



Pierