



October 16, 2020

Addressee's Name  
Addressee's Company Name  
City, State, Zip Code

Subject: Pierce Transit Bus Rapid Transit property acquisition notice

Dear Addressee's Name

Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) is a new line of service from Pierce Transit that is designed to carry larger numbers of riders with greater speed, reliability, and frequency than a standard fixed route bus. The first BRT route is planned to replace a portion of the current Route 1 along the 14.4-mile corridor between Downtown Tacoma and Spanaway. Although the route will operate primarily in the public right of way, building this project will require Pierce Transit to purchase strips of private land in sections of the route where there is not enough room for the project street improvements (space for road designs, BRT station locations, and sidewalk installations).

**PROJECT PHASE: 30-60% DESIGN**

You are receiving this letter because **Pierce Transit may need to purchase a strip of your property or the access rights to your property at <INSERT ADDRESS> to build the project. Note: Pierce Transit does not expect to need to purchase your entire property.** Construction activities may impact access to your property at various times while the project is being built. Pierce Transit will work with property owners to minimize those impacts when construction is in your area. Construction is scheduled to take place 2021-2024 with service beginning in 2024.

**WE WANT TO TALK TO YOU**

We at Pierce Transit coordinate directly with staff from the Washington State Department of Transportation, the City of Tacoma and Pierce County. We direct all questions and comments about the Bus Rapid Transit project to Pierce Transit's Real Estate Acquisition Team. The team is happy to field any questions or concerns regarding BRT design impacts on your property, real property valuations or any other effects the Bus Rapid Transit may have on your property. Please contact us via email at [BRT@piercetransit.org](mailto:BRT@piercetransit.org) or phone at 253-581-8016.

We are also inviting you to reach out for a one-on-one meeting to examine your property and individual potential project impacts. Please sign up at <https://ptbrt.as.me>.



## FOR MORE INFORMATION

This packet includes the following materials for additional resources and information:

- Project flier
- Property acquisition brochure that describes Pierce Transit's property acquisition process and common questions
- Survey with a self-addressed envelope to let us know your preferred contact information

We encourage you to visit our website at <https://www.piercetransit.org/brt> for more information. You can sign up for project email notifications to stay informed of upcoming comment periods as well as regular project updates.

Thank you,



Ryan Wheaton  
Executive Director, Planning and Community Development

### Translation Service is available in more than 200 languages, by calling 253.581.8000.

Llame al 253.581.8000. Habrá un representante y servicio de traducción en español disponible para atenderle.

Заказать услуги представителя с переводом на русский язык можно по телефону 253-581-8000.

Xin gọi 253-581-8000 để nói chuyện với Nhân Viên Đại Diện Ban Phục Vụ Khách Hàng là người sẽ cung cấp dịch vụ thông dịch Việt Ngữ.

Tawagan ang 253-581-8000 upang makipag-usap sa Representatibo ng Pangserbisyong Kustomer na magbibigay ng serbiyong pagsasalin ng wika sa Tagalog.

한국어 번역 서비스를 제공하는 상담원과 통화하시려면 253-581-8000 으로 전화하십시오.

អាចទំនាក់ទំនងភ្នាក់ងារសេវាបកប្រែភាសាខ្មែរ (កម្ពុជា) ដោយហៅតាមរយៈ លេខទូរស័ព្ទ ២៥៣-៥៨១-៨០០០ ។

致电 253-581-8000 联系客户服务代表，将提供中文翻译服务。





16 de octubre de 2020

Estimado

El autobús de tránsito rápido (Bus Rapid Transit, BRT) es una línea de servicio nueva de Pierce Transit diseñada para llevar a más pasajeros con mayor velocidad, confiabilidad y frecuencia que un autobús de ruta fija estándar. Se planea que la primera ruta de BRT reemplace una porción de la actual Ruta 1 a lo largo del corredor de 14,4 millas entre el centro de Tacoma y Spanaway. Aunque la ruta funcionará principalmente en la vía pública, para construir este proyecto, Pierce Transit necesitará adquirir franjas de terreno privado en aquellas secciones de la ruta donde no haya espacio suficiente para realizar las mejoras planeadas de las calles del proyecto (espacio para el diseño de carreteras, ubicaciones de estaciones de BRT e instalaciones de aceras).

