

PT Tomorrow Public Involvement Phase 2 & 3 Report

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Last Updated: 07/12/10



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Phase 2 and 3 Executive Summary

In mid-2009, Pierce Transit embarked on a process to review its service delivery. Thirty years into its history, it was apparent that a comprehensive study was needed to determine whether we are still serving peoples' needs. The PT Tomorrow Team was formed to facilitate communication with the public. PT Tomorrow's work plan was divided three phases, with an overarching theme of "educate, ask, and listen."

The primary objectives during Phase I were threefold: first, to educate the public about Pierce Transit's services, riders and finances; second, to get input on what the public values about transit in their community; and third, to foster a sense of ownership of Pierce Transit's role in the community and future plans. Secondary objectives included developing an innovative outreach plan, reaching large numbers of constituents, and laying the groundwork for developing future partnerships.

During Phase 2, we wanted to continue to educate, ask, and listen with a focus of sharing the conceptual plans with the public and fostering a dialogue that would help PT refine the plans into a transit system our community would value and use. Using the lessons learned during Phase 1, we honed our efforts to focus on specific stakeholder groups and spoke to over 8,000 people during this phase.

At the start of this phase, we invested a significant amount of time in training our internal team of employees who would be doing outreach. The PT Tomorrow Orientation successfully educated over 50 employees on the details of the conceptual plans and prepared them to be ambassadors for Pierce Transit.

The feedback received from the community was clear during this phase; provide more service across the entire service area. There was a strong outcry from riders and small city leaders related to proposed cuts on routes that did not achieve traditional measures of productivity. In response to such feedback, Pierce Transit's Board directed staff to provide service across the service area. As a trade-off, the designs reflect more routes, yet with less frequent buses and with service that does not operate as many hours during the day in the reduction plan. That said, because of PT Tomorrow's dialogue with the public, these trade-offs reflect community values of providing access to the system.

In Phase 3, we tested these refined alternatives with a focus on Open Houses across the community and continuing to work with our stakeholder groups. With an initial "thumbs up" from the downtown Tacoma group and planners from local jurisdictions, we formed our rough sketches into maps that we then shared with the broader community. In Alternative 1 – Reductions, concern about the reductions still exist, especially regarding the loss of trips in the morning and evening. In Alternative 2 – Preservation Plan, many community members responded positively to the changes made to the plans such as more direct routes and buses that come more often. They were supportive of implementation and the funding required to implement the plan.

The results of this effort culminated with the Public Hearing held June 14th, 2010. With over 150 people in attendance, 81 testified in front the Pierce Transit Board. The Public Involvement team felt this phase, along with phases 1 and 2, was a success based on the objectives set at the beginning of the project with the quality of input received and with over 27,600 face to face interactions overall.

Phase 2 By the Numbers

Spring Planners Summit: 26 attendees

Commuters Summit: 16 attendees

Citizens Review Committee: 18 members

Public Meetings: 6 meetings, 202 attendees

Community Presentations: 38 groups, 1820 attendees

Website Visitors: 3846 site visits

Comments Received: 1000 from the web, workshops, and presentations

Transit Center Outreach: 5350 brochures distributed at morning events

Employee outreach: 550 employees

Employees Participating in Public Involvement: 63

8,000 Face to Face Interactions

Phase 3 By the Numbers

Planners Brown Bag Lunch: 15 attendees

Open Houses: 8 open houses, 287 attendees

Community Presentations: 26 groups, 600 attendees

Website Visitors: 6938 site visits

Comments Received: 528 from the web, workshops, and presentations

Transit Center Outreach: 9400 brochures distributed in 7 days of rider outreach

Neighborhood Outreach: 90 locations

Transit Center Outreach: 12 morning events over a week time span

Employee outreach: 550 employees

Employees Participating in Public Involvement: 101

Public Hearing: 81 testimonials

11,000 Face to Face Interactions



Lynne Griffith, CEO, speaks with community members about the preservation plan during the public meeting in Lakewood

Community Organizations Presentations

Pierce Transit staff visited community organizations throughout the year. Following up with groups we had met with previously, and also adding new groups to our presentation circuit, staff reported on the current and future financial situation. This was also an opportunity to share the draft service alternatives, and to extend an invitation to the public meetings, open houses and the June public hearing. In part, this was accomplished by following up with those organizations that welcomed us in the first round of community outreach.

