

Project Background

Pierce Transit, along with planning partners in the City of Tacoma and Pierce County, are in the final stages of planning an improved service called Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) along a 14.4-mile corridor on Pacific Avenue/State Route 7 between downtown Tacoma and Spanaway.

The corridor is currently served by Route 1, which continuously has the highest ridership of any Pierce Transit fixed route. Currently, riders board the BRT portion of the Route 1 alone an average of 1.1 million times per year, which accounts for 12 percent of Pierce Transit's total ridership systemwide. By 2040 Pierce Transit projects 2.2 million annual boardings along the BRT corridor.

As part of a comprehensive system expansion implementation strategy, Pierce Transit is convening a volunteer BRT Community Committee (Committee) for the project refinement phase of the project from November 2019 through final design in 2021.

Project purpose

- Increase transit ridership through enhanced transit service
- Deliver cost-effective service that provides capacity to meet future demand
- Promote transportation equity in the corridor by ensuring that transit service is accessible to all populations
- Improve multi-modal access and connectivity
- Support a regional vision for the community as documented in land use and transportation plans
- Enhance safety and security for transit patrons and public health overall
- Support existing economic activity and be a catalyst for sustainable economic growth and corridor redevelopment
- Promote environmental stewardship and sustainability

BRT Community Committee Purpose

The purpose of the Committee is to bring together representatives from transit users, local businesses, residential organizations, agencies, and other community-based organizations to learn more about the project, discuss its impacts, and share that information with their respective groups.

BRT Community Committee Objectives

- Guide the process to identify the most effective BRT investments the region can make through continuous participation in facilitated discussions.
- Provide a platform for existing transit users to understand the BRT project and share their input on how proposed project plans would affect them.

- Advise Pierce Transit on the ways to best engage and hear from key interests and constituencies throughout the region, including historically underrepresented groups.
- Provide insights and information related to the pressures, issues, and trends impacting constituencies and businesses throughout the region.
- Assist Pierce Transit in understanding the high-level impacts, trade-offs, and opportunities associated with the planning process.

Expected BRT Community Committee Outcomes

- Insights and perspectives of all Committee members have been meaningfully considered in the next steps of the project process.
- The outcome of the Committee reflects a well-reasoned balance of input provided.
- A fair and accurate record of the committee's deliberations has been prepared.
- Members believe the Committee process has been complete, accurate, fair, and transparent.

The group's effective start date is Nov. 12, 2019. The group is expected to meet quarterly.

BRT Community Committee Members

Committee members have been identified by the Pierce Transit team in coordination with representatives from the City of Tacoma and Pierce County to ensure that corridor communities and interests are represented.

- Jerrol Anonuevo, Downtown on the Go
- Cody Bakken, Pierce Transit Community Transportation Advisory Group
- Mike Bowerman, American Pawn Brokers
- Athena Brewer, South End Neighborhood Council
- Jay Brower, Bethel School District
- Richard Gardner, Tacoma Transportation Commission
- Larry Leveen, ForeverGreen Trails
- Michelle Matheson, Tacoma-Pierce Chamber of Commerce/Small Business Roundtable
- Cary Nilson, Pacific Ave Business District
- Jennifer Schaal, Hilltop Action Coalition
- Lynnette Scheidt, Eastside Neighborhood Council
- Tom Seigel, Bethel School District
- Rick Semple, Dome Business District
- Julian Wheeler, Pierce County Accessible Communities Advisory Committee
- Joel Zylstra, Franklin Pierce School District

Roles and Responsibilities

Committee Members will:

- Review agendas and materials sent in advance of each meeting.
- Attend all meetings and participate in briefings and discussions between meetings, as needed.
- Openly share observations and views and consider other's views before making conclusions.

- Keep an open mind regarding other’s opinions, ideas and viewpoints, and recognize the legitimacy of other member’s concerns, whether they agree with them or not.
- Voice any concerns regarding the Committee process through dialogue with the Pierce Transit team, Committee members and the facilitator before taking any public action or statement that could affect the Committee process.

Pierce Transit’s team will:

- Provide meeting agendas and materials in advance of each meeting.
- Provide technical expertise and information to inform Committee dialogue and recommendations.
- Consult with the Committee, listen carefully, and consider Committee input prior to finalizing recommendations about project refinements.
- Explain how Committee feedback and/or recommendations were considered and/or reflected in project refinements.
- Provide a clear and updated Committee look-ahead and schedule of meeting dates to members.
- Provide an opportunity for the public to make comments to the Committee members at each meeting.

Committee facilitator will:

- Serve as an impartial individual who guides the process, including facilitating Committee meetings.
- Keep the group focused on the agreed-upon task.
- Set protocol for each meeting, suggest alternative methods and procedures, and encourage participation by all group members.
- Work with the Pierce Transit team to coordinate meeting logistics, prepare meeting agendas, materials and documentation.
- Assist in keeping communication open between the Committee members and the Pierce Transit team.
- Not offer substantive opinions or recommendations about project refinements.

BRT Community Committee Meeting Expectations

- Meetings start and end on time
- Silence electronics
- Ask questions of each other to gain clarity and understanding
- Express thoughts and ideas in terms of preferences, interests and outcomes you wish to achieve
- Listen respectfully, share discussion time and sincerely try to understand the interests of others
- Come with curiosity and willingness to listen, learn and contribute

BRT Community Committee Meeting Documentation

The meetings will be documented through detailed meeting notes that will memorialize attendance, discussions and any actions or recommendations made by the group. Meeting summaries will be prepared and transmitted to the Committee upon their completion, and prior to the next Committee meeting.