#### FASE DEL PROYECTO: DEL 30 % AL 60 % DEL DISEÑO

Usted recibe esta carta porque **Pierce Transit** podría necesitar comprar una parte de su propiedad o los derechos al acceso a su propiedad <INSERTE LA DIRECCIÓN> **para construir el proyecto.. Nota: Pierce Transit no espera que necesite adquirir la totalidad de su propiedad.** Las actividades de construcción pueden afectar el acceso a su propiedad en distintos momentos mientras se construye el proyecto. Pierce Transit trabajará con los propietarios para minimizar esos efectos cuando se lleven a cabo trabajos de construcción en su área. La construcción está programada para realizarse entre 2021 y 2024, y servicio se arrancará en 2024.

#### QUEREMOS HABLAR CON USTED

En Pierce Transit, coordinamos directamente con el personal del Departamento de Transporte del Estado de Washington (Washington State Department of Transportation), la ciudad de Tacoma y el condado de Pierce. Enviaremos todas las preguntas y los comentarios sobre el proyecto de autobús de tránsito rápido al equipo de Adquisición de Bienes Raíces de Pierce Transit. El equipo está encantado de responder a todas las preguntas o inquietudes relacionadas con los efectos del diseño de BRT en su propiedad, la valoración de los bienes inmuebles o cualquier otro efecto que el autobús de tránsito rápido pueda tener en su propiedad. Contáctenos a nuestro correo electrónico [BRT@piercetransit.org](mailto:BRT@piercetransit.org) o al teléfono 253-581-8016.

También le invitamos contactarnos para organizar una reunión individual a fin de examinar su propiedad y los impactos potenciales individuales del proyecto. Regístrese en <https://ptbrt.as.me>.



## PARA OBTENER MÁS INFORMACIÓN

Este paquete incluye los siguientes materiales para obtener recursos e información adicionales:

- Un volante del proyecto.
- Un folleto sobre adquisición de propiedades que describe el proceso de adquisición de propiedades de Pierce Transit y las preguntas frecuentes.
- Una encuesta con un sobre auto-dirigido para conocer su medio de contacto preferido.

Le recomendamos visitar nuestro sitio web <https://www.piercetransit.org/brt> para obtener más información. Puede registrarse para recibir las notificaciones del proyecto por correo electrónico y mantenerse informado sobre los próximos períodos de comentarios, así como actualizaciones regulares del proyecto.

Atentamente,



Ryan Wheaton  
Director ejecutivo, Planificación y Desarrollo Comunitario

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## MESSAGE TO PROPERTY OWNERS

Pierce Transit improves people’s quality of life by providing safe, reliable, innovative and useful transportation services that are locally based and regionally connected. To keep pace with our growing population and increasing demand for public transportation, Pierce Transit is tasked with improving and upgrading its transit system.

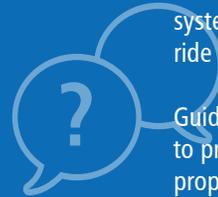
In many cases, these improvements can be made within the existing public right-of-way. In other cases, Pierce Transit needs to acquire real property from adjacent property owners.

While we prefer to improve the transit system with no impact or inconvenience to any of our neighbors, that isn’t always possible. Nevertheless, Pierce Transit’s intent is to treat property owners and tenants fairly, minimize hardships, and seek cooperative and fair settlements.

This brochure outlines what happens when Pierce Transit needs to acquire property from you. We will work together with you to ensure we provide the information you need to help you in the decision-making process.



## Why do you need my property?



In order for Pierce Transit to build and operate the local transit system, made up of local bus routes, transit centers and park and ride lots, the agency must occasionally acquire real property.

Guided by federal and state regulations, Pierce Transit strives to provide consistent and equitable treatment of all affected property owners and tenants. Pierce Transit will make reasonable efforts to acquire real property expeditiously through negotiations based on appraised fair market value. The Pierce Transit Board of Commissioners will determine when real property must be acquired by eminent domain.

## How much property will you need?



Pierce Transit begins a capital improvement project by carefully examining the proposed site: studying traffic trends and accident patterns, testing the soil, surveying the surrounding area, talking to potentially affected property owners, identifying potential environmental impacts, and weighing the costs of different design alternatives. After considering these factors, we develop a plan which identifies what is needed for the project.

## Will I have a chance to comment?



Yes. Public meetings will be held at different stages of the project. The purpose of these meetings is to provide opportunities for public participation to ensure that the location and design of transit facilities are consistent with federal, state, and local goals and objectives. We will notify potentially affected property owners and encourage them to attend and comment on the preliminary plans.