After the presentations, the members of these organizations expressed concern with the Alternative 1 – Reduction Plan, and for the most part supported Alternative 2 – Preservation Plan. Again, most were concerned about how this would impact a student's ability to get to school and the unacceptable situation of having people with disabilities not able to leave their homes.

Large Groups and Community Events

Pierce Transit staff shared information about Pierce Transit services at scheduled community events and activities, and continued to incorporate the PT Tomorrow message where ever possible. Although these contacts and communications were not as in-depth and informative as the organization presentations, they did serve the purpose of informing the community that there are financial challenges at Pierce Transit. The brochures inviting people to attend the public meetings and open houses were handed out in great numbers.



Pierce Transit welcomes Spring Fair visitors on board one of our "green machines".

Contact was made with over 500 people at:

- Puyallup Spring Fair
- Pacific Lutheran University - Sustainability Expo
- Puyallup Adults with Disabilities

Additional large group and community events will be attended by Pierce Transit throughout the summer and beyond the PT Tomorrow process.

Council Presentations

After the draft alternatives were revised at the beginning of the year, staff made it a priority to reserve time on Council agendas to inform them of the changes. Starting in mid-February, Pierce Transit staff presented at 14 council meetings. The council presentations were scheduled roughly a week before the closest public meeting so that the council members would be aware of the meeting and also to invite them to participate as a community representative. The presentations focused on the changes to the draft system redesign alternatives, current funding issues at Pierce Transit and staff extended an invitation to attend the public meetings. While every effort was made to schedule a presentation at all the councils within our service area, some cities were not able to accommodate our request for a presentation.

Presentations regarding Public Meetings were made at:

- City of Bonney Lake
- City of Buckley

- City of DuPont*
- City of Edgewood
- City of Fife
- City of Gig Harbor
- City of Lakewood
- City of Milton
- City of Orting
- City of Puyallup
- City of Sumner*
- City of Tacoma Study Session
- Pierce County Council*
- Town of Steilacoom

With the public comment PT received at the public meetings, more revisions were made to the plans. To keep Councils up to date and informed of the changes, staff went back to the Councils and gave a third presentation on the final alternatives. Staff took this opportunity to inform them of the changes in their service area with specific details about levels of service that could be received with the revised plans. This was also an opportunity to invite them to an Open House meeting and the June Public Hearing. Again, every effort was made to schedule a presentation at all the councils within our service area, DuPont and the Pierce County Council were not able to accommodate our request for a presentation.

In May, June, and early July presentations were made at the following 13 council meetings.

Presentations were made at:

- City of Bonney Lake
- City of Buckley
- City of Edgewood
- City of Fife
- City of Gig Harbor
- City of Lakewood
- City of Milton
- City of Orting
- City of Puyallup
- City of Sumner*
- City of Tacoma Study Session
- City of University Place
- Town of Steilacoom

The council presentations provided an excellent opportunity to information both council and interested community members. Each of the council meetings had anywhere from six to thirty individuals attending. Presentations noted with an asterisk (*) indicate that those sessions were televised on local access television or through the internet achieving additional coverage upcoming meetings. Here are a few highlights from a couple of the presentations:

On May 24th, Public Relations Coordinator, Lind Simonsen spoke to the Gig Harbor City Council. The Council was very complimentary of the way we are communicating with the various cities and towns. They were especially impressed with how we have listened and modified our plans based on the feedback we received.

Councilmember Paul Conan complimented us on our handling of the route 601 group at the community meeting and how we addressed their needs in the revised plans.

Principal Planner, Tina Lee, spoke to the Bonney Lake Council for close to an hour on May 18th. In general the Council did like the changes to alternatives from the initial concepts but were concerned with loss of SHUTTLE service and felt that alternative 2 did not provide the Bonney Lake community growth in service. They asked for additional services that would encourage the community to want to utilize public transportation. They again expressed the value of sales tax from their community and wanted to see how they are receiving the same value from the system. They continue to express they are paying into a system but they do not derive the same value of benefit from that system.

Staff heard a broad range of comments from these presentations. Unanimously, each council thanked staff for presenting and were pleased that PT staff used the public comment received to revise the plans. A common theme was a request for additional service and the small cities and towns would like more service for the tax dollars they pay into the PT system.

