



Snoqualmie Valley Transportation
PO Box 806
1308 Boalch Ave NW
North Bend, WA 98045

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Catch a bus and hit the road; Snoqualmie Valley Transportation makes getting around the Valley easy

Contributed by Snoqualmie Valley Transportation

Riding a bus in the Snoqualmie Valley could mean checking Metro's timetables, buying an ORCA card or installing an app on your phone, paying a fare of about \$3, then hoping you're at the right bus stop at the right time for your trip. Alternately, it could mean a phone call to Snoqualmie Valley Transportation – SVT as Valley locals call it -- to find out which bus you need and where to meet it, then getting on board and handing the driver a dollar.

“This isn't such a big city deal, that's so regimented, that we're not all just folks,” is how Marcia Bennett-Reinert put it during a recent presentation to residents of Monroe's Brookdale Manor. Bennett-Reinert is Snoqualmie Valley Transportation's driver supervisor and, whenever she gets the chance, its travel training expert, too.

Travel training is what Bennett-Reinert calls her meetings with groups or individuals to explain the three main services offered by SVT – shared rides with door-to-door service, loop routes covering various parts of the Valley and the shuttles that go up and down the Valley every 90 minutes.

The first thing she wants to teach people about SVT, though, is that anyone can use it.

“Because our buses are small, everyone thinks we're only for seniors, or differently-abled folks but actually, we are a public transportation company,” she said.

SVT is a project of the Mt. Si Senior Center in North Bend; it receives a large share of its funding from King County Metro, as a contracted provider of Metro's alternative services in the Snoqualmie Valley. Other supporters include the Snoqualmie Indian Tribe and the Washington Department of Transportation.

SVT services cover almost the entire valley and extend into Snohomish County, helping to expand local residents' words, as Bennett-Reinert says.

"You can go from Monroe, all the way to Rattlesnake Lake east of North Bend, for a dollar," she said.

That got her audience's attention, and then the questions started coming:

Can we go to the Snoqualmie Casino? Yes, the casino is a stop on several routes.

Can the buses accommodate medical equipment like walkers? Yes, and every bus has a lift that people are encouraged to use if they want it. Every bus also has a bike rack for people who need them.

Where do we catch the bus? At any of the scheduled stops on the routes, available on www.svtbus.org. Or if you see one approaching on the route, you can just wave at the driver to stop.

"That bus driver is always on the lookout for riders," Bennett-Reinert said.

People also asked about getting to places SVT doesn't go, such as Kirkland or Everett. Their solutions were generally the same: Call the SVT staff at 425-888-7001 and explain where you need to be, and when, then let them plan out how to get you there. Because SVT is part of the Metro system, riders can easily transfer to Metro buses, without having to pay an additional fare. They do have to pay the Metro fare, instead of the \$1 to SVT, but they don't have to pay both.

"The only thing you really need to know is our phone number, 425-888-7001," said Bennett-Reinert. "We're there to help you."

Her presentation also included a brief history of the 15-year-old bus company, which started with one bus, serving only seniors, and has expanded into a 15-bus operation with service throughout the valley every weekday.

"We are awfully proud of what we have accomplished, I must admit. We are trying to become a standard for rural transportation," Bennett-Reinert added.

Snoqualmie Valley Transportation Services:

Door to Door: This shared ride option is for people want to be picked up from one location, such as their homes, and dropped off at another. Call two to three days in advance to schedule this service; day-of exceptions are possible, but rare. The fare is \$1 per trip.

Valley Shuttle: This route travels between North Bend and Duvall every 90 minutes with stops in Snoqualmie, Fall City and Carnation. See the route map on the website for the designated stops. The fare is a \$1 suggested donation.

Cedar Falls Loop: This route circulates through downtown North Bend, Wilderness Rim, Rattlesnake Lake and Riverbend. See the route map on the website for the designated stops. The fare is \$1 per trip.

Downtown Loop: This route travels to and from the downtown areas of Snoqualmie and North Bend. See the route map on the website for the designated stops. The fare is \$1 per trip.

Ridge Loop: This route connects downtown Snoqualmie and the Ridge, with stops in historic downtown, Snoqualmie Ridge, Snoqualmie Valley Hospital and Snoqualmie Casino. See the route map on the website for the designated stops. The fare is \$1 per trip.

Duvall-Monroe Shuttle: This newest service travels between the SVT stop at Brown and Richardson in downtown Duvall to several locations in Monroe including Walmart, the movie theater, hospital, YMCA, and senior center. See the route map on the website for the designated stops. The fare is a \$1 suggested donation per trip.

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About Snoqualmie Valley Transportation: Snoqualmie Valley Transportation (SVT) is a project of Mt. Si Senior Center. SVT began its services in 2003 with funding assistance from Snoqualmie Indian Tribe, King County Metro Transit, and the Washington State Department of Transportation. Learn more about the bus services and find maps and schedules at www.svtbus.org, or call 425-888-7001.