## How will you determine my property's value?

Pierce Transit will make an offer of "just compensation" for the property to be acquired based on its "fair market value". Fair market value is the value of the property under normal market conditions. In most cases, your property will be appraised by an independent state-certified appraiser hired by Pierce Transit. The appraiser is a professional with considerable training, experience, and knowledge of property sales in your area. Property owners will be given the opportunity to accompany the appraiser during the inspection. As permitted by federal and state regulations, in certain cases where the proposed acquisition is determined to be non-complex, an administrative offer may be prepared by a qualified member of Pierce Transit's real estate staff or a knowledgeable consultant that is familiar with standard valuation practices.

## What will Pierce Transit pay for?

Compensation may include the fair market value for land, buildings, and other improvements to the property. It also may include any loss in fair market value (damages) to any portion of the property that remains. If the remaining portion of property is of such a size or shape that it has little or no value or use, it is called an "uneconomic remnant". Pierce Transit will offer to buy this remnant from you. The offer to the owner is based on a determination of "just compensation" and may not be less than the amount established in the approved appraisal report.

## The Purchase

### How will Pierce Transit make me an offer?

An agent representing Pierce Transit will present or mail a written offer for your property. The agent will then work with you to answer any questions you may have about the offer.

### When will you take possession of the property?

Owners are not required to surrender possession of property until they have been paid the agreed purchase price or an amount equal to Pierce Transit's established estimate of just compensation has been deposited with the court for the owner's benefit.

### Will I have to pay capital gains tax on the proceeds?

Because tax laws change frequently, we recommend that you check with the Internal Revenue Service, a tax consultant, or your attorney about current capital gains tax laws. You will be required to complete IRS Form W-9.

### When will I receive the money?

Closing can take up to several months depending on the complexity of the transaction and the number of encumbrances on the title. Payment is made when the title is cleared and the documents are recorded. The date on which payment is made available to you is called the "date of closing". On that date, Pierce Transit becomes the owner of the property.

### What happens if I accept the offer?

The agent will handle all the details of the sale, preparing the paperwork, and clearing title to the property. You may meet with the agent several times to prepare and sign all the necessary documents. Please call the agent whenever you have questions about the sale. As with any property sale, this process can be lengthy and confusing. The agent's job is to address your concerns and facilitate the purchase.

### Who pays the closing costs?

When Pierce Transit buys your property, we pay all the costs of the sale including: recording and escrow fees, title insurance premiums, and other normal expenses. There is no real estate commission.



# Your Rights

## Can I prevent my property from being acquired?

Our state constitution grants certain public agencies the right of “eminent domain,” or the right to acquire property for public use upon payment of just compensation. Without this right, Pierce Transit could not meet public needs for transportation facilities. However, Pierce Transit would have to prove to a court why your property is needed for a public purpose and must fairly compensate you for the property needed.

## Can I recover any of the trial costs?

Under certain conditions, the court may set an amount that Pierce Transit must pay to reimburse a property owner for attorney and witness fees. Generally, to receive such an award, the owner must: Grant immediate possession and use of the property and receive a verdict at least 10 percent over the highest offer made by Pierce Transit 30 days before the trial. You should consult with your attorney before the trial about recovering attorney and witness fees.

## What if we can't agree on a price?

The law safeguards you from receiving less than the fair market value for your property. But it also prevents Pierce Transit from making payments that would be unfair to the taxpayers funding the project. When there are indications that agreement on the purchase of your property cannot be reached, a legal action to acquire the property by eminent domain may be filed.

## What if I feel Pierce Transit's offer is too low?

If you believe Pierce Transit's offer is too low, explain to the agent why you believe you should receive a higher settlement. You may point out any items of value that you think the appraiser overlooked, recent sales of comparable properties, and other data you believe support a higher value. The agent will take this information into consideration in working with you. You also have the right to seek an evaluation of Pierce Transit's offer to assist you in your consideration of the offer. As per RCW 8.25.020, Pierce Transit will reimburse you at the time of final settlement for up to \$2,500.00 of your evaluation cost, upon presentation of the bill or paid receipt. After reviewing the evaluation and the information that supports it, Pierce Transit's agent will work with you to reach a fair and equitable settlement.

## What happens if I go to court?

You may hire an attorney to represent your interests. Trials are normally held in Pierce County Superior Court and are tried before a jury, unless you waive the right to a jury trial. The verdict is binding on both parties unless there is a valid basis for an appeal.