Citizens Review Committee

Pierce Transit formed the Citizens Review Committee (CRC) in March 2010 to develop a set of recommendations for Pierce Transit's Board of Commissioners to guide new investments or, if necessary, to guide significant potential cuts. The CRC was also charged with providing the Pierce Transit Board with a recommendation regarding whether or not the Board should consider exercising ballot authority as a means of closing an estimated \$68 million dollar budget gap.

The CRC was comprised of residents from Tacoma, DuPont, Puyallup, Lakewood and Gig Harbor. The group consisted of riders who use Pierce Transit's fixed route, SHUTTLE and vanpool services, as well as some non-riders. Members also represented several stakeholder groups including the business, environment, labor, education, bicycle and low-income housing communities. All agree that Pierce Transit provides valuable services and are extremely supportive of efforts to make Pierce County's transit system the best it can be.

Over the course of seven meetings, the CRC had the opportunity to review the draft concepts and offered suggestions that resulted in substantial changes to the draft concepts. The CRC then presented to the board a set of final recommendations to guide changes to the system as the Pierce Transit Board adopts its final alternative. Following are their recommendations:

1. Support strong growth management policies by prioritizing direct connections between urban centers and mixed use centers, e.g.:
 - a. Provide high-frequency service during week-day peak hours (a minimum of 15 minutes) along key corridors between major urban and mixed-use centers. The CRC supports reducing weekend and evening service to achieve high-frequency, peak service if such a trade-off is necessary due to budgetary constraints.
 - b. Provide a direct, high-frequency connection between Puyallup, Downtown Tacoma, and Lakewood.
 - c. Provide high-frequency connections between the Proctor District, the Stadium District, and Downtown Tacoma.
 - d. When planning direct routes, select the most expeditious paths possible.

- e. Perform a transit needs analysis of each of Tacoma's Mixed Use Centers, jointly undertaken with Pierce Transit and the City of Tacoma, to encourage additional transit-oriented development.
2. In both the 9/10ths and the 6/10ths scenarios, emphasize investments in corridors with the highest ridership that go through the most transit-conducive communities while at the same time providing at least limited access for those who live in outlying areas and have no other means of getting around.
 - a. In the 9/10ths scenario, develop a Competitive Partnership Program that prioritizes those communities that put in place transit-oriented land-use and transportation policies or those communities that provide matching funds for the provision of transit services for those who cannot drive. This program could include any jurisdiction in the Pierce Transit service area.
 3. Modernize and transform Transit Centers:
 - a. Phase out the Tacoma Mall Transit Center, Tacoma Community College Transit Center, and Parkland Transit Center, and work with local jurisdictions to create transit-oriented development on former transit center sites.
 - b. Pursue partnerships in outlying areas to build Park & Rides to facilitate bringing more people into the system.
 - c. Move away from pulse style-system.
 4. Develop transit investments that support a vibrant, economically-viable downtown Tacoma
 - a. Simplify the downtown service, while at the same time de-emphasizing Commerce Street as the major destination downtown. Disperse service in a balanced manner on a few key corridors including Pacific, Market, A Street, and Commerce. As funding and infrastructure become available, add east-west service in order to develop a robust grid system.
 - b. Continue to emphasize the downtown core as the focal point of downtown Tacoma transit service. Continue routes that go through Tacoma Dome Station to downtown Tacoma to the extent possible.
 - c. Additional planning for transit integration with current and future bicycle infrastructure is needed as well as service planning to facilitate bicycle use.
 5. Simplify visual presentation of the system – use colors and markers to better distinguish types of routes, services and destinations.
 6. Adopt the 9/10ths plan and exercise Pierce Transit's full taxing authority to fund this plan.
 7. As plans move toward implementation, subarea advisory committees should be formed to represent the needs and visions of their communities.

The CRC reviewed the maps and believe that these depictions of the system represent the spirit of our recommendations. Therefore, the committee endorses both the contents of the 6/10ths and the 9/10ths plans. The CRC urges the board to adopt the 9/10ths plan and exercise Pierce Transit's full taxing authority to fund this plan.

PT Tomorrow Outreach Materials

Pierce Transit relies heavily on the talent of our Marketing department. They have continually provided high quality outreach materials that are informative, easy to read, and respond to the needs of our community whether it is brochures, posters, direct mail, Facebook posts, "Tweets", presentation boards, outdoor sandwich boards, transit shelter ads, print ads, and radio ads. We proudly share the success of the outreach with this fine group of professionals.



