

Vantage Point

JANUARY – FEBRUARY 2013

Vanpool Public Hearings

Pierce Transit and its customers face significant changes in the coming year as result of the failed ballot initiative, Proposition 1, on November 6, 2012.

On February 11, 2013 at 4 p.m., Pierce Transit will conduct a public hearing regarding vanpool-specific proposals to:

1. Increase vanpool fares,
2. Recover Tacoma Narrows Bridge tolls for vanpools crossing the bridge, and
3. Align the vanpool service area boundaries with the new bus and SHUTTLE boundaries.

A bit more information for you about the third proposal...If it is adopted:

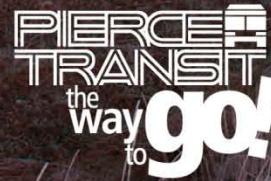
- All PT vanpool groups will be required to have an origin or destination within [Pierce Transit's new service area](#).
- If your vanpool group's current origin (overnight parking location) **and** destination are **both** outside the new service area, you must change your overnight parking location to a location within the new service area. The new origin must be in place no later than June 30, 2013 in order for your group to remain in operation.
- With this proposed service area change in mind, we have adjusted our overnight parking policy to allow overnight parking at riders' homes. If no riders in your group live within Pierce Transit's new service area, contact your vanpool coordinator to discuss possible options.

For more info about the Public Transportation Improvement Conference (PTIC) process that took place in 2012, visit the [PTIC website](#). Pierce Transit's Board of Commissioners will make decisions on the above proposals at their March 11 meeting.

Please contact your Pierce Transit vanpool coordinator with any questions:

Pierce Transit Vanpool Coordinators

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Vantage Point is a publication of Pierce Transit.

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Please consider the environment before printing this newsletter.

COMMUTING NEWS

Increase in Transit Benefit

Great news! The [Association for Commuter Transportation \(ACT\)](#) reports that new legislation preventing the "fiscal cliff" (HR 8) includes a provision that re-establishes parking and transit benefits at \$245/month. The provision is effective immediately and is currently set to expire at the end of 2013. Check with your employer to see how this affects your vanpool subsidy.

Thank You

Bookkeepers and drivers, thank you for your outstanding coordination in recording the one-way passenger miles info we requested. Because of your efforts, we were able to go live in January with our new report format.

Thank you for helping us to meet our federal reporting requirements, and for helping us provide that information to the Federal Transit Administration more completely and accurately than ever before. You rock the party!

Note: Bookkeepers, please go green by NOT including a copy of the fare reports in your payment envelope. Simply enclose the payment in one of our manila envelopes, and write your van number or group ID number on the envelope.

A Brilliant Commute

Headlights

Let there be light! It's a great safe-driving practice to turn on your vehicle's headlights. In fact, Washington State law requires vehicle headlights to be on from a half hour after sunset until a half hour before sunrise, and any time conditions make it difficult to see people or other vehicles. In bad weather, poor visibility or any time there is doubt, turn those lights on to help you see and BE SEEN by others. Clean the headlights for even better visibility!

Lane Stripes

You may have noticed new lane stripes brightening your commute route. Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) recently wrapped up a \$2.7 million safety project, which restriped high-traffic locations on Interstate 5 in Marysville, Lynnwood, Lacey, Tumwater, the Seattle express lanes, and several locations in Eastern Washington. Get more project info [here](#).

Governor's Commute Smart Awards

Each year the Governor's Commute Smart Awards recognize communities, businesses and employee transportation coordinators for their efforts to promote smart alternatives to driving alone, like vanpooling, carpooling, bicycling and teleworking. Their work improves traffic flow, cuts greenhouse gas emissions, and strengthens the economy by reducing our dependence on foreign oil. These guys are true heroes!

The Commute Smart Awards highlight the benefits of commute trip reduction – like better traffic flow and cleaner air – felt by everyone who lives or works in Washington. It's a celebration of efficient transportation as much as it is a demonstration in resourceful public spending. For every taxpayer dollar that goes to these programs, businesses invest \$18. And their returns are substantial in employee satisfaction, cost savings and community appreciation.

The 2012 Commute Smart honorees include **Mike Harbour** (former General Manager of Intercity Transit and now Deputy CEO of Sound Transit), Microsoft, Boeing Employees Credit Union, and **Cindi Gyselinck**, employee transportation coordinator at AT&T in Bothell.

