

This service revision is wonderful. It makes a lot of sense and it makes responsible use of our transportation resources. I've ridden the bus over the years from West Seattle, Beacon Hill, Ballard, the International District and in recent years Wedgwood and Meadowbrook in the North East. I've also driven to work when the bus commute gets impractical. This restructure is probably the best thing I've seen to make the bus system usable since the tunnel opened and we got Orca cards.

The bus routes in NE Seattle are terribly outdated. Sure, you can cobble together a half-hour schedule by endlessly pouring over meandering routes, but who has the patience? I can take a 72 from Lake City Way, but if I miss that my only option might be waiting for a 372 and detouring through the U-District. Or I'll take the 65 and transfer to the 41 in Lake City via Northgate and Pronto bike from Downtown to my job. Or endless other variations. Every day. I have the trip planner bookmarked to figure out my commute based on when I leave home or work and the travel conditions. Most others just give up and just drive. Or they wait and wait and wait. Sometimes I give up and walk home and I pass kids waiting for a 65 that isn't coming because it's stuck in some other corner of the city. This restructure will allow me to take the 65 to the 70. Period. When I leave the house, I won't even have to check my watch or the calendar (because even this level of service gets reduced when UW is out of session). My neighbors will have different routes, but they will gain similar predictability. This kind of reliability might even allow me to run errands. Stop off on 35th at my in-laws. Get dinner in Lake City or U-Village or Northgate or Downtown. Work late if necessary. As it is, a seat on the bus is worth two on the schedule and I usually pass up the businesses on my route.

Many young families have moved to my neighborhood in recent years. And many of them are trying to be one-car families. This cuts down on air pollution, it reduces driving on neighborhood streets with no sidewalks, dangerous arterials like Lake City Way and expensive highways like I-5. It reduces road and parking congestion for everyone. Buses in our neighborhood go to Lake City for restaurants, or the Farmers' Market or the Library. They access U-Village and 35th street, Magnusson Park, Nathan Hale, Childrens' Hospital and the U District, but they do so unreliably, so often we just default to driving, clogging up the roads and using more parking.

Beyond NE Seattle, this plan will make transfers far more reliable. Over the last year I have been stuck in Fremont for waiting a few minutes past rush hour when frequency drops. I often stand on a corner in Lake City waiting a half hour or more for a transfer from the 41 to the 65 or a 75 (I'm not picky) that is stuck in distant traffic somewhere. Often they both arrive nearly at the same time, which is poor use of poor frequency. The changes in this plan might not give me a one seat ride home from Fremont any more (a very specific trip only available at certain times), but it will get me home and work more reliably and as fast or faster. By comparison my current 7-mile commute takes at least 70 minutes by bus with no delays. I can do it by bike in 40, but that is not something I can do year round. This plan will actually make the U-District,

Lake City and Northgate and even 65th Street or Magnusson Park effective as transit transfer points for NE Seattle. As it is, they are just barely transit destinations.

These are real improvements that will make a clear difference. The Proposition 1 service additions to route 70 made a night-and-day improvement to the usability of that route. Instead of waiting and waiting at evening rush hour for a full bus that couldn't even stop at Fred Hutch, it's now possible to get a bus without setting an alarm clock and having a backup plan. In the mornings Instead of seeing my 70 pull away just as my 65 got to UW in the morning, I now make the transfer reliably. The additional 70's continue to be full because that's just what the demand is nowadays. But they are reliably where they are scheduled to be, and the transfers at the UW match up, which wasn't the case back in August before prop 1. The U Link route changes would give that kind of service along the 66 corridor that serves rush-hour Roosevelt. It would make the transfers at Lake City, 35th street and Sand Point work. People will notice this is a positive change and they will also notice if the change is not made and the positive momentum is squandered.

So you see these changes are necessary for NE Seattle even without U Link opening. Am I looking forward to taking the Link from the airport to UW and transferring to the 65? Sure. I'll also be able to run errands Downtown and get back home reliably after work. It's even possible that the Link will be a better regular commute option for me than the 70. My family will probably start taking weekend trips to Capitol Hill again and not have to worry about parking. But these necessary changes are incredibly positive regardless of Link. It would be irresponsible to leave redundant service on the table when the U Link opens up.

In short, this service revision is a credit to King County Metro. It has been my light at the end of the tunnel since it was announced. I'm exhausted trying to make this commute work. Please don't leave the system unchanged and make me switch back to driving. That would be a waste for all of us.

Thank you,  
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