

Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation



PRESS RELEASE

46411 Timine Way
Pendleton, OR 97801
541-276-3165 • CTUIR.org

April 12, 2024

Contact: Travis Snell • 541.429.7394 • travissnell@ctuir.org

Kayak To Offer EV Shuttle Service on Nixyáawii Campus

MISSION, Ore. – Kayak Public Transit will soon offer shuttle service around the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation's (CTUIR) Nixyáawii campus thanks to two electric vehicles it recently received.

Vicki Croes, CTUIR Public Transit general manager, said Kayak received two Waev Gem E6 EVs about seven weeks ago as part of a Federal Transit Administration grant. Each EV has six doors, six seats and a storage pod in the rear for bags and small items.

She said with the EVs now adorned with Kayak's branding, the shuttle service will run from the Kayak Transit Hub to Nixyáawii Education Center, Timine North Apartments, Yellowhawk Tribal Health Center and the Nixyáawii Governance Center as soon as two drivers are hired.

"It'll run from 7:10 in the morning till 5:25 in the evening, Monday through Friday. And then we will also utilize anytime there's a sports event at the school. We'll utilize the shuttles for parking, excess overflow parking," Croes said. "Everyone is welcome to use the shuttle service. If we have a passenger with limited mobility or confined to a mobility device, we will respond with a paratransit van that has a lift and is parked here at the Kayak Hub."

The two EVs are street legal with a top speed of 25 mph and battery range between 75 and 80 miles, depending on temperature, grade and payload. Kayak got the EVs to provide safe and reliable transportation for movement of tribal members and employees around the campus without using their private vehicles.

Eric Smith, Kayak transit fleet and safety manager, said Kayak got the EVs because they are environmentally friendly, and they will make for better campus transportation.

"We want to support more green initiatives. That's important to everybody; it's important to the tribe," Smith said. "Also, these are going to be a pretty handy tool for here on campus, you know, for our elders that are going to appointments, our kids down here at school. These are going to be a big benefit for those two issues right there."

Kayak provides free and accessible transportation for the public in 19 rural communities in Northeast Oregon and Southeast Washington. All its buses are equipped with wheelchair lifts and bicycle racks. The transit program is funded through a combination of federal and state grants and CTUIR general funds.

The Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation is comprised of the Cayuse, Umatilla, and Walla Walla Tribes, and formed under the Treaty of 1855 at the Walla Walla Valley, 12 Stat. 945. In 1949, the Tribes adopted a constitutional form of government to protect, preserve and enhance the reserved treaty rights guaranteed under federal law.

###

Caption1: Eric Smith, Kayak Public Transit fleet and safety manager, takes one of the two electric vehicles Kayak recently received out for a test drive. Kayak will use the EVs for shuttle service around the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation's Nixyáawii campus in Mission, Oregon. Lee Gavin/CTUIR

Caption2: One of the two Waev Gem E6 electric vehicles that Kayak Public Transit recently received charges at the Kayak Transit Hub in Mission, Oregon. Kayak received the EVs thanks to a Federal Transit Administration grant. Each EV has six doors, six seats and a storage pod in the rear for bags and small items. Lee Gavin/CTUIR

