live here.

Emmett Heath: 00:40:21

Another great partnership that illustrates that whole regional vision is ORCA, one regional card for all. About 2010 we kicked it off, but it was in development for 10 years before that, but it's basically one card, one fare card that you can use. You load some money on it, like a Starbucks card, or you can buy a pass that lives on that card and you can use it on any of six of the transit agencies within Puget sound. You may have to transfer between community transit in King County Metro Transit, but you don't have to worry about pulling out coins and figuring out how much do I pay for this one or that one. You just take that Orca card and tap it on it and with Link light rail expanding, it's even better because Link is a spine.

Emmett Heath: 00:41:10

It goes up and down north, south right now, eventually it'll have some east, west spines, but to get to Link or to get from Link, you're gonna likely ride a bus or maybe you take an Uber or something. But having a card like that where you can just tap it and take care of your fare helps to make an easier customer experience.

Jim Hills: 00:41:33

I worked for a while at one of the local community colleges and those orca cards, when they went on sale every quarter were hugely popular with students. They'd line up for orca cards when they went on sale, it was amazing. The students made great use of that, that was the way many of them got around.

Emmett Heath: 00:41:50

Imagine, Martin's was talking about this, but I think it's such a cool example, imagine a trip where you started Everett station in Everett, maybe you ride Everett Transit, you get on this Community Transit bus, you get off and get on a Sound Transit train, you get off, you catch a metro bus down to the ferry terminal, you get on the Washington state ferries, you get off on the other side, you get on to Kitsap Transit bus, you can tap, you tap your Orca card on every one of those agencies, basically you tap it once in pay and as long as the rest of the trips within

a two hour window, you're making free transfers across all of those systems, so we're back to partnership and integration.

- Emmett Heath: 00:42:23 Our job is to make that a seamless journey for the customer. Martin made a great point earlier, if they ride Everett and community and Sound and Metro and the State Ferries and Kitsap, that's six different providers, but you know what? If they finished set trip and you asked the customer how their trip was, chances are they're going to tell you about the lowest common denominator. We might have done a wonderful job on the community transit portion of the trip, but if they were let down and some other segment, that's how they're going to describe their trip.
- Jim Hills: 00:42:55 It's all about the experience.
- Emmett Heath: 00:42:57 That means we have to be just as invested in the success of our partners as they are in us because we're sharing that customer.
- Ken Harvey: 00:43:05 I booked an airline flight recently and if I look at the details of the flight, there are different providers and carriers that will get me from point A to my destination and back. I don't care about who those individual providers are, all I care about is it's one trip as far as I'm concerned and I want that entire trip to be convenient and pleasurable. If it's not, then I've got a problem and frustration and a soured experience that I'm likely going to remember. I really love what the two of you are saying in terms of really making it a seamless experience as much as possible that ends up with a satisfied traveler.
- Jim Hills: 00:44:01 I wanted to bring up ... it doesn't really change ... I want to build on this, but I want to change the focus a little bit because, Emmett, I was listening to you talk about your previous work experience and we did mention the snow and we are talking about having good experiences and just amazed that you worked at Metro, now King County, and then Snohomish County PUD, and then CT, all of those are seriously impacted by the kinds 11 days snow events that we've just had. When it starts snowing, what do you think, what was the first thing when you see the snowflake coming out of the sky?
- Emmett Heath: 00:44:40 I was asked that question earlier today, before I came down here I was out doing my rounds in our operating bases and maintenance facilities and such. Most of my co colleagues would tell you those are the times they enjoy the most and remember the most, these are the experiences that create urban legends that we talk about it forever. I can guarantee you in 10 years people are going to be going, "Yeah, remember that

storm back in February of '19?" In fact, we're doing that now, the last major snow storm event we had was in 2012. It's been that long since we went to our maximum level of alert. The urban legends, the stories, the camaraderie are fantastic. You asked me what I think about, I think about being at the PUD and there being a threat of the dike on the Skagit River breaking and flooding the substation and Camano and how PUD crews would work 40 hours continuously before they would take a short break and then come back for 12 on 12 off.