PT Tomorrow brochure

For Phase 2, 15,000 "Changes Ahead" brochures were printed, and included a tear-off questionnaire. These were distributed at Pierce Transit information outlets including all buses and SHUTTLE vans, Bus Shops, and schedule and pass outlets. Outlets included public gathering places such as libraries, banks, government buildings, and Fred Meyer. For Phase 3, Open House information was included in the 8,000 "Summer Service Guide & June Service Change" brochures, which were also distributed as described above. Additionally, 13,000 "June Open Houses" brochures were printed. Those included route-specific details about each Alternative, and were distributed to riders at transit centers, and to the public at community meetings.

The Bus Stops Here

Both the February and June 2010 issues of *The Bus Stops Here* featured PT Tomorrow on two full-color pages. The articles summarized the system redesign progress to date, and promoted upcoming opportunities for riders to attend meetings or provide feedback through other means. This reached a tremendous number of our riders.

Other Onboard Communications

Onboard, riders also learned about upcoming meetings through onboard announcements delivered by our Trax system and "Changes Ahead" and "Public Meetings" coach posters.

Post Card Mailing

To promote Phase 2 public meetings, 5 different post cards were mailed to a total of 52,000 households along bus routes that ran near meeting locations. Each postcard featured the meeting closest to that household, but also listed other upcoming meetings, and drove traffic to the PT Tomorrow website for details on the proposed Alternatives.

Report to the Community

In March, the "Spring 2010 Report to the Community" was inserted into the News Tribune, Herald, and Gateway, reaching 95,000+ readers throughout our service area. The report featured the System Redesign Alternatives and schedule of Phase 2 public meetings, as well as articles about local employers who have outstanding transportation benefit packages for their employees.

Public Involvement Report

At the beginning of Phase 2, the “Public Involvement Report” was distributed to all PT staff, highlighting what the Public Involvement team learned during Phase 1 community workshops and presentations. The report also spotlighted several PT employees, and laid out the timeline of the upcoming Phase 2 projects.

Free Pass Mailing

28,700 Free Pass mailing packages were mailed in May. The message encouraged people to try riding PT today, and help design the PT of tomorrow. The Phase 3 Open Houses were listed, and *The Bus Stops Here* was also included.

Print Advertisements

Phase 2 public meetings were promoted through 6 colorful ad insertions in the News Tribune, Puyallup Herald, and Peninsula Gateway. In June, Phase 3 Open Houses were advertised in the same publications, 7 insertions.

Radio

A flight of radio ads ran on KPLU during late March and early April to promote Phase 2 meetings. For May's Phase 3 foreign-language meetings, radio ads were broadcast in Spanish on two stations, and in Korean on one station.

Online

Throughout Phases 2 and 3, upcoming meetings and open houses were promoted regularly on Facebook, Twitter, piercetrips.com, and piercetransit.org, with links to PTtomorrow.org. Additionally, a paid, animated advertisement ran on the News Tribune's home page in late March and early April to promote the Phase 2 meetings.

Electronic Invitations

For the Phase 3 Executive Briefing, customized E-vites were sent out to individuals.

For Phases 2 and 3, outreach members and other PT staff placed dozens of A-boards along transit routes, and posters in bus shelters that served routes that went near the meetings. In addition, window posters were provided to local businesses and A-board signs were placed at popular locations in the community inviting people to attend. Korean- and Spanish-language posters were displayed in key locations in the local community. Large outdoor posters were hung at all major transit centers. Outreach staff heard from participants at most meetings saying they had seen these materials and was motivated to attend.

Transit Center Outreach

A week prior to each public meeting and open house, PT staff distributed brochures and talked with passengers during the morning commute from 5:30 – 7:30 AM at major transit centers and Park & Rides. Additional shifts were added during Phase 3 to reach riders throughout the day and on the weekends in the beginning of June to invite people to the open houses and the June public hearing. This was an intense outreach effort to cover all transit centers and park and rides with staff at each facility twice during the seven days of outreach. Our goal was to reach as many riders as possible.

Media Coverage

We chose to use a mix of traditional media and web 2.0 technologies to reach the Pierce County community. We had newspaper coverage from the following papers: The News Tribune, The Tacoma Daily News, Sumner/Bonney Lake Courier, Tacoma Weekly, The Puyallup Herald, and The Peninsula Gateway. We were also given time on Pierce County News Television, TV Tacoma and KLAY Radio.