For more details and the complete list of 2012 winners, see WSDOT's [Public Transportation](#) page.



Keith Cotton and Ted Horobowski with (clockwise from lower left) Lesley Schmidt, Lori Barschig, Charlie Moore and LeAnn Yamamoto.

Distracted Driving



The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) has identified driver distraction as a key cause of accidents. The organization cited that almost 80% of crashes occur when the driver is inattentive, distracted or drowsy.

Some other conclusions from NHTSA's multi-year study in driving habits:

- Drowsiness is a significant problem that increases a driver's risk of a crash or near-crash by at least a factor of four.
- The most common distraction is the use of cell phones. Interestingly, the number of crashes and near-crashes attributable to dialing is nearly identical to the number associated with talking or listening.
- Reaching for an object in the vehicle increases the risk of a crash or near-crash by nine times.
- Looking at an external object increases the risk factor by 3.7 times over normal driving.

Try these tactics to give your focus more focus:

- If you are tired, don't rely on energy drinks, loud music, or air conditioning to keep you awake. Let someone else do the driving.
- Do not even think about texting or reading text messages while driving. If your cell phone rings, have your copilot answer it or let it go to voicemail.
- Likewise, enlist the copilot to pick up dropped items or complete other tasks so you can focus on the road.

A Note About Odometer Readings

We love (and hope you do, too) that our vans are pretty slick. While they may not have swiveling, reclining captain's chairs, sunroofs and TV's (this is public transportation, after all), most of our vans have fancy odometers that record mileage right down to the tenth of a mile.

One small problem....we don't want mileage recorded to the tenth of a mile. We prefer nice, round numbers. So, drivers and bookkeepers: Any time you record mileage – when picking up a spare van or recording month-end mileage for your reports – please IGNORE the tenths. Drop them. Pretend they don't exist. For example, record mileage of 50,751.8 simply as 50,751.



At the gas pump, be sure to accurately key in the van's current odometer reading (again, lose the tenths). This mileage reading is important, as it ends up on a report that we use to schedule vehicle maintenance. If you accidentally key in a wrong odometer reading, just let us know.

Also, please don't estimate mileage to help make monthly reports balance. Record month-end mileage on the last commute day of the month, at end of day. If you forget to record an odometer reading, whether it's on your regular van or a spare, let us know. We will be happy to help you figure it out.



Updates & Reminders

VANPOOL

24/7 Emergency
253.381.3762

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

Vanpool Fax
253.984.8227

Vanpool@piercetransit.org

RIDEShare

1.888.814.1300
RideshareOnline.com

PIERCE TRANSIT

Customer Services
253.581.8000

Toll Free
1.800.562.8109

TDD Customer Service
253.582.7951

Piercetransit.org



Insurance ID Cards

Volunteer drivers, please ensure that the WSTIP 2013, Fleet Policy Insurance Identification card with effective dates of 1/1/2013 - 12/31/2013 is in the vanpool vehicle. We mailed a card to each primary volunteer driver mid-December. Feel free to remove and recycle the other card that expired 12/31/2012.

Vanpool Group Roster

Be sure each vanpooler has updated contact information for all participants in the vanpool so that you can plan alternate transportation. Download a blank Ridership Roster form from the [Vanpool Tools](#) section of our website and update your list today.

Love to Ride Campaign

February 3 - February 23



Use a smart commute option at least six days during the *Love to Ride* campaign, and you will be entered to win a weekend getaway to Portland, Oregon, and other fabulous prizes!

Love to Ride modes include carpooling, vanpooling, riding the bus or Sounder train, bicycling, walking, working from home or not commuting because of a compressed work week schedule.

You must commute to a worksite located in Pierce County (for [partnering](#) Pierce Trips employers only) and log your trips using the [Pierce Trips Commute Calendar](#) to be eligible for prizes.

GRAND PRIZE:

- ★ Weekend getaway for two to Portland, Oregon

OTHER PRIZES:

- ★ \$100 gift card to The Melting Pot Restaurant
- ★ \$100 gift card to Anthony's at Point Defiance
- ★ \$100 gift card to Harbor Lights
- ★ \$50 gift card to Harvester Restaurant
- ★ \$50 gift card to Hob Nob Restaurant
- ★ Museum of Glass and Hello Cupcake Outing
- ★ Grand Cinema Theatre and Corina Bakery Outing

What are you waiting for? Start logging those trips!