Sign up to receive email updates:

Visit [PierceTransit.org/StayConnected](https://PierceTransit.org/StayConnected), enter your email address, and select “Bus Rapid Transit.”

Follow us on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram for the latest news:

-  [Facebook.com/PierceTransit](https://Facebook.com/PierceTransit)
-  [Twitter.com/PierceTransit](https://Twitter.com/PierceTransit)
-  [Instagram.com/PierceTransit](https://Instagram.com/PierceTransit)

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7/2020



Visit us at [RideBRT.com](https://RideBRT.com) for more information or to participate in the virtual open house.



[BRT@PierceTransit.org](mailto:BRT@PierceTransit.org)



For questions regarding your property impacts, call 253.581.8016.



# LET'S GET MOVING



## BRT IS:



### Frequent

Bus runs every 10-15 min



### Fast

Traffic signals prioritize transit



### Safe and reliable

Real-time information and lighting



### Accessible

Larger buses, room for on-board bicycles, easier wheelchair access



### Connected

Connecting downtown Tacoma and Spanaway with stops at key destinations



### Easy to board

Off-board fare readers, raised platforms, multiple doors

## STATING THE FACTS ABOUT PIERCE TRANSIT BRT

**What we've heard:** BRT will replace a route that isn't widely used.

**Fact:** Pierce Transit BRT will upgrade Pierce Transit's Route 1 – the local route with the highest ridership in Pierce County – to be more reliable and efficient so buses can bypass traffic and riders can get to their destinations sooner.

**What we've heard:** Dedicated bus lanes are ineffective, because some drivers will use them to get around traffic.

**Fact:** Only a portion of the total Pierce Transit BRT route will be a bus-only median lane. The median will prevent cars from using the lane, and cars will still be able to access right turns and businesses through the corridor.

**What we've heard:** BRT will displace homes and businesses because Pacific Avenue will be wider.

**Fact:** The corridor will be widened as needed to add new BRT transit lanes. The roadway design status is "work in progress" so the overall project impact is not yet known. The BRT project team is working with WSDOT and the city on design standard requirements for the project and a traffic analysis study. An important objective for the project design team is to evaluate both roadway safety requirements and property impacts with the BRT project. The BRT project team will work directly with all affected homeowners and businesses whose property may be identified as impacted by the project.

**What we've heard:** BRT will remove all the parking along State Route 7.

**Fact:** The Pierce Transit BRT project will lead to reduction of parking inventory along its 14.4-mile route; the Pacific Ave segment from S 38th and S 56th streets currently has the greatest number of on-street parking inventory. However, the project will not remove all parking along the project route.

**What we've heard:** BRT stops will be far apart, making the service less accessible.

**Fact:** Pierce Transit BRT keeps riders and traffic moving by prioritizing stops near key locations. Along the corridor, you should on average walk no more than a quarter mile (5-minute walk) from a Pierce Transit BRT stop. Current stops that would be removed are typically those with the lowest boardings and few transit connections.