Tina Lee, Principal Planner and Amber Simonsen, Executive Project Manager appear on TV Tacoma's CityLine

We maintained a project website, www.pttomorrow.org, which was a source of the 1000 comments and provided an opportunity for the public to learn more about the process. This website was updated and enhanced during Phases 2 and 3 to allow visitors to compare the plans, look at individual routes, and take a survey in addition to the comment feature and other pages developed as part of phase 1. The website also allowed users to sign up for updates. Along with contact information collected at public meetings, the distribution list for updates grew to over 800 people.

Pierce Transit's Facebook and Twitter pages were used to actively promote upcoming workshops and drive traffic to the project website. Our "fan" base on Facebook nearly doubled and is now at 634 and we are being "followed" by 425 Twitter users.

The blogosphere also helped with promotion and news coverage with the following blogs writing about PT Tomorrow:

- Exit 133
- Seattle PI
- Seattle Transit Blog
- Tacoma Tomorrow
- Transportation Choices Coalition Blog
- Volcano Spew

Public Meetings and Open Houses

The meeting formats of our Public Meetings and Open Houses were developed to achieve our overall theme of "educate, ask, and listen." Pierce Transit conducted six public meetings during phase 2 which consisted of a brief presentation of Pierce Transit's financial situation and an overview of the conceptual plans. Attendees were then encouraged to visit various stations setup around the room and talk with staff individually. Prior to leaving, the public had the opportunity to provide comments to a person who would capture the comments on a computer or to fill out a comment card. Feedback provided at these meetings was crucial to helping PT technical staff refine service concepts to better reflect community needs and desires.

Given the nature of the changes to the plans, the Public Involvement team chose to use open houses for phase 3. Open houses would provide a broad educational opportunity for the public with the opportunity for attendees to ask specific questions of staff. Eight open houses were held with member of the public dropping in to view the alternatives and talk individually with staff at the various stations.

Lakewood/University Place



Sandy Johnson, Senior Planner captures a citizen's comments at the Open House in Lakewood

The Lakewood/University Place Public meeting held on March 23 was attended by 34 people. This group was very concerned about Reduction Plan. SHUTTLE users from the area, including Steilacoom, had unease about access to services in the Reduction Plan. Representatives from the City of DuPont attended to express their need for service, especially in the Preservation Plan. Overall, most attendees were supportive of the Preservation Plan, but they had some concerns about changes to routes 48 and 53.

The Lakewood/University Place Open House on June 8 was attended by 53 people. Most attendees were pleased with the modifications in the Preservation Plan that included SHUTTLE access to Steilacoom. Almost all of the attendees spent time learning the details of the agency's financial situation and how Pierce Transit is funded.

Tacoma

Thursday, April 1st, PT hosted two public meetings at The Evergreen State College Tacoma Campus. The first meeting was from 3pm – 4:30PM. During that time 26 people came by to view the draft alternatives and visit with staff. This meeting was held at this time to respond to a request to accommodate the schedules of senior and disabled riders who prefer to not ride after dark. The second meeting was from 6pm – 7:30PM and 15 people attended. At both meetings, people expressed concern with the reduction in service and frequency. Public comment was captured at a comment station and we heard that the loss in service in the north end of Tacoma was not going to work.

With revised plans, staff went back to The Evergreen State College Tacoma Campus on June 9th for an Open House. Thirty-seven people attended and the commons area was busy with people who were again concerned about losing service in Tacoma. Several regular riders were concerned about the elimination of routes 11, 16 & 51 and stated that cutting routes will mean that less and less people are going to be riding transit. They feel that businesses along the bus routes will be impacted by people doing less shopping because they won't be able to get to where they are going. Several SHUTTLE customers expressed disappointment with the reduction in service. The open house attendees were supportive of the preservation plan and also prefer that the transfer point stay centralized at Commerce versus rerouting through Tacoma Dome Station.

Gig Harbor/Key Peninsula

A public meeting was held in Gig Harbor at City Hall on March 29th. Forty-seven people attended and were very concerned and unhappy about the elimination of route 601 – Olympia express. A large group came only to speak of this route and had a lot to say about the proposal. The route 601 supporters were very concerned about their route being eliminated and collected signatures and submitted a petition at the Public Meetings to keep the route. PT also received letters of support for route 601 from Representative Jan Angel. The public meeting was well attended and staff heard the commuters' needs to keep route 601.

