



**Pierce Transit Bus Rapid Transit
BRT Community Committee Meeting #3
Summary**
Updated: 8/24/2020

Pierce Transit BRT Community Committee

Meeting #3
Virtual Zoom meeting
July 22, 2020

BRT Community Committee Purpose

The BRT Community Committee brings 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.

Attendees

Name	Business / Organization	Email	In Attendance
<i>Community representatives</i>			
Jerrold Anonuevo	Downtown on the Go	jerrola@downtownonthego.org	
Joe Atkinson	Pacific Avenue Business Owner	joeatkinson1@yahoo.com	
Cody Bakken	Pierce Transit Community Transportation Advisory Group	cbakken@piercetransit.org	X
Mike Bowerman	Pacific Avenue Business Owner	mike@americanpawnbroker.com	X
Athena Brewer	South End Neighborhood Council	senco253@gmail.com	
Jay Brower	Bethel School District	jbrower@bethelsd.org	X
Echo Abernathy (secondary)	Bethel School District		X
Richard Gardner	Tacoma Transportation Commission	rgardner02@comcast.net	X
Michelle Matheson	Tacoma-Pierce Chamber of Commerce/Small Business Roundtable	michellem@tacomachamber.org	
Jane Moore	ForeverGreen Trails	forevergreentrails@gmail.com	X

Cary Nilson	Pacific Avenue Business District	cary@mofps.com	
Jennifer Schaal (secondary)	Hilltop Action Coalition	jenniferschaal@gmail.com	
Lynnette Scheidt	Eastside Council of Tacoma	enact@live.com	
Thomas Seigel (primary)	Bethel School District	tseigel@bethelsd.org	
Rick Semple	Dome Business District	ricksemple@mac.com	
Cedric Silas	Transit user	casilas@att.net	
Jane Trancho (primary)	Hilltop Action Coalition	jtrancho@gmail.com	X
Julian F. Wheeler	Pierce County Accessible Communities Advisory Committee (PC-ACAC)	julianfwheeler@aol.com	X
Joel Zylstra	Franklin Pierce School District	jzylstra@fpschools.org	
<i>Project staff</i>			
Kim McGilvery	Pierce Transit	kmcgilvery@piercetransit.org	X
Sean Robertson	Pierce Transit	srobertson@piercetransit.org	X
<i>Facilitation staff</i>			
David Gitlin	EnviroIssues	dgitlin@enviroissues.com	X
Nyles Green	EnviroIssues	ngreen@enviroissues.com	X
Chris Johnstone	EnviroIssues	cjohnstone@enviroissues.com	X

Meeting agenda

Time	What	Who
4:00 p.m.	Welcome and meeting overview	David Gitlin, EnviroIssues Kim McGilvery, Pierce Transit
4:10 p.m.	Community Committee update: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introductions • What have you been hearing? 	All
4:30 p.m.	Project updates	Sean Robertson, Pierce Transit

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Station design • COVID-19 impacts 	Kim McGilvery, Pierce Transit
5:00 p.m.	Property owner coordination <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30% design plans available online • Next steps and materials for property owner outreach 	Sean Robertson, Pierce Transit
5:30 p.m.	Outreach update <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Virtual open house stats and feedback received so far 	Kim McGilvery, Pierce Transit
5:40 p.m.	Questions and discussion	All
5:50 p.m.	Next steps and action items	David Gitlin, Envirolssues
6:00 p.m.	Adjourn	All

Materials shared during the meeting

- Meeting presentation
 - Includes the property owner notification packet

Welcome and meeting overview

David Gitlin, Envirolssues, began the meeting, thanked everyone for their virtual attendance at the Zoom meeting, and gave an overview of the meeting agenda. Kim McGilvery, outreach lead at Pierce Transit, and Sean Robertson, lead project manager at Pierce Transit, also introduced themselves. David Gitlin then went over best practices on how to use Zoom and explained to the attendees how to comment and ask questions during the meeting. He then asked the Committee members to introduce themselves and to identify their organization affiliation.

Project update: station design and branding

Sean Robertson began discussing project updates regarding the station design. At the second BRT Community Committee meeting in February 2020, the group had discussed the three station design options: Suspension, Mountain, and Ripples.

However, upon launching the project’s virtual open house in June 2020, only Suspension and Mountain moved forward. Sean the team removed Ripples from consideration because that design would require more frequent maintenance and may not have the same longevity as either the Suspension or Mountain designs.

Sean Robertson also mentioned that the team will prioritize public safety in their final design and will include adequate lighting.

Based on feedback received from the virtual open house, the public prefers the Suspension design. Sean Robertson added that Pierce Transit staff also prefers the Suspension design and that is the design that will move forward.

Sean Robertson also reminded the group that this BRT line will be one of five total BRT lines.

Kim McGilvery continued with this point and provided a project update regarding branding. She indicated that the BRT service will have a different name so it would be distinguished from other Pierce Transit service. Pierce Transit worked with GreenRubino, a Seattle-based marketing firm to identify and select a project brand. Kim McGilvery shared the three branding options under consideration: The Peak, Current, and Streamline. She then asked the Committee members to name their favorite branding option.