**What we've heard:** BRT is too expensive, and we can't afford it.

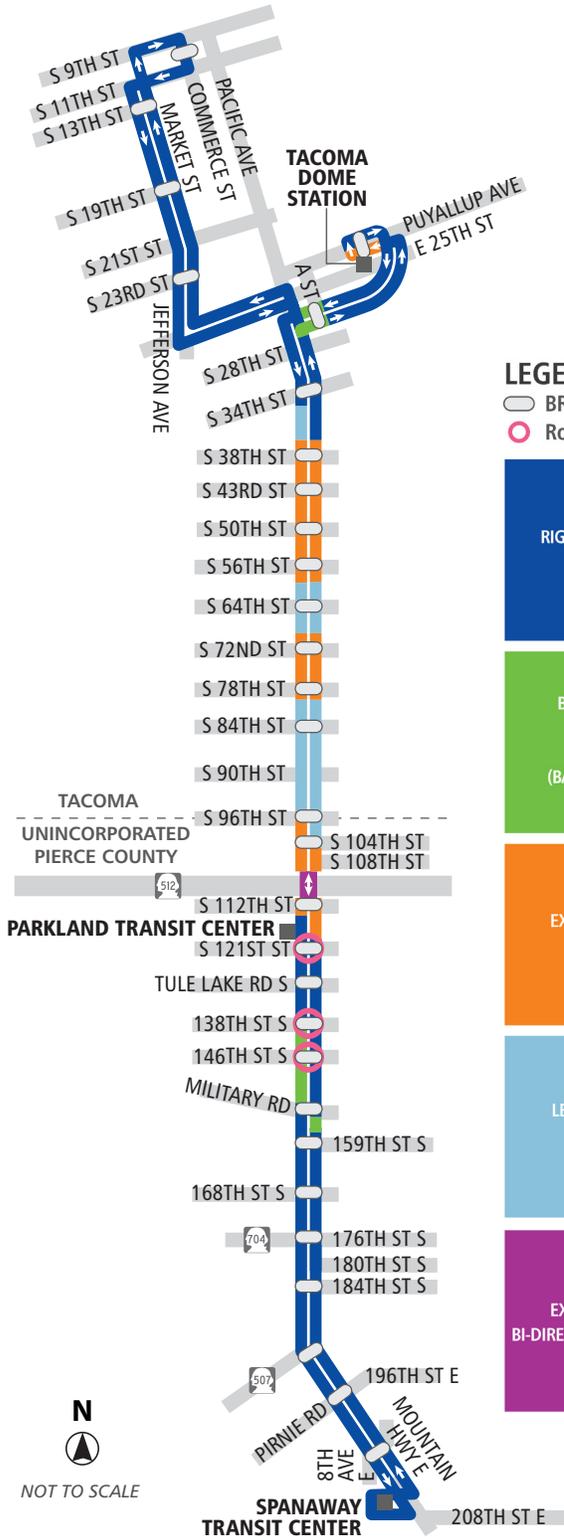
**Fact:** Pierce Transit BRT is estimated to cost \$150 million, paid for in large part by Sound Transit funds and potential Federal Transit Administration grants. Federal grants are your tax dollars coming back to your community to improve your services and quality of life. Pierce Transit BRT is a more budget-friendly option compared to street cars and light rail – without sacrificing efficiency and reliability.





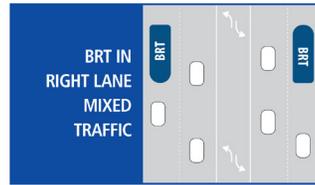
# RideBRT

BUS RAPID TRANSIT TACOMA TO SPANAWAY



### LEGEND

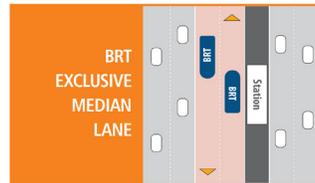
- BRT Stations
- Roundabout



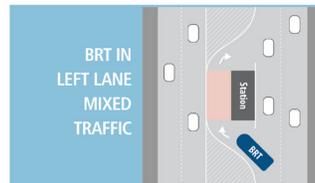
7.5 Miles



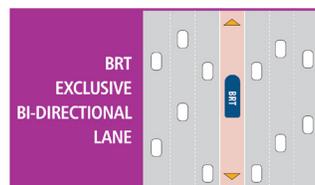
1.6 Miles



3.9 Miles



1.3 Miles



0.1 Miles

DIAGRAM IS NOT TO SCALE

## GET INVOLVED!

### Receive updates



Visit [PierceTransit.org/StayConnected](http://PierceTransit.org/StayConnected), enter your email address, and select "Bus Rapid Transit"

### Get in touch



Visit us at [RideBRT.com](http://RideBRT.com)



Email [BRT@PierceTransit.org](mailto:BRT@PierceTransit.org)



BRT Phone Line **253.983.3407**

### Be social with us!

Follow us on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram for the latest news:



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[Twitter.com/PierceTransit](https://twitter.com/PierceTransit)



[Instagram.com/PierceTransit](https://www.instagram.com/PierceTransit)

September 2020



## We want to connect with you!

Thank you for reaching out to discuss your property and the Pierce Transit BRT project.

Please fill in the below details so we can discuss any questions you may have about the property acquisition process and how the project could impact your property. Fold and insert this sheet into the pre-addressed envelope and send it back to us. We'll be in touch!

**Name (first and last):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address (number, street, city, state, zip):**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

*Please list any additional addresses you own in the project corridor on the back of this sheet.*

**Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Communication preference (check one):**

Video conference (preferred tool: \_\_\_\_\_)

Phone conference

In-person (will be available in accordance with changes to Gov. Inslee's Stay Home, Stay Healthy order)