Emmett Heath: 00:45:44 I think of our Community Transit staff that ... I had heard a story from a coach operator who said, "Yeah, I set my alarm. I was getting up every two hours all night long to drive my car up and down the driveway to make sure I had a pathway to get out in order to be there for my route." We have people who will come in two hours early to make sure they're there to get the route out. I was in the shop a couple of days ago talking with a journey mechanic who was on chain duty, not normally what he does, but he was saying, "Yeah, we haven't put chains on like that for a long time. We were standing there laughing and figuring out how to put them on and we were timing ourselves to see if we could get faster and faster and faster."

Emmett Heath: 00:46:24 He was actually laughing, describing working at 20 degrees in an open environment and chains on and off a bus, that's what I think about. People come together in these adverse conditions and it is an amazing level of dedication and commitment that people have to serve the citizens, that's what public service is all about. We attract a lot of people who are into public service because it makes them feel good to give back to their community and when you see people giving of themselves to help other people, it's as good as it gets.

Ken Harvey: 00:47:01 Sometimes these little events actually not only bring out the best but take the best to another level so it's really rewarding to see that happen.

Martin Munguia: 00:47:13 Also an opportunity to take a look at what you did and, and see what you can do better, so there's always that chance to ... they say never let a crisis go unused or something like that.

Emmett Heath: 00:47:29 That is the dominating conversation at our agency right now. We've said it's a little too early, we're still an emergency operations, but actually this afternoon we will hold the first in a series of what we call after action reviews. We did a good job, we're proud of it, but we've learned about a lot of opportunities that we have to improve our performance and do better next time. What's really fun in an organization as a CEO,

is to see people get excited about opportunities to do things better the next time around. That will be a very comprehensive review that we will do in the aftermath of the storm, what did we do well that we can build on next time, where did we fall short, where we can make changes and improve it?

- Emmett Heath: 00:48:13 I was talking with some coach operators this morning and told them that yesterday our executive team discussed this, and we made a commitment that we will reach out to every single one of about a thousand people in our organization and invite them to send us their comments about what went well, what didn't, we'll structure a review of that input and ultimately close the loop back to each of those people, thank you for the input, here's what we did or here's what we didn't do and why, and next time around, we'll do this a little bit better than we did this time, even though this was a fantastic effort.
- Martin Munguia: 00:48:48 One of the reasons why the storm of '19 will be legendary, was the duration of it. Usually what's typical when we have snow in this region is you get one day, maybe two days of snow, and then it turns to rain so you get into that operation mode that you haven't done for a year or two. You start doing it, then you're out of it and you learn a little bit, but really you're just kind of getting up to speed. In the last week and a half, two weeks, we evolved, every part of our operations evolved in communications because it just kept going and kept going. We learned from day to day, hey, you know what? This is what went well yesterday this is what didn't, here's how we're going to do this tonight or tomorrow.
- Martin Munguia: 00:49:32 It just continued to go like that, and I have to say, having been through a few storms at Community Transit, that this was definitely the most educational of them and these after action reviews that we're going to have you take a really going to inform our operations more than the previous one or two day storms have in the past.
- Ken Harvey: 00:49:55 I think this is a good place to take a little break. We've got just a few minutes left in the podcast, but we're going to take a little break here and come back and we're going to talk maybe just a little bit as we end about an ongoing partnership between Sno-Isle Libraries and Community Transit and some great things that we're looking forward to in the region.
- Speaker 6: 00:50:17 Join business people from around the region who are taking advantage of free expert business advice through business pro classes from Sno-Isle Libraries. Find a business pro class at a

library near you by searching online for events at Sno-Isle Libraries.

Ken Harvey: 00:50:33 We love hearing from our listeners and subscribers, especially if you enjoyed guest or have a suggestion for a future topic. Drop us a line at checkitoutpodcast@sno-isle.org. Again, that's checkitoutpodcast@sno-isle.org and let us know what you're thinking. Don't be surprised if we read your comment or answer your question on a future podcast episode.

