



PIERCE TRANSIT SPECIAL STUDY SESSION MEETING

**Training Center, Rainier Room
3720 96th Street SW, Lakewood, WA
October 9, 2017, 3:30 PM**

AGENDA

The Regular Board Meeting will follow subsequent to this meeting at 4:00 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER

ROLL CALL

PRESENTATIONS

- Pierce Transit 2018 State Legislative Agenda Discussion

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Communications Manager

ADJOURNMENT

Pierce Transit 2018 State Legislative Agenda DRAFT

October 9, 2017

Pierce Transit 2018 Requests

Long-term solutions

1) **Study best practices in transit funding models**

Washington law requires that Public Transportation Benefit Districts rely solely on sales taxes for their funding. The sales tax is a regressive, volatile funding source that is subject to severe drops during economic downturns, resulting in dramatic transit service reductions when people often need those services the most. During the last economic downturn, Pierce Transit reduced service by about one-third as sales tax revenues dropped dramatically.

Pierce Transit proposes **advocating for an exploratory study**, through the Joint Transportation Committee, to identify and evaluate stable funding mechanisms of public transportation benefit areas across multiple states. The study would help us garner a better understanding of best practices and possible avenues to generate reliable revenue, rather than relying solely on sales tax revenue. Spearheading a study, anticipated to be completed by January 2019, would give us direction and momentum for the 2019 and future legislative sessions to explore other funding models. Another transportation package is anticipated by the 21-23 biennium; we could be very well positioned to suggest changes, informed by the study.

Short-term funding needs

2) **Capital Funding Request: Real-Time Arrival Information Infrastructure**

Real-time arrival signage (example shown) at Pierce Transit Park & Rides and transit centers would allow current route information to be displayed to the public, communicating timely updates and



increasing commuter confidence through modern channels. To that end, Pierce Transit would **respectfully request \$300,000 to fully fund the procurement of a system-wide real-time arrival information system** to better serve the Pierce Transit ridership community. This level of funding would provide this information at Tacoma Dome Station, Lakewood TC, Tacoma Community College TC, Tacoma Mall TC, Commerce St. Transfer Area, South Hill TC, 72nd St. TC, the SR-512 P&R and Parkland TC (locations where multiple PT routes connect). The request would provide capital and contingency costs for least two screens per island at each location (budgeted for 30 screens).

3) **Electric Bus Fleet Diversification**

Pierce Transit is working to diversify its fleet by increasing the number of electric buses in its fleet. Building on the investment of three electric buses and related infrastructure currently being procured, **Pierce Transit requests additional funds to advance the procurement schedule of electric buses and fleet support vehicles** while promoting environmental stewardship and leadership in the electrification landscape throughout Pierce County. Most likely, this funding would come from the VW settlement funds once they are released. Although the settlement spending has not been finalized, we are keeping this item on the agenda because it will remain front and center as we diversify our fleet over the next five to six years.

4) **Retain \$15 Million Secured During FY15 for HCT**

In FY15, Pierce Transit successfully secured \$15 million to begin the study, design and implementation of High Capacity Transit (HCT) on the SR-7/ Pacific Avenue corridor. Despite proposals during the 2017 session – including in the Governor’s budget – to push that funding out beyond the date we anticipate starting the service, we were successful in moving the funds back up so they could be used while planning for the service. We will diligently work to **continue protecting the original funding schedule** as presented in the 2015 Connecting Washington Transportation package.

Commissioner Input

- 1) **Consider any actions by the Legislature that could help Pierce Transit expand its service area or give us more *flexibility* in expanding our service area.**
- 2) **Support Sound Transit and Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) in the implementation of a “Bus on Shoulder” Program in Pierce County.**

Ongoing Priorities

- 1) **Comprehensive tolling parity policy for transit agencies in Washington state**
Pierce Transit is the only transit agency in the Puget Sound region paying tolls within its Public Transit Benefit Area. This year Pierce Transit has spent \$131,162 paying tolls (26,232 trips, excluding Vanpool riders, which reimburse PT for tolls), plus about a week of administrative staff time (for tasks such as maintaining tolling accounts), for a total of more than \$132,000 spent on tolling fees and administrative tasks thus far in 2017. This does not include the time it takes Maintenance personnel to install and remove the Good to Go transponders when the agency procures or sells rolling stock. Pierce Transit supports **comprehensive tolling reform** as it relates to transit operations, including fixed route, SHUTTLE, Vanpool and fleet support vehicles, to ensure parity among agencies statewide.

2) Vanpool Investment, with a Focus on Replacement Vans

Pierce Transit’s Vanpool program alleviates congestion, reduces pollution and fosters a better quality of life for workers and employers throughout the Puget Sound region. Currently, more than 150 of PT’s 368 vanpool vans are at least seven years old and need to be replaced (FTA recommendation is four years; industry standard is six years; PT stretches that to seven years, after which maintenance costs outweigh the value of retaining the vehicle). Due to the aging of our vanpool fleet, Pierce Transit supports the idea of the Vanpool Investment Grant Program **prioritizing investment in replacement vanpool vans** over expansion vans.

3) Support Washington State Transit Association’s Legislative Goals and Priorities

See separate handout.

Monitoring

Monitor and analyze potential outcomes of **all legislation** introduced in the 2018 state legislative session which would **impact the ability for Pierce Transit to execute the transit mission and all operations.**