On Thursday, June 10th, PT held an open house to share the revised alternatives with the citizens of Gig Harbor. Twenty-three people visited the Gig Harbor/Key Peninsula Open House held again at the Gig Harbor City Hall.

Those that attended the workshop consisted of the former Mayor of Gig Harbor, local residents and several of the commuters who ride route 601 to Olympia. They were happy to see that some service in Gig Harbor has been restored in the plans. The riders of the 601 feel that Pierce Transit heard their plea to keep the service that gets them to their jobs, which is one of the values identified by the community during the first round of outreach at the Community Design Workshops. Additional feedback was provided by the riders to let PT know what times work best for the commute to Olympia.

We also heard from riders who are very supportive of public transit. They believe it's imperative that the 113 route stays in service. One attendee stated that even though the ridership is not always high, there are thousands of people in that area that need it, if they have an emergency, need to go to the doctor, their car is broken; the service is imperative. It's really important for people to have an alternative to cars. Living in Gig Harbor there is no way out because of all the water. Overall, the residents of Gig Harbor are in support of the preservation plan for PT Tomorrow.

Parkland/Spanaway

The Parkland/Spanaway Public meeting held on March 31 was attended by 28 people. This was a vocal group that did not hesitate to express their concerns about our plans, especially the Reduction Plan and the impact it would have on SHUTTLE users. This group was supportive of the ideas presented in the Preservation Plan, especially the express route on SR7/Pacific Avenue and the new trunk route serving South Hill/Parkland/Lakewood.



Tina Lee, Principal Planner listens to concerns from community members at the Parkland/Spanaway public meeting

The Parkland Open House on June 6 was attended by 30 people and was held in the Pacific Lutheran University East Campus building across the street from the Parkland Transit Center. A very diverse crowd attended the Open House. There were staff and students from PLU, local residents, daily riders, riders who were deaf or blind, and family members of those who may be affected. People were surprised and concerned about the depth of cuts in the Reduction Plan. The majority of those in attendance favored increasing their sales tax in order to maintain service.

Puyallup/Sumner

The public meeting was held at the Puyallup Public Library on April 5th and was attended by 55 people. The group was very concerned about reductions to routes in their area including routes 413, 490, and 409. A number of concerns regarding Bonney Lake service were also raised. The group was very supportive of the changes proposed to the 402 with direct service into Tacoma.

On June 7th, the Open House was held at Kalles Middle School and was attended by 39 people. The range of riders and friends of riders was evident with many students, trails advocates, bike advocates, seniors, and family of disabled riders filling the room. Many attendees were pleased with the changes to Puyallup service made since the public meeting. Concerns regarding the elimination of route 409 were the cause of many comments. The changes to the 402 and 501 were received positively.

Bonney Lake Open House

This was the first community meeting held in Bonney Lake during the PT Tomorrow process. At the request of the Bonney Lake residents, PT added a meeting in their area to our circuit of open houses. Twenty people joined us at the Bonney Lake Senior Center on June 2nd to discuss the potential route changes. Attendees included regular riders, city council members and city staff. Those that attended expressed concern about possible reductions in service.

Public Meetings in Other Languages

At the end of May, PT staff held meetings in other languages to reach out to our riders who speak Spanish and Korean. It was determined at the end of phase 1 that an effort must be made to specifically reach these communities. Much effort went into organizing these meetings. After many attempts to gather information through community organizations that work with these communities, Amber Simonsen, Executive Project Manager visited Centro Latino to learn about the best ways to reach out to the Latino community and the best location to have the meeting. In addition, Amber also visited the Korean Women's Association to determine how to best reach the Korean community. Each meeting was scheduled and advertized along with the Phase 3 Open House information. Both events were advertised broadly, including radio ads on two radio stations and distribution of fliers and invite brochures in local Spanish and Korean businesses and service organizations

The meeting targeted at Spanish speaking residents was held on May 24th at the Portland Avenue Community Center. Centro Latino recommended advertizing on the local Spanish radio stations, which we did in addition to distributing fliers in local businesses and service organizations that work with the Latino community. Unfortunately, there was no attendance at this meeting. The lack of attendance demonstrates a continued need for outreach and relationship-building on the part of Pierce Transit with the Spanish-speaking community.