Ken Harvey: 00:51:08 All right, we are back and we have about 10 minutes left in the podcast. I wanted to just go back to the topic of partnerships that we were discussing earlier and I think that it might surprise many of our listeners to know that that Community Transit and Sno-Isle Libraries have essentially a long, long term relationship where we've been connected at the hip. One of the ways that that has manifested is that many of our library facilities are located, actually all of our library facilities are located in areas where there is a bus stop nearby, very close by, maybe right in front of the library, and that's not by chance that that's happened. It's been very important to us that all residents, all citizens, all people have easy access to the library. We know that some people drive up and some people ride up, and we wanted to make it easy for individuals to do that. Does that type of partnership or joint planning just happen by chance?

Emmett Heath: 00:52:24 Oh boy, it doesn't happen by chance. It happens because it's a really important part of growth management and land use planning. Sno-Isle is an enlightened organization in terms of looking to cite your facilities near existing infrastructure. I was at a public meeting the other day and a jurisdictional planner was telling us that they were hoping to site and build a new senior center and that as soon as they had that built, they hoped that we could put a bus line near that facility so their patrons could access it. I took the opportunity in public session to push back a little bit and say, "Yeah, you know what, there's an alternative approach there and that is that you look to cite your senior center near existing infrastructure. You wouldn't build it where there's no electricity, you wouldn't build it where there's no water, you wouldn't build it where there's no access to other services, don't build it where there's not access to public transportation." Earlier, Ken, you-

Ken Harvey: 00:53:24 That sounds like that runs counter to that word, if you build it, they will come.

Emmett Heath: 00:53:30 People understand. It's intuitively obvious once you point it out. You can't run a transit line to every single point in the county. If

you look at the electric transmission lines coming from Grand Coulee Dam to central Puget Sound, they don't zigzag to Othello and to Ellensburg and to Yakima, they go in a straight line, so there's some efficiency in building that kind of infrastructure. You asked earlier, Ken, who rides the bus? I could ask that question a lot and oftentimes I'll just say we take employees to work, we take customers to retail, we take students to work, we take people to services. Now in response to your question, I'll say, and we take readers to the library. We've had a long partnership with Sno-Isle wild.

- Emmett Heath: 00:54:15 You mentioned earlier, Martin serves as the president of the board of trustees at Sno-Isle, one of my close colleagues was your former recently retired CEO, Jonalyn Woolf-Ivory, when you opened a branch in Arlington, as a resident of Arlington, I was there for the grand opening. When you opened Mariner, I was there, when senator Lias and others wanted to kick off the Mariner Campus partnership, we were there and we've been to all the subsequent meetings. Martin represents us in that initiative because that's our business. How do you help people get from where they are, to the quality of life that they're seeking? The opportunity to be at a library, it's important to a lot of people. It's important that we work together, that we have a strong partnership to make it as easy as we can for people to be able to get to the library.
- Ken Harvey: 00:55:09 Since this is the first time in this podcast that we've actually mentioned the Mariner Community Campus Project, we should probably just explain a little bit about what that's about. Martin, you want to take a stab with that?
- Martin Munguia: 00:55:23 Yeah. Mariner, for people who aren't aware, is a part of the community, south Snohomish County, just south of the Everett city limit, kind of maybe falling into Everett a little bit along 128th street, roughly west of I-5, maybe to Highway 99. It's not a certainly defined jurisdictional area and it's a little bit kind of an orphan or the loss stepchild because it unincorporated Snohomish County just outside of the Everett city line and even from a transit perspective, there's that jurisdictional boundary between Community Transit in Everett Transit. But it's a growing community, a lot of low income minority residents, a lot of transitional housing or apartments, not so much homes, but this is a community that also was not really served by a library until recently when Sno-Isle opened a demonstration site there along 128th, in a storefront there, and it's been wildly popular.