- Jane Trancho indicated that she prefers Streamline because the name reflects fast and easy travel to the destination. She said that she does not like Current.
- Julian Wheeler also preferred for Streamline and does not prefer Current because the name has connotations of electrocution.
- Richard Gardner preferred The Peak.
- Mike Bowerman preferred Streamline and does not prefer Current.
- Jane Moore also prefers Streamline.
- Echo Abernathy also does not prefer Current but indicated that The Peak represents the Pacific Northwest region well. She also mentioned that Streamline has connotations of quick travel. She said that short names work best.
- Cody Bakken indicated that he dislikes Streamline the least and dislikes Current the most. He has concerns with The Peak because transit users could associate that name with “peak service” or “peak ridership,” meaning full, busy buses. He explained that Streamline has a smooth sound to it but has more syllables. He finished his comment by expressing that most BRT names use acronyms and don’t necessarily have fun names like the ones presented at this meeting.
- Jay Brower preferred Streamline but also said he likes the name Glide.

Kim McGilvery continued to give an update and mentioned the origins of the branding names rooting from the desired representation of a quick ride. She also indicated that other BRT systems in the region have selected similar names, and this project cannot use the same names. For example, Sean Robertson added that the team considered “Throughline,” but a coffee shop with that same name already exists in the project corridor. He also mentioned that the Superlative Group put together a list of businesses in the project corridor to check in with them and see if they would like naming rights for the BRT. More information about this effort will come in late August or September.

Comments and questions regarding station designs and branding

Question: Cody Bakken asked about how the transit users will identify the different BRT lines: “Would users refer to one line as Pierce Transit Steamline A or Pierce Transit Peak A?” He indicated a preference for naming conventions that would easily make the BRT recognizable and fun to say. He then asked if Pierce Transit could crowdsource different names.

Response: Kim McGilvery said that the name Pierce Transit likely will not go in front of the branding name. She mentioned that Pierce Transit considered crowdsourcing branding names but then opted to

go with the branding consultant after discussing with other transit agencies how they developed their branding. She indicated that Pierce Transit could use colors as names for the different route lines as well. Sean Robertson interjected and cautioned that Pierce Transit will not name a “Red Line,” given the connotation of red lining and the harm it causes to people of color.

Comment: Richard Gardner mentioned that he likes the idea of names based on salmon species.

Comment: Jane Trancho said that the Mountain theme would fit well for naming conventions of the different BRT lines.

Response: Sean Robertson reminded the Committee that Mountain theme did not have positive responses on the virtual open house. Jane acknowledged the reminder and admitted that she doesn’t like the design; however, she sees how naming the different lines after local mountains (using The Peak theme) would prove simple and would accommodate the mountain design.

Comment: Cody Bakken indicated that he prefers Streamline.

David Gitlin then concluded this agenda topic and identified consensus for Streamline.

Impacts of COVID-19 on the project

Sean Robertson continued the meeting by explaining the impacts of COVID-19 on the project schedule. The environmental review process faces the biggest impact. The team needs to complete the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) documentation and deliver it to the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). However, this documentation requires review and coordination with six local tribes that are currently facing staff furloughs during the pandemic. The Pierce Transit team will complete the documentation when they receive input from the tribes.

Sean Robertson mentioned that the team does not need as much detailed environmental review as other projects because crews will pave over an existing road rather than building a new road. He also announced that the original start of construction date for March 2021 will likely move to June 2021 because of the delays. The project funding has not changed (\$90M). However, Pierce Transit still needs to achieve additional funding from the FTA. In order to achieve this funding, the project must reach the 60% design milestone, dependent on completing the NEPA documentation.

Richard Gardner asked if geotechnical soil borings have occurred yet. Sean Robertson confirmed that surveying and geotechnical soil borings has occurred in the project corridor since March. Some of this work also determines if excess levels of contamination exist in the ground. Sean Robertson mentioned that crews will complete potholing to understand any utility conflicts under the existing pavement. He also added that the team will send notices to any properties impacted by the fieldwork to coordinate access and any other potential business disruptions.

Jane Trancho asked about roundabouts in the project corridor. Sean Robertson confirmed that the project will incorporate three roundabouts. However, an Intersection Control Evaluation studied a total of five roundabouts in the project corridor. The project team encouraged Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) to remove two of the roundabouts from consideration in the City of Tacoma portion of the project because of the potential roundabouts’ proximity to businesses. The evaluation includes roundabouts at 121st St S, 138th St S, and 146th St S.

