



Umo Mobility Platform: Streamlining Fare Collection and Enhancing Skagit Regional Transit Connectivity



OVERVIEW

Skagit Transit, a public transportation agency serving Skagit County in Northwest Washington, faced challenges in providing seamless connectivity between rural areas and urban centers like Mount Vernon, Seattle, and Everett. The outdated and increasingly difficult-to-maintain fare collection hardware resulted in high repair costs and inefficiencies. In partnership with Whatcom Transportation Authority, Skagit Transit implemented the Umo Mobility platform, enabling a regional fare system that streamlined fare collection and improved transit experiences for residents



PROBLEM

Skagit Transit's existing fare collection system suffered from antiquated hardware and limited availability of repair parts. Many riders, such as college students and veterans living in rural areas, face difficulties when traveling to urban destinations for school or medical appointments. They need a seamless and hassle-free experience without having to deal with different payment methods during their journeys. The agency was spending approximately \$92,000 annually on mechanics' road calls to fix the hardware. These challenges hindered efficient transportation services and made it difficult for residents to travel across county lines. A solution was required to modernize fare collection, reduce repair costs, and enhance regional connectivity.

SOLUTION

Skagit Transit and Whatcom Transportation Authority collaborated to implement the Umo Mobility platform, addressing the fare collection challenges faced by both agencies. The Umo platform introduced a single fare payment system that allowed residents of Northwest Washington to seamlessly cross county lines. The system offered user-friendly features and a centralized fare management portal, simplifying the purchasing and use of transit passes. Additionally, the implementation of stored value and fare capping capabilities provided convenience for riders, eliminating the need for cash transactions and associated costs.



The Umo platform has enabled Whatcom Transportation Authority and Skagit Transit to partner on a regional fare system that allows our residents to move between the counties seamlessly and without interruption.

– **Brad Windler**
Planning & Outreach Supervisor,
Skagit Transit

RESULTS

The adoption of the Umo Mobility platform yielded significant benefits for Skagit Transit and its riders.

Improved Efficiency: The elimination of antiquated fare collection hardware reduced the need for costly repairs, resulting in **annual savings of \$92,000** previously spent on mechanics' road calls.

Enhanced Regional Connectivity: The Umo platform **facilitated a regional fare system, enabling residents to travel seamlessly between counties** without interruptions. Riders gained access to local routes and county connector passes, offering flexibility and convenience in their journeys.

User-Friendly Experience: The Umo platform was **widely praised for its ease of use and intuitive interface**. Customers found it simple to navigate the system, leading to quick adoption and positive feedback from both riders and resellers.

Cost Reduction: The transition to the Umo platform **significantly reduced the expenses associated with cash transactions**. The stored value feature provided a streamlined process, eliminating the need for manual cash counting, armored car services, and cash depositing.

Timely Bus Operations: The tap-and-go functionality of the Umo platform **reduced boarding times**, enabling buses to stay on schedule. By eliminating the hassle of dealing with cash and change, riders and drivers experienced smoother transit operations.

Increased Ridership: Since implementing Umo, Skagit Transit observed a **substantial adoption rate, with approximately 60% of riders making it their primary mode of travel**. The digital fare collection system offered better ridership data, allowing the agency to gain valuable insights into travel patterns and demand.

In summary, the implementation of the Umo Mobility platform transformed fare collection for Skagit Transit and Whatcom Transportation Authority. The flexibility of the platform allowed Skagit to recently extend its services with the launch of a new fare-free offer for all passengers under 18 years old. By addressing hardware limitations, streamlining fare payment processes, and enhancing regional connectivity, the Umo platform significantly improved the transit experience for residents of Northwest Washington while reducing costs and increasing operational efficiency.

ABOUT THE UMO MOBILITY PLATFORM

Umo is a smart travel companion and mobility platform that provides simple and flexible travel for users, transit agencies and mobility service providers. Umo empowers its users to improve their quality of life by optimizing the way they get around. We believe in freedom, the freedom to choose your preferred mode (or modes) of transport and to use your preferred way of paying for those services. Everyone deserves the ability to travel safely, seamlessly and stress-free around their city or town. Umo. Simple Solutions. Seamless Journeys.



Cash transactions are expensive to use because they require someone to count the money, having to have an armored car service to pick up the money, take it, count it, deposit it... where stored value is one transaction basically for us when they load it onto their account. And that's it. It worked really well for us and for a lot of our riders too.

– **Tami Coleman**

*Revenue Manager,
Whatcom Transportation Authority*