- Martin Munguia: 00:56:34 Partly because of that library, Senator Marko Liias, who grew up in the area and attended Mariner High School, or I believe he was at Kamiak, but did a lot of work at Mariner, he proposed this initiative to try to create a community center in that area, to help bring together the needs of the community, so he looked to Sno-Isle to help lead that project and brought in a number of community partners in the area. Community Transit got involved because we do have a Park & Ride right there-
- Ken Harvey: 00:57:07 Right across the street.
- Martin Munguia: 00:57:08 Just off of I-5 at 128th, the Mariner Park & Ride and it's also going to be the future site of a light rail line or light rail station within the next 10, 15 years. Bringing people to that center is part of our mission to that area and so we've been involved as these talks have moved forward in bringing lots of members of the community together. It's still in its early stages, but the hope is that there may be some sort of community gathering space where resources, social services and others can be brought together in one central location for that neighborhood.
- Jim Hills: 00:57:48 I think it's amazing, when we were getting ready ... when Sno-Isle Libraries was doing they were too ready for that demonstration library and defining that area. It's also can be seen as south of Everett, east of Mukilteo, west of Mill Creek, north of Lynnwood. You describe by what it isn't, but what it is, is a place where 30,000 people live. It's shocking to think that there are 30,000 people in an area that you described with no boundaries other than somebody else's boundaries. When we were doing that work for the demonstration of Marina and the library, demonstration library, that number really stuck with me. Anywhere else that would be a thriving city, but it's just as this area that we call Marina now.
- Martin Munguia: 00:58:34 That's something at 30,000, it would probably rank as third largest city in Snohomish County.
- Emmett Heath: 00:58:41 A couple of years ago, we had an art project there at the Mariner Park & Ride. We invited students from Mariner High School to build these panels for our transit center there and when we unveil them, one of the statistics that we said was, if you considered this an art gallery where people are going to come by and see these artworks, you'd have roughly 5,000 people who are our bus riders coming through that Park & Ride every day, viewing these artworks. That's like a major art gallery.
- Ken Harvey: 00:59:11 Successful gallery space.

- Jim Hills: 00:59:14 What a fun project and we talk about partnerships a lot, Mukilteo School District obviously big partner there. We worked with and art teachers at Mariner High School and again, out there for the grand unveiling of these murals that make up our bus shelters out there, what a fantastic community event.
- Ken Harvey: 00:59:36 Well, and speaking of community, Community Transit seems to do a lot to be seen as an active member of all of the communities you serve and of the larger community, the Puget sound community. One of the ways that I saw that reflected was Community Transits being involved as a partner in the TEDxSnoIsleLibraries, a series of events that we did in some previous years. Why was Community Transit involved?
- Emmett Heath: 01:00:13 I'm reminded of our governing board, I, the chief executive officer report to a governing board of 10 members. Nine of those are elected officials from across Snohomish County. We call that form of government a federated board, people from different jurisdictions coming together to govern Community Transit. Those people are mayors, council members from throughout Snohomish County, but when they come together, their politics are transportation. If they serve in part as an office, they don't bring that, what they bring is a transportation agenda and a regional civic agenda. We have a strategic framework in our agency, like most do. One of the strategic priorities, one of six that we've identified as fundamentally important to our business, is civic engagement. I get a lot of questions, "Why is community transit involved in that? That doesn't have anything to do with transportation."
- Emmett Heath: 01:01:09 It does because transportation is about a vibrant community and if you really are in the business to make a contribution to a healthy, strong, civic structure and commitment to the quality of life, then Sno-Isle is in that business, community transit is in that business. All of us really, fundamentally, we're all in that business. How do we create a community that enhances the quality of life for those of us who live here, work here, get educated here, go to libraries here. Civic engagement, giving back to the community in a variety of ways, is a part of the fabric of our agency. It's something I'll continue to push on as long as I have a voice in promoting how we're involved in the community.
- Ken Harvey: 01:01:59 Well, we really appreciate that.
- Emmett Heath: 01:02:00 You can take a bus to a, one of our community transit buses to an Everett Silvertips game, but you can take a bus to a TEDx Sno-Isle event where you get to hear these great intellectual

speakers. We also want to represent what are our various diverse audiences would want to get to, the destination as they want to be. The destinations aren't just physical geographic locations, they might be events. TEDx is a different event that we had in Snohomish County, then some other things that are going on. To be able to say, hey, Community Transit is part of that and you can take our services to get there, is again, part of our commitment to the community.

