

EDMONDS HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

THE PRESERVATIONIST

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THE RAILROAD COMES TO EDMONDS

In 1889 the combination of several smaller railways by "The Empire Builder", James Jerome Hill created The Great Northern Railway. After first stretching from Duluth and Minneapolis/St. Paul across North Dakota, Montana, and Idaho, it arrived in Washington State.

At this time, access to Edmonds was by water and horse. Paved roads were 30 years in the future, and passenger steamers were the preferred mode of travel between Seattle, Edmonds and Everett. When the railroad finally arrived, it was assumed that a surge in Edmonds' economic growth would follow.

In 1890, the year of Edmonds' incorporation, construction began on the stretch of track going north along Puget Sound from Seattle to Canada. Originally known as the Seattle-Montana Railroad, it was soon acquired by the Great Northern.

It was assumed from the beginning that the coming of the railroad would catapult Edmonds into unprecedented economic prosper-

ity. In anticipation of windfall profits to come, the Minneapolis Realty and Investment Company purchased Edmonds Township and adjoining property totaling 455 acres from George Brackett for \$36,000. The company replatted the town and built the Bishop Hotel, named in honor of its president.

In addition to the hotel, Minneapolis Realty built a new wharf with deep water moorage and an office building which later became a post office.

But the panic of the 1890's plunged the country into recession, and the anticipated land boom never materialized. The company's holdings were foreclosed, and the land reverted to George Brackett.

Work on the railroad proceeded however, and at 5 pm on June 17, 1891 a track laying engine rounded Hamlin's point, heading for Edmonds. By the end of 1891 trains were running regularly between Seattle and Bellingham.

By 1910 there were two tracks through Edmonds.



The Evening Express at Edmonds Station, 1947.
(photo courtesy of the Edmonds Historic Museum)



The Railroad Foreman's House with Edmonds Station in the background. *(photo courtesy of the Edmonds Historic Museum)*

Daily freight trains ran up and down the west coast delivering shingles manufactured in Edmonds' booming mills.

During the next decade

Edmonds' population mushroomed, the economy boomed, schools, churches and homes were built. It was time for Edmonds to have its own passenger rail station.



EDMONDS HISTORIC
PRESERVATION COMMISSION

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The mission of The Edmonds Historic Preservation Commission is to actively encourage the conservation and retention of the city's historic resources through initiating and maintaining a register of historic places. Toward this end, the Commission works to raise community awareness of the city's history and historic resources and serves as the city's primary resource in matters of history, historic planning, and preservation.

WE'RE ON THE WEB! [HTTP://WWW.CI.EDMONDS.WA.US/HPC.STM](http://www.ci.edmonds.wa.us/hpc.stm)

THE RAILROAD COMES TO EDMONDS (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)



Clockwise from lower left: Track bed construction near Lund's Gulch (now Meadowdale Park), John Lund standing on left, circa 1890 (photo credit: Edmonds Historic Museum); Edmonds first railway station constructed in 1910 (photo credit: Edmonds Historic Museum); The Edmonds passenger station today (photo by Larry Vogel)

The first Edmonds railroad station was built in 1910. Twelve passenger trains stopped daily. A railroad brochure praised it as "an attractive new station-spacious, fenced and well lighted" and "North Seattle's only suburban railway station." It served until 1955, when it was replaced by the present day Edmonds station .

During the 1920s, freight business increased, while most passenger needs and services gradually declined.

Today the Edmonds Railroad Station is enjoying a renaissance as a critical hub in the regional transit system. Linking bus, rail and ferry systems at a single location, the railway station is once again a source of prosperity and civic pride for Edmonds.

EDMONDS TRANSIT HUB DEDICATED



Edmonds station Dedication July 2011

Snohomish County Executive Aaron Reardon is joined by Edmonds Mayor Mike Cooper and others at the July 8, 2011 ribbon-cutting ceremony dedicating the improved Edmonds Station.

On July 8, 2011 the Edmonds Rail Station officially became part of a multi-modal transit hub under the umbrella of Sound Transit.

With the addition of a modern bus transit center adjacent to the station, commuters and travelers now have one-stop access to bus, rail and ferry service. Commuters from Kitsap County and north Snohomish County may now travel to their jobs in downtown Seattle and elsewhere through this modern transit hub.

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