



**Pierce Transit Bus Rapid Transit
BRT Community Committee Meeting #4
Summary**
Updated: 11/6/2020

Pierce Transit BRT Community Committee

Meeting #4

Virtual Zoom meeting

October 20, 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@downtownonthe-go.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		
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	

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
Chris LaBonte	CommonStreet	chris@csrow.com	x
<i>Facilitation staff</i>			
David Gitlin	EnviroIssues	dgitlin@enviroissues.com	X
Chris Johnstone	EnviroIssues	cjohnstone@enviroissues.com	X

Meeting agenda

- Welcome and meeting overview, *David Gitlin*
- Zoom tips, *David Gitlin*
- Project updates, *Kim McGilvery and Sean Robertson*
 - Community Committee update
 - Service branding update
 - Virtual open house update
 - Project schedule update
- Property owner meetings, *Chris LaBonte*
- Next steps and action items, *David Gitlin*

Materials shared during the meeting

- Meeting presentation
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Welcome and meeting overview

David Gitlin, EnviroIssues, 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, identify their organization affiliation, and share what they've been hearing about the Pierce Transit BRT project.

Project updates – Branding

Kim McGilvery, Pierce Transit, continued the meeting by providing the group a recap of the August virtual public meeting and mentioned that Pierce Transit will conduct another virtual meeting in December. She then provided an update on the BRT service branding. The Pierce Transit Board decided to name the BRT service **Stream**. Pierce Transit will also undergo a trademark process and has reached out to various companies regarding corporate sponsorship the individual service lines within the Stream system.

Project updates – Project schedule

Sean Robertson, Pierce Transit provided the group an update on the project schedule. The project will reach the 60% design milestone soon. The National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) will be approved this month, allowing the project to reach the design milestone. Pierce Transit will share more details with the public after reaching the milestone and during the December virtual public meeting.

Sean continued the meeting and provided an update on the schedule of construction. He indicated that work will begin in early 2021; however, this work will be limited to utility relocation work, which involves moving utility poles that construction could impact. This work will begin at the southernmost portion of the project in Spanaway. Sean explained that this work will pave the way for the project construction to begin in January 2022. Pierce Transit originally planned for service to start in 2023; however, after having coordinated the schedule with City of Tacoma and the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT), the updated start of service date will move to mid-2024.

Sean then provided the group an update on the cost of the project. The cost increased from \$150 million to \$170 million. He explained the reasons for the increase in cost relating to inflation, utility relocates, transit signal priority, and construction cost adjustments. Additionally, not all the work can happen during the day, and some of it must happen at night. Pierce Transit calculated these adjustments after having discussed the contractor, Granite. Sean reassured that some of the cost increases will be covered by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) grant when Pierce Transit secures that funding after it reaches the 60% design milestone.

Jay Brower then asked to confirm where the work will start. Sean indicated that more specifically, the utility relocation work will begin outside the Walmart in Spanaway. Jay then asked when specifically, the actual construction will start. Sean responded that Granite is not scheduled to break ground until early 2022. Limited work could begin as soon as summer 2021.

Mike Bowerman asked Sean if Pierce Transit receives any type of incentive to save money on these types of projects. Mike expressed frustration with public agencies frequently needing more money to complete projects. Sean responded that Pierce Transit regularly analyzes where it can cut costs on projects while still delivering on its promises. The cost increase of this project is tricky because Pierce transit cannot ask for more than 50% of the project funding from the FTA. Sean indicated that Pierce Transit is actively trying to avoid the \$200 million cost point because they the agency would lose money from the FTA based on prior funding agreements.

Property owner notification update

Chris LaBonte, CommonStreet continued the meeting to provide the group an update on the property owner meetings that had occurred to date. Chris showed the group the property owner packet that went out to the impacted properties that will require partial acquisition. He then talked about the property owner meetings that the project team offered to the property owners. The purpose of offering the meetings was to provide clear, transparent information to property owners so that no one is surprised. The agents on the call also communicated property owner rights and protections under the law.

Chris also explained that a benefit of the meetings is that the owners could provide information about their property so that the project team could potentially mitigate or lessen any potential impacts to the property. Chris mentioned that the team could include provisions with the contractor to maintain access to a business, for example.

Chris gave the following breakdown of the property owner meetings that could be requested online or via phone, email, or a paper survey included in the property owner packet:

- The project team sent 257 letters*
- The project team has conducted meetings or a conversation with owners of 71 parcels in the project corridor*
- The project team has completed 14 follow-up meetings (onsite or virtual) and has eight scheduled (onsite or virtual)*
- The meetings occur throughout the whole project corridor (not from specific pockets of sections)
- Meetings have occurred with 17 residential property owners and 54 commercial property owners*
- 60% of the properties are owner-occupied versus 40% tenant-occupied*

*As of October 20, 2020

Chris then summarized some of the questions the property owner asked during the meetings. Most of the questions were related to the project schedule, route, frequency of service, station locations, and

individual property impacts. Chris mentioned that the key takeaways the project team has gathered through these meetings include:

- Everyone has a voice and their concerns matter
- Knowledge is power
- Important for the property owners to work with the design team to minimize impacts

Jane Trancho asked about language access regarding property owners requesting meetings and if the ways to request a meeting include other languages. Chris explained that the property owner letter was translated and sent to all property owners in Spanish. Additionally, the online scheduling software was translated to Spanish. Chris included that no one has yet requested a property owner meeting via any language other than English.

Cody Bakken asked if people not on the project team have come forward to support the project team. He has concerns that members of the Community Committee voice their individual concerns but don't seem to have consideration for other people. Chris and Sean responded that they have not heard from specific people wanting to get involved on the project from a position of generally wanting what is best for everyone. David included that the project team conducted door-to-door outreach in the project corridor and heard from many property owners and tenants that they generally support the project.

Richard Gardner asked about the level of outreach conducted with commercial properties in the project corridor. He indicated that he knows of some properties in the project corridor that are currently in negotiations and that the project and potential for property acquisition has not come up in their conversations. Chris indicated that CommonStreet tracks this issue and works with title companies regularly but that no specific property owners have come forward raising this concern regarding negotiations.

General questions and comments

David offered general question and answers to the group; however, no one had additional questions or comments.

Action items

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

- Kim will follow up about the virtual public meeting
- Presentation will be sent to this group for reference

Adjourn

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