Ken Harvey: 01:02:43 Well, again, can't thank you enough for your past partnerships and along those veins and looking forward to the things that are going to come out of the Mariner Community Campus project and the opportunities to see about how we can build community around the Mariner area. In the last minute or two, want to just ask you this question about, what's your earliest memory of a public library and what age were you?

Emmett Heath: 01:03:18 I'll take that one first. I grew up in southern California, a small town called Monterey Park. It was small by LA Standards, it had about 50,000 people, so pretty big for Snohomish County. We didn't have a lot of money and we used to take the bus to go to our local library, which was near a park. I remember, uh, there was a joyful experience there because not only was it going to the library, but it was going to the park and riding the slides and doing all of those things associated with running around in the park. I was probably six or seven years old and we'd go there and of course there were the card catalogs in those days, you get to sign the cards and you'd always take a look at the names of people who had checked out the book before you. I just remember that every once in a while I'd see some kid from one of my classes or something, oh, so and so read this. That was kind of fun.

Martin Munguia: 01:04:16 That brings ... touches, brings back all kinds of names, cards, elementary school and the having to learn that Dewey Decimal system like advanced math at that age in my life. My library memory that that overshadows my youth is actually today, my wife and I both hold Sno-Isle Library cards, we're a very frequent visitors to the Sno-Isle Library in Arlington. My wife is an incredibly voracious reader to the point where I'll go into the library with her and I'll come out literally with my arms full of books. I feel so conspicuous, I came, well, what do people think I'm going to do with all these books? Oh, my wife will take those home and sit on the couch and brief them and sort them into read and don't read and take back.

Martin Munguia: 01:05:09 I actually got my card several years ago when she went in and she had a late book in her card, it had been locked out. They're

very helpful, lady behind the desk, no problem, why don't we get your husband to card and then you can check stuff out on his card. To this day, she still checks stuff out when her card is locked because she's lost her book. She will check stuff out on my card, boy, do I give her grief? When I started getting those automatic email messages from Sno-Isle, "You're slightly overdue." I forward it to my wife and say, "Honey, you're hurting my good credit."

- Ken Harvey: 01:05:43 You still have a good reputation with us and, Martin, you too, we thank you both for spending this time with us. Community Transit is an incredible force within this region and you make life so much easier for untold thousands of, uh, of individuals would travel through it. We just want to thank you for your work and the work of your incredible staff. We know that there's coach operators and maintenance people and mechanics and the folks who work behind the scenes who make this whole thing work. Boy, you deserve a lot of gratitude and appreciation.
- Emmett Heath: 01:06:26 Our two agencies share. We share that mission and both of us provide really important services to the citizens of the county. Partnership with Sno-Isle has been a highlight for us and we'll continue to be in the future. We look forward to continuing to work with you.
- Ken Harvey: 01:06:41 Thank you very much.
- Emmett Heath: 01:06:41 Thank you.
- Martin Munguia: 01:06:42 Thank you.
- Jim Hills: 01:06:50 I thought that was a really interesting conversation. Emmett Heath, what a community oriented person, some of the language that he was using was really inspiring, I thought.
- Ken Harvey: 01:07:01 What language really caught your attention?
- Jim Hills: 01:07:04 When he was talking about the mission shift from trying to get riders onto buses, on what he called fixed routes to what they call now where they are to where they want to be. That's their mission, get you where from where you are to where you want to be.
- Ken Harvey: 01:07:20 I love that, I really love that.