Property owner coordination

Sean Robertson continued the meeting and provided the Committee an update on the property owner coordination process. He presented the property owner packet via the slideshow presentation. The packet includes a letter explaining that Pierce Transit is seeking to acquire land or a temporary construction easement from property owners, a map that outlines the specific property, a project fact sheet, a property acquisition folio, and a survey for the property owner to fill out details of how they prefer Pierce Transit contact them to schedule a meeting if desired. Sean Robertson explained that project real estate consultant CommonStreet will complete the real estate-related items for the project, and project contractor Granite will complete the project contracting work. Property owners have the opportunity to request either a phone or video conference with a member from Pierce Transit, CommonStreet, and Granite if they desire.

Sean Robertson explained that the project will require Temporary Construction Easements (TCEs) for construction equipment staging purposes. He included that the construction team replaces any walls or fences they take down during the construction activities. Property owners can negotiate these types of improvements on their property in exchange for allowing the staging of equipment and materials on their property in the form of the TCE. The project team will also work with property owners to understand how and when they access their properties to better mitigate construction impacts and access to properties during construction activities.

Sean Robertson then prompted the Committee to ask any questions about the property owner packet and property owner coordination process. Jane Trancho inquired about the number of impacted properties, and Sean Robertson explained that the project impacts approximately 300 properties, including acquisitions and TCEs.

Richard Gardner then asked what outreach to impacted residents and commercial properties will look like if they do not own their property but rather rent from a property owner. Sean Robertson explained the project team will work with property owners and tenants alike during the construction activities so that everyone understands impacts and access needs to their property.

Outreach update

Kim McGilvery continued the meeting with an outreach update. She explained that the virtual open house launched in May and features versions of the website in English, Vietnamese, and Spanish. The website had received approximately 1,500 sessions over an average of approximately three minutes per session. She explained that the Suspension design received 83 comments, and the Mountain design received 84 comments. Site visitors indicated that they value real-time arrival notifications at the stations, safety features, and weather screening. Site visitors also indicated that on the buses, they value stability poles for standing passengers, plenty of space for bikes, and adjustable air conditioning vents.

The Committee did not have any questions or comments regarding the outreach update.

General questions and comments

Kim McGilvery and Sean Robertson then opened the Committee meeting to ask any questions about any of the content shared at this meeting.

Question: Mike Bowerman asked if the project has reached the 30% design phase.

Response: Sean Robertson explained that the project has reached the 30% design phase; however, the project has not yet reached the 60% design phase because the remaining NEPA documentation requires coordination and review with six local tribes. The team planned to have the documentation completed by October; however, this date will move due to the tribes on furlough.

Question: Mike Bowerman asked about potential street and utility improvements as part of the construction activities.

Response: Sean Robertson explained that the project team will coordinate any improvements during the project as they occur as to not ruin other more recent work completed in the project corridor. He mentioned that the City of Tacoma has yet to complete some of their proposed improvements. This project will work in phases, starting in the south and moving toward the north, allowing for more flexibility in timing for the City of Tacoma to complete their proposed projects. This project will partner with other projects as necessary and where feasible.

Comment: Cody Bakken expressed concern for roundabouts. He explained that he understands WSDOT studies their feasibility in the Intersection Control Evaluation; however, he had concerns that roundabouts contribute to ADA safety issues because cars either yield to other cars or maintain movement through the roundabout. He also questioned if 60-foot coaches could safely and quickly get through the roundabouts.

Response: Sean Robertson answered that WSDOT has a hard stance on implementing roundabouts where feasible to keep traffic safely flowing from all directions.

Comment: Jane Moore explained that the Tacoma Transportation Commission also brought up the same concern about roundabouts. She then asked why WSDOT treats roundabouts differently in the city limits than outside of the city.

Response: Sean Robertson explained that WSDOT does not treat roundabout differently based on their location in or outside of a city. Pierce Transit already communicated to WSDOT that it has concerns with a few of the roundabouts because of their impact on nearby businesses. Pierce Transit does not want to shut down any businesses either temporarily or permanently based on the final design of the project.

Question: Richard Gardner asked about decisions regarding lane treatments (i.e. mixed, curbside, median, etc.).

Response: Sean Robertson encouraged Richard Gardner to go to the virtual open house for the most recent lane treatment designs.

Question: Cody Bakken asked if ADA or disability representatives and/or experts consulted during the Intersection Control Evaluation process.

Response: Sean Robertson explained that the evaluation started in 2019 and that the team discussed roundabouts with ADA representatives at the City of Tacoma and WSDOT. He does not know of anyone else from other organizations who participated in the conversation. He encouraged Cody Bakken to connect any ADA groups and representatives with him and Pierce Transit so that they can work together to better understand decisions and evaluations regarding roundabouts in the project corridor.

Action items

David Gitlin prompted the end of the meeting and announced action items.

- David Gitlin to send out the meeting presentation at the conclusion of the meeting.
 - Kim McGilvery to find out more information regarding the branding/naming convention narrowing process.
 - Cody Bakken to follow up with Sean Robertson with ADA group representatives to learn more about decisions regarding roundabouts in the project corridor.
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Adjourn

David Gitlin adjourned the meeting and stated that he will share the meeting summary with the Committee soon for review and comment.

Attachment

- Zoom meeting chat box