

DOWNTOWN: On the go!

A Program of the Tacoma-Pierce County Chamber, City of Tacoma, & Pierce Transit

Pierce Transit Redesign Community Workshops in October/November

Did you know that Pierce Transit buses, vanpools, and shuttles take 20,000 trips off the road every week day? Did you know that their entire bus fleet is powered by compressed natural gas? And, did you know that Pierce Transit ridership is at an all time high and growing?

Great news overall, and the reason why Pierce Transit (PT) is a premier transit system in both the state and country. However, despite the good news, Pierce Transit is facing its biggest budget challenges yet. With sales tax dollars bringing in 73% of PT's revenue (fares bring in 14% and grants 10%), and these dollars plummeting since 2007, PT predicts a 2009 budget deficit of more than \$10 million!

Because of this alarming number, PT has taken steps to cut expendi-

tures, such as hiring freezes, a decrease in capital projects, and the July 2009 5% reduction in service. But clearly, with a predicted budget shortfall of \$10 million, they will need to do more.

Thus, the reason for PTtomorrow—an entire system redesign that prioritizes types, locations, and frequencies of transit routes. In an attempt to reevaluate a 30-year-old system so that efficiencies can be obtained, expenditures reduced, fare revenues increased, and service improved, PT is taking the necessary steps to address their uncertain fiscal future; and, they want your help in doing so!

In the early phases of the PTtomorrow process, PT is asking the public for their input. They want to know where you would like to see improvements and where you would like to see reductions. They



want help making choices about priorities and efficiencies. From there, they will take your suggestions, combine it with their ridership data to create several plans, and come back to you again in April/May of 2010 for feedback on those plans.

How can you get involved? Attend one of the 8 community workshops (3 in Tacoma) offered throughout Pierce County in October and November. Check out the workshops, RSVP (not required but preferred), and read more about PTtomorrow at PTtomorrow.org.

Volume 1, Issue 2
October 2009

Did you know?

- PierceTrips.com commuters logged 364,498 alternate commute miles and saved approximately 296,255 pounds of CO₂ from being emitted.
- Do you have a commute success story? How about a poem, limerick, or otherwise creative tidbit tied to transportation? Please share... email juliap@tacomachamber.org.

Upcoming Events

Candidates' Transportation Forum

October 1st @ 6:30pm
Carwein Auditorium, UWT
See pg. 2 for more details.

Pierce Transit ReDesign Workshops
(dates throughout Oct & Nov)
PTtomorrow.org for more info.

Cascade Bicycle Club Workshop on Bike Advocacy
October 17th, 10:00-3:00pm followed by post-meeting drinks
Tacoma Downtown Library
RSVP and info, click [here](#).

Tacoma Chamber Business Expo
October 20th, 10:30-6:00pm
Greater Tacoma Convention Center
Visit the Chamber's [website](#).

Conversations Re: Tacoma Series
October 22nd @ 6:30pm
Register at www.retacoma.com.
See pg. 2 for more details.

Tacoma Transportation for the 21st Century
Brown Bag Lunch Discussion
Early November ~ Date TBD



The ORCA Transit Card Roll-Out Continues

Individuals and organizations in the Puget Sound area are switching over to ORCA cards in increasing numbers, and you are encouraged to do the same if you or your business have not already!

ORCA offers a one-stop shop for all of your Puget Sound transportation needs. As a regional fare system, it allows easy boarding on the buses, trains, or ferries of 7 transportation agencies. Your ORCA products can be purchased

online, your account can be managed (including cancellation of lost/stolen cards), and your balance easily viewed.

For the individual commuter working for a business that does not subsidize transit, ORCA cards can be obtained on-line at www.orcacard.com, or by visiting Pierce Transit's Bus Shops located at the Commerce St. Station or the Tacoma Dome Station. ORCA cards are free only for a limited time, so get yours soon!

For a business subsidizing transit for their employees, several business account options are available. If you are such a business, or if you are currently considering the addition of an employee transit subsidy, get more information on the ORCA business products by emailing: sstockwell@piercetransit.org.

Want to Visit to Rome?

WheelOptions & PierceTrips.com May Get You There

If you've considered making the switch to a non-single occupancy vehicle commute, now is the time to do it. Visit PierceTrips.com and log an alternate commute at least twice between October 18th and 31st, and you'll be eligible for great Wheel Options prizes—a trip to Rome, a Victoria Clipper Vacation Package for two, a trip to Leavenworth, WA, or one of many \$100/\$75/\$50 gift cards and certificates.

Wheel Options campaigns are meant to reward commuters who are currently using an alternate commute, entice previous alternate commuters away from their drive



alone habit, and encourage new users to try an alternate commute.

Interested in more information on the Washington State Ridesharing Organization's Wheel Options campaign?

Visit: wheeloptions.org

Want to you enter to win? Visit PierceTrips.com, click on the Commute Calendar, create a profile if you do not already have one, and log your trips between October 18-31. It's that easy!

Wheel Options is proudly sponsored by the Pierce Trips team and the Washington State Ridesharing Organization.

www.wheeloptions.org

Conversations Re: Tacoma Series

Provoking Thought, Offering Information, and Stimulating Conversation about the Future of Tacoma

Take your understanding of the links between transportation, land-use, and neighborhoods to the next level—attend *The Neighborhood: Creating Vibrant Communities* lecture, part of the Conversations Re: Tacoma Series.