The Korean Women's Association (KWA) partnered with us to allow Pierce Transit to host the public meeting during their senior meal site event at KWA headquarters. They also recommended advertizing on the local Korean radio station. Celeste Lee from KWA provided the translation for the ad and for posters that were distributed fliers in local Korean businesses and organizations.

Over 85 people filled the room and with the help of a translator, Jessyn Farrell provided an overview of PT Tomorrow and the System Redesign process, along with PT's current and future funding information. The group was concerned about the loss of SHUTTLE service and had concerns about the reduction in frequency as many of those in attendance were either regular or occasional riders. Some English speaking riders also attended the public meeting and expressed their concern about cuts to the route 48. Without that route and the current schedule, these ladies would not be able to get to or from work and stated that they would lose their job, their homes, and their way of life. Overall, the presentation was informative, excellent questions were asked, and we would recommend using this method again to reach the Korean community.

Spring Planners' Summit – Phase 2

On March 15, 2010, Pierce Transit hosted the Spring Planners' Summit. This follow-up forum provided an opportunity for PT to discuss the changes made to the draft alternatives and gathered input from jurisdictions and agencies within our service area. The summit was attended by 25 staff representing: Cities of Bonney Lake, Lakewood, Pacific, Puyallup, Sumner, Tacoma, and University Place; Clover Park School, Metro Parks - Tacoma, Pierce County, PSRC, Sound Transit, Tacoma Community College, Tacoma Pierce County Chamber of

Commerce, and the Town of Steilacoom. Participants represented a number of disciplines with staff from economic development, planning, and community development departments.

The Spring Planners' Summit included the stations that were used during the employee training and later used at public meetings. Each station had a large map for one of the alternatives to show routing for each plan. This was a great opportunity to show the plans and get feedback on areas where changes would need to be made. The feedback received was very specific by route which was vital to the process. Given the wide variety of staff and jurisdictions represented, the summit provided an opportunity for participants to meet and discuss a diverse variety of transit needs for each jurisdiction. The downtown station received a lot of feedback and the planners provided great input on possible changes, including keeping routing through the Commerce Transfer facility in downtown instead of routing through the Tacoma Dome Station. In addition, City of Tacoma staff requested creation of a work group comprised of downtown stakeholders to review our plans in further detail. With the help of the Pierce County Chamber of Commerce, this group met at the Chamber on April 22, 2010 for a Downtown Round Table meeting.

Planners' Brown Bag Lunch – Phase 3

Following the Spring Planners' Summit, PT staff revised the plans by using the public comment received during the public meeting process. We invited the planners back to see the revised plans over an informal brown bag lunch session, held on May 13th. The brown bag lunch brought small groups together to discuss the plans in closer detail and was attended by 15 staff representing: Cities of Bonney Lake, Fife, Lakewood, Puyallup, and Sumner; Foss Waterway District, Metro Parks - Tacoma, Pierce County, PSRC, and the Town of Steilacoom.

Overall, the group felt that changes that had been made were good and had a few new ideas for future partnerships. Ryan Windish with the City of Sumner shared the idea of using small buses that could lend themselves to new routing and better circulation. Tacoma representatives thought that the changes made to service in Tacoma were fabulous and the downtown Tacoma changes were liked overall as well. Additional request for service on Ruston Way and to the Foss Waterway District were noted, but the attendees also understand our limitations. One area of concern heard from the group was the decreased frequency in most areas.

Downtown Commuter Summit and Roundtable



On March 25th, PT partnered with the Tacoma-Pierce County Chamber of Commerce to host a Downtown Commuter Summit at the Chamber. We invited Employer Transportation Coordinator's (ETC's) and other downtown employees to join us for an update on the draft alternatives. We wanted to get their feedback on the plans and how the changes could affect the employees at their respective companies. ETC's from Russell Investments, UW – Tacoma, GVA Kidder Mathews, CH2M, Columbia Bank, DaVita, True Blue, Economic Development Board, BLRB Architects joined us for the Summit. Overall, the ETC's were not supportive of the loss in service, especially in the north end of Tacoma.

To determine the best way to meet the needs of those employees, PT launched a survey to determine the needs of employees in downtown Tacoma and we received a good response to the survey.