Jim Hills: 01:07:23 It's so customer focused. It's so not about them, it's about their customer, people that are using them.

Ken Harvey: 01:07:29 Well, and in some ways it seems to me that it really shifts the traditional argument and debate of cars versus buses to cars and buses and ferry and roads and-

Jim Hills: 01:07:47 Vanpools.

Ken Harvey: 01:07:48 Vanpools and rail and everything, whatever it takes to ...

Jim Hills: 01:07:53 I want to have him back because we were so busy talking about the now and the immediate future, what about the next step? I want to talk, what about smart cars, what about autonomous vehicles and where's the next step? I think all of that, I imagine if he were here, he'd say, "Yes, all of that is about getting you from where you are to where you want to be." And yes, public transportation being part of the total solution. If have that vision from the beginning, everything is possible.

Ken Harvey: 01:08:34 What do you think about, um, that the Arlington residents who described himself as I am from the Puget Sound?

Jim Hills: 01:08:45 I think that's awesome, I do think that it is interesting when he talks about being able to move, being able to travel as a fundamental piece of quality of life, maybe a fundamental right, so that you can be an Arlington resident and a resident of the Puget Sound region.

Ken Harvey: 01:09:09 I really appreciated some things at Martin added in to the conversation around the work of community transit helping to get people to and from the region. It's so interesting that his perspective is one that really blends together the mission of a public transit and transportation with the mission of public libraries since he is the board president for the board of trustees.

Jim Hills: 01:09:44 I thought that was really interesting listening to Emmett talk about how he was perhaps changing the perspective of someone else at a public meeting where, hey, could you run a bus line to our new facility? And he goes, hey kid, you put your facility where our bus line is and why wouldn't you do that, think about a public transportation like you would electricity and water. You wouldn't put your facility where he can't get electricity or water or sewer, so don't put it where you can't get public transportation either. I really liked that piece.

- Ken Harvey: 01:10:16 I appreciated just the thinking of not just putting the facility where the bus line is but, I think our mutual acknowledgement that that's exactly the way that Sno-Isle Libraries has approached where we located all of our facilities. We wanted to know where the transit line was and is there a bus stop nearby or some other kind of a high capacity transit facility nearby. In fact with the recently opened Mariner Library that is located near a bus Park & Ride, which will one day be also a light rail station.
- Jim Hills: 01:11:03 Yeah, and I'm thinking about, you know, if I go back a little further, the last three libraries opened by Sno-Isle Libraries, that'd be Mariner, Lakewood Smokey point, and Camano Island, all of the locations were all chosen to be most accessible by people. It was really consciously chosen to put where people are and where they travel and how they travel. Those were conscious decisions, I think those are really important. The other thing I thought was fun, a little factoid that he put out when he said ... Emmett was talking about the study that they had done on I-5, that 25% of the people and I-5 were in 1% of the vehicles, that is an amazing stat. I'm going to keep that one in my head.
- Ken Harvey: 01:11:53 Well, it's so much to take away from that conversation and I think that you're right. We're going to want to invite the two of them back, I think there's a lot more that we could have covered that we didn't and I think that our audience will find just as fascinating. I'll just reiterate how needed it has been to see the ongoing collaboration, cooperation and partnership between Sno-Isle Libraries and community transit. They are a tremendous community partner.
- Jim Hills: 01:12:25 I think there's going to be plenty of that in the future because our listeners didn't get a chance to hear and see the thing that we saw right after we had finished the interview, walking in the door was new executive director of Sno-Isle Libraries Lois Langer Thompson, and it was really clear that Emmett and Lois were on the same page talking about a service to the community and how that can be coordinated and the collaboration and the partnership that can happen. It was obvious that it was just going to be more and more of that happening in the future of both agencies.
- Speaker 6: 01:12:59 If you enjoyed this podcast, please subscribe so you can receive every episode automatically. Until next time, remember, your library has a lot to offer you, so what are you waiting for? Check it out.