

# Ellensburg High School Shop Students to Build Bus Shelters for Central Transit

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Shop students at Ellensburg High School will use their skills this spring to build bus shelters for Central Transit passengers.

A joint project of EHS, HopeSource and the Ellensburg Public Works Department, four shelters will be erected at two stops, one on each side of the road, at the bus stops on Ruby Street and Fourth Avenue by Safeway and the bus stops on Capitol Avenue and Water Street by Fred Meyer. The shelters will be 4 feet by 8 feet, or 32 square-feet, with no sides for now.

Central Transit provides free bus services to the city of Ellensburg, and can be used by anyone in the community.

Ellensburg's Public Works Director Ryan Lyyski said the city used specifications from a similar project by Everett's Community Transit when planning the project.

Funding comes from the city's public transit budget from last year, Lyyski said, from money that wasn't directly committed to operations.

On Monday, the Ellensburg City Council awarded a bid for purchase of materials to construct the bus shelters to Tolar Manufacturing Company, which was the only bidder, at \$30,085. Materials are due to be delivered later this month or by early April.

Tolar designed and engineered shelters, city council member Bruce Tabb said. Tabb was closely involved with organizing the bus shelter project.

"The designs are simple, straightforward and adaptable," Tabb said.

The shelters will arrive in pieces and the EHS students will paint and assemble them,



learning engineering and construction skills, Tabb said. Installation will be done by city work crews, with the possibility of student assistance.

There may even be a way to get more students involved. The EHS environmental club could design solar cells to light the shelters, he said.

Tabb said the transportation committee identified the need for bus shelters to keep riders out of the wind and weather a couple years ago.

Mark Hollandsworth, senior transportation manager at HopeSource, said the bus shelter project lends permanence to the program and shows commitment to the long term interests of the city and the people riding Central Transit buses.

Also, "we're seeing very strong increases of ridership levels," he said.

Central Transit currently averages 250 riders a day. In 2013, ridership was 29,100. In 2014, ridership jumped to 53,985.

By this time last year, Central Transit buses provided 13,700 rides. This year, that number is at 14,914.

"There's more knowledge that Central Transit is public transportation, not student-specific," he said. "The more awareness and communication that takes place, it's utilized more."