

Portland Transport

A conversation about access & mobility in the Portland-Vancouver region.

by **Guest** on [September 7, 2012](#) in **Bus, Community Transit, Guest Posts**

This is a guest post from regular contributor Ron Swaren. Anyone who wishes to submit a guest post is welcome to contact the moderators and we will be happy to assist you.



Submitted by: Ron Swaren
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Community Transit of Snohomish County, Washington (north of Seattle) inaugurated its fleet of 23 "Double-Tall" express buses in March, 2011. The passenger capacity is equivalent to articulated buses (77 seated), but they perform much better in slippery conditions, and can shift weight in the rear axle. The length of 42 feet takes up less road space and was requested by the City of Seattle. Martin Mungia, information director for Community Transit, stated that while the number of passengers is typically about 40, a couple times a week they fill up to 100-110 riders.

There are two main routes using the double-talls (they are switched to other routes during the day): the **402 to Lynnwood**, and the **405 to Edmonds Park and Ride**. Technical data on the double-talls is available [at this page](#).

They make one or two stops at Park and Ride lots in the suburban communities, take I-5 into Seattle, and make 5-7 stops downtown. Mr. Mungia also pointed out that the height of the vehicles –approx. 14 feet–provides desirable advertising space that is more visible, thus bringing in more revenue. Community Transit may purchase more vehicles in the future if economic conditions become more favorable. The cost of \$850,000 per vehicle was higher than normal buses, but they think these will prove to be good investments over time.

The initial investment of \$23 million was 88 percent covered by grants, substantially from WDOT "Regional Mobility Program" and by federal stimulus money. Alexander Dennis Co. based in Scotland, opened an assembly plant in Southern California where final assembly was accomplished, thus qualifying the buses under "Buy America" requirements. Similar vehicles are also being used in Victoria and Kelowna, BC.

The inaugural day of the new routes was covered in [this entry](#) at **Community Transit's blog**.