

VantagePoint

September – October 2012

Proposition 1 Open Houses

Attend and tell us your thoughts.

Beginning September 5, Pierce Transit is hosting a series of Informational Open Houses for the public regarding Proposition 1.

Prop 1 basics: The PT Board determined that to restore access to essential services for seniors, the disabled, and people who rely on Pierce Transit requires asking voters to approve a ballot proposal to utilize the remaining 0.3% (three cents on a \$10 purchase) authority.

Please check out our [website](#) for the open house schedule, to learn what will happen if Prop 1 passes, and what will happen if it fails.

Thank you in advance for voting on November 6.

Help Us Improve Our Services

PT now accepting applications for new Community Transportation Advisory Group.

Would you like to be directly involved in helping Pierce Transit improve its services? This is your opportunity! We are in the process of establishing a citizens' advisory body specifically for the purpose of engaging the public on issues of significance to the Agency. It's called the Community Transportation Advisory Group (CTAG).

The point of the CTAG is to not only notify our stakeholders (that's you!) of impending changes, but also to solicit ideas and solutions from members of the community, and encourage public support of transit initiatives.

The CTAG will be composed of nine members appointed by the Pierce Transit Board of Commissioners. Members of the CTAG must reside in, or work within, the Pierce Transit service area.

The CTAG application will be available online soon at the [Pierce Transit website](#).



Vantage Point is a publication of Pierce Transit.

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Please consider the environment before printing this newsletter.

HAPPENINGS



JBLM Grant Vans Still Available

Hurry to get yours!

There are still seven brand new vans available to vanpool groups heading to JBLM for their commute. You may remember that these vans are available as part of a competitive grant through Washington State Department of Transportation, aimed specifically at easing congestion in the I-5 corridor near and around JBLM.

On July 28, we issued the first eight new vans to happy JBLM groups – these smart commuters are pictured above. Five additional groups are in the works and will receive their new vans soon.

What are you waiting for? This amazing opportunity won't last much longer, and rumor has it gas prices are set to spike yet again. Take this chance to slash your commute costs and get to work in a brand new van.

If you work at JBLM or Camp Murray and are interested in learning more about starting a vanpool group, contact Kim Pontsler or Lynne Cunningham at 253.983.2724 or 253.983.3321. Or email us at vanpool@piercetransit.org.



Pop Quiz!

Test your Voyager knowledge

True or false:

The primary driver of the van is the keeper of the one PIN used for the Voyager card. All drivers from the same van share the same PIN.

Answer:

FALSE! Each approved driver has his or her own PIN, which should not be shared with anyone else. PINs are assigned to individual drivers, and are reflected that way on the monthly Voyager invoice. Any time your PIN is used, the report reflects that you fueled the van that day. Please keep your PIN in your wallet (not anywhere in the van...not even written in code).

True or false:

When I drop my van off for service, I need to take its Voyager card with me in case the spare van needs gas.

Answer:

Again, FALSE! Every van in our fleet (including spare vans) has its own Voyager card. We DO appreciate you returning your spare van to us with at least $\frac{3}{4}$ tank of gas.

Forgot your Voyager PIN? Call your Pierce Transit vanpool coordinator – she can look it up for you in about three seconds!

Driver ID Cards

Obsolete!

Still got the vanpool driver ID card you received after completing our defensive driving class? Well, hang onto it, as it is now a collector's item! We no longer issue the cards to newly approved volunteer drivers. If a transit security officer asks for your ID, please provide him or her with your driver license and van number.

Questions? Call your friendly Pierce Transit vanpool coordinator.

Share the Road with School Buses

All motorists should know how to safely share the road with school buses, pedestrians and bicyclists. School buses are one of the safest forms of transportation on the road today.

Most of the children who lose their lives in bus-related crashes are pedestrians, four to seven years old, who are hit by the bus or by motorists illegally passing a stopped school bus. For this reason, it is necessary to know the proper laws and procedures for sharing the road safely with school buses.