Once PT revised the plans, a Downtown Round Table was held on April 22, 2010 to share the revised alternatives. At the round table we had many of the same attendees with a stronger representation from the City of Tacoma. Having city staff at the event provided the opportunity to discuss bus zoning possibilities and routing options in downtown Tacoma. Following the round table, we received a letter from the Downtown: On the Go!'s partners that stated they much appreciate the significant outreach efforts on behalf of Pierce Transit, as well as PT's willingness to solicit feedback on their draft plans. They hope that as stakeholders within the region's economic hub, they can continue to provide constructive feedback toward a transit system that efficiently connects people to jobs while enhancing a vibrant, dense urban landscape. Both events were well attended and were a great way to reach the downtown commuters.

Executive Briefing

As a follow up to the Leadership Summit and Leadership Interviews held in the fall of 2009, Pierce Transit CEO Lynne Griffith led a session with ten public and non-profit sector leaders to brief them on system redesign draft alternatives and to get feedback from them on the alternatives. Attendees included representatives from United Way, Broadway Center for the Performing Arts, Tacoma Pierce County Public Health Department, WSDOT Office of Transit Mobility, as well as other organizations. A few themes emerged including ensuring system access for low-income residents in communities across Pierce County; creating a partnership with smaller cities to create buy-in around productivity measures for suburban and rural services; and messaging our plans as "improvements" and "efficiencies" as opposed to "expansions". All participants were very supportive of our system redesign effort and expressed support for Alternative 2 in their comments.

Opinion Survey

In April of 2010, Pierce Transit conducted a 600-person opinion survey, the purpose of which was to gain understanding of the public's awareness of Pierce Transit's financial crisis, their values relating to service delivery, and their willingness to support a 3/10th of one percent sales tax increase in November 2010. There were three strong themes that came out of this survey. First, the public has a strong favorability of Pierce Transit, with over 60% of respondents rating the agency as good or excellent, and with 76% of respondents having a favorable view of public transit generally. Second, the prospects of a successful ballot measure in November are decidedly mixed, with only 48% of respondents stating they were likely or very likely to vote yes on a tax increase for transit. However, an additional 21% of respondents stated that they would be willing to vote for a tax increase for transit at a later date than November of 2010. Awareness of Pierce Transit's financial crisis was a major determining factor in the likelihood of support for a ballot measure. Third, two particular messages resonated with the public: that Pierce Transit helps those who can't drive get around, and that Pierce Transit has a positive economic benefit.

Focus Groups

On June 26th, Pierce Transit conducted two focus groups to learn more about the conclusions of the opinion survey conducted in April. Specifically, we wanted to learn how residents in East Pierce County and Tacoma perceived the agency, whether they would be supportive of a ballot measure, and what aspects of service delivery each group felt was compelling.

The East County group generally had a low awareness of Pierce Transit service. Specifically, they expressed:

- Unanimous support for role of public transportation
- Awareness of and support for Bus PLUS service
- High approval of small buses

- Some awareness of PT's financial situation
- No awareness PT is funded by a sales tax
- Need for proof PT is spending its budget wisely, and for explicit information on how funds are spent
- Some overt resistance to any additional taxes
- Desired destinations more regional than urban group: SeaTac Airport, downtown Tacoma, Federal Way, Seattle using ST Sounder

The Urban group had high awareness of Pierce Transit and strong support for its services. They expressed:

- Feels that PT provides safe and reliable transportation
- Thinks PT should do more to explain how transit supports jobs, reduces traffic and builds communities
- Some were aware of the public outreach process, others would like to see more public forums
- Wants to see an action plan showing specifically how the money can be used to maintain service
- Thinks this is an inappropriate time to expand service, because families and businesses are just trying to maintain what they have
- Near universal approval of a tax increase, if adequately explained

Public Hearing

This public involvement yielded two service alternatives:

- Alternative 1 – Reduction Plan
- Alternative 2 – Preservation Plan

These plans achieve qualitative inputs like community values and quantitative data like travel demand, origin/destination patterns, and how our services are currently utilized. Ultimately, because of this emphasis on outreach, these plans are truly community based. Phase 3 concluded with the public hearing held on June 14th at the Pierce Transit Board of Commissioners meeting. Over 150 people were in attendance with 81 choosing to give testimony to the Board. The Board will likely adopt a preferred alternative at their July 12th meeting.



June 12th Public Hearing at the Pierce Transit Board of Commissioners meeting in Lakewood