Guest speakers Eric O. Jacobsen and Jim Diers will offer their insight on the much needed change from auto-centric

neighborhood planning to planning focused on creating healthy, livable, and dynamic communities. The speakers will share examples of such places, many of them designed and achieved by residents themselves.

The lecture will take place on October 22nd at 6:30 at the New Frontier Lounge, with tickets bought at the door (\$10) or

On The Go! Rewards for October...

Log 5 non-SOV commute trips on PierceTrips.com and win a gift certificate to Corina Bakery. The winner will be announced in next month's newsletter.

Candidates' Transportation Forum Thursday, October 1st

On October 1st, please join The Tacoma-Pierce County Chamber, Transportation Choices Coalition, and other co-sponsoring organizations for a citywide Candidates' Transportation Forum.

Because our transportation and land use policies have dramatic impacts on economic development, air quality, greenhouse gas emissions, community health, and quality of life, these topics pose some of the greatest challenges facing Tacoma's City Council. At this forum, candidates will respond to questions about the future of Tacoma's transportation system (transit, bikeways, roads, parking, etc.) and related land-use implications.

EVENT INFORMATION:

When:

Thurs, Oct 1st, 6:30-8:30pm

Where:

Carwein Auditorium, Keystone Building—UWT

* The program will be available for Click! Cable TV customers through Click! On Demand as of mid-October. Simply go to the "Free Click! Local" area of on demand and you'll find it in the area: "South Sound Specials"



101 Reasons to Kick Your Car to the Curb

Reason #2: Air Quality



Did you know that cars and trucks typically produce more than 700,000 pounds of smog-forming pollutants each summer day in the Puget Sound region? Created when vehicle emissions and other toxic emissions combine with sunlight, ground-level ozone (smog) is typically a brown, yellow, or whitish haze. The haze ruins our mountain views, damages trees, lichens, and mosses in Pacific Northwest forests, and has significant consequences for human health, causing respiratory damage in even the healthiest humans.*

Nationwide, motor vehicles are also the leading contributors to air toxics emissions, a nasty stew of pollutants that can cause cancer, reproductive and neurological problems. Currently, the EPA estimates that mobile sources of air toxics

So, what can be done? Take the following steps to reduce your contribution to Puget Sound air pollution:

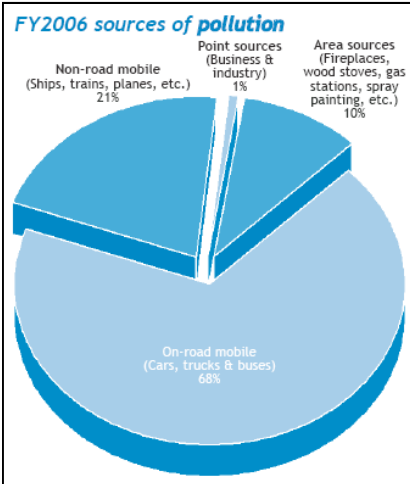
- 1) Use an alternate commute! Biking and walking have no negative impact on air quality, taking the Puget Sound region's buses have limited impact on air quality, and riding in a carpool/vanpool significantly decreases your air pollution emissions. If only one day a week, give the alternate commute a try!
- 2) Don't idle. Idling for longer than 30 seconds burns more gasoline than turning off and restarting your car.
- 3) If you must use a car, either conduct proper and regular maintenance (change oil and air filters, keep tires inflated) or purchase a cleaner, more fuel efficient vehicle.
- 4) Refuel when it's cool. Especially in the summertime, refuel during evening hours when warm air can't get a hold of chemicals released during fueling and turn them into smog-causing ozone.
- 5) Switch out your gasoline guzzling equipment—mowers, blowers, and wackers. Opt instead for air friendly electric!



We are each responsible for Puget Sound's air quality, as well as the health of Puget Sound's residents. Start today in taking the steps to improve air quality, reduce air pollution, and improve human health!

Interested in monitoring Puget Sound air quality and ozone levels? Check out the Puget Sound Clean Air Agency's website: www.pscleanair.org/

Sources:
 *www.pscleanair.org/airq/basics/weather/smog.aspx
 **www.epa.gov/otaq/fo2004.pdf



for as much as half of all cancers attributed to outdoor sources.**

While business and industry also produce smog causing chemicals and air toxics, their contributions are a drop in the bucket as compared to mobile sources. Yet, because the former is much easier to regulate relative to individual driving behaviors, we often have the perception that it must be a larger contributor. Not true—our individual driving behaviors are single-handedly emitting the largest portion of both smog and cancer-causing chemicals.

DOWNTOWN: On the go!

Have an alternate commute success story you would like to share? How about a poem, limerick, or otherwise creative tidbit tied to transportation? Email juliap@tacomachamber.org and your story may be published in next month's newsletter!

The Downtown: On the Go! Program

The Downtown: On the Go! Program is an active partnership between the Tacoma-Pierce County Chamber, the City of Tacoma, and Pierce Transit. Leveraging their resources and relationships, these organizations work together with employers, commuters, and the Downtown: On The Go! Partnership to promote alternate commuting options. Together they aim to keep Downtown moving efficiently, growing in economic vitality, and improving in air quality.



In addition to the programs available through Pierce Transit, the Chamber offers resources and incentives specific to Downtown commuters and businesses. From informational presentations, individualized employee/ employer consultations, commuter rewards, socials, and more,



Tacoma-Pierce County Chamber
 905 Pacific Ave.
 Suite 300
 Tacoma, WA 98401
 Phone: 253-627-2175
 E-mail: juliap@tacomachamber.org