Here are a few tips to remember when you see a school bus:

- It is illegal to pass a school bus that is stopped to load or unload children.
- School buses use yellow flashing lights to alert motorists that they are preparing to stop.
- Red flashing lights and an extended stop sign arm signals to motorists that the bus is stopped and children are getting on or off the bus.
- Traffic in both directions are required to stop on undivided roadways when students are entering or exiting a school bus.
- Stop your car far enough from the bus to allow children the necessary space to safely enter and exit the bus.
- Be alert. Children are unpredictable.

For more information on sharing the road safely with school buses and other back-to-school safety tips, please visit nsc.org.

Transportation Tidbits

- ❖ Prospective vanpoolers clamoring to get on your van? If your van is full and you have a wait list, please refer waiters to us – we may be able to place them with another group so they can be served immediately.
- ❖ You probably already know your bookkeeper must submit reports and monies to Pierce Transit by the tenth of each month. But did you know they may submit reports as early as the first of the month? So at the end of the month when your bookkeeper says, "Show me the money!" please have your checkbook ready. You will make their job easier and help them avoid last-minute dashes to Pierce Transit by submitting your fare payment when it is due: BEFORE the first of each month. Thank you!
- ❖ When entering your van's odometer reading at the gas pump, please be sure to enter it correctly. Ignore the tenths on the odometer and enter only the whole numbers. If you realize you've made a mistake entering the mileage, please drop your vanpool coordinator a note advising her, and provide the correct mileage. Thanks!
- ❖ A bit of transportation trivia....you may know the SR 520 floating bridge is being rebuilt. The work going into the rebuild is quite fascinating. For instance, pontoons are being built in 77 various sizes (some of them HUGE) needed for the new six-lane floating bridge. Together, the pontoons will help form what will be the world's longest floating bridge at 7,710 feet. A total of 44 pontoons will be built in Tacoma and 33 in Aberdeen. To learn more, check out WSDOT's website.

More News



VANPOOL

24/7 Emergency
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Direct Line
253.983.3377
7:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Vanpool Fax
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RIDESHARE

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Customer Services
253.581.8000

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Ramp Meters to Ease Congestion on I-5

New ramp meters will help smooth traffic flow and ease congestion along eight miles of Interstate 5 between Tukwila and Federal Way.

The Washington State Department of Transportation will install ramp meters at four separate interchanges where traffic routinely slows to a crawl during the morning and afternoon rush-hour commutes. New meters at all four interchanges should be in place and easing congestion by summer 2013.

WSDOT reports the average morning commute speed for northbound traffic is 37 mph between Federal Way and Tukwila. And it's 40 mph southbound for the evening commute. When traffic signals at intersections near these ramps turn green, a dozen or more cars enter I-5 at the same time, further clogging already-slow traffic on the interstate.

WSDOT states ramp meters are proven to reduce collisions by at least 30 percent. Every minute a lane is blocked by a collision or other incident adds four to ten minutes of traffic delay, so reducing collisions at these merge areas will also reduce congestion.

Here's to traffic improvements that help ease your commute!

Pentagon Approves \$5.7M for Freedom Bridge Improvements

Great news for JBLM/Madigan commuters! The Pentagon has approved a \$5.7 million grant for the City of Lakewood to improve the Freedom Bridge overpass, to help alleviate congestion for people accessing Madigan Army Medical Center. The grant was announced on Monday, August 6.



Improvements will include an additional eastbound ramp to the bridge, a second left-turn lane to the I-5 southbound off-ramp, upgrades to traffic signs and additional pedestrian facilities for increased public safety.

The Freedom Bridge improvements are among the priorities addressed by the South Sound Military and Communities Partnership (SSMCP), a consortium designed to coordinate the response to dramatic growth at Joint Base Lewis-McChord.

For more info, visit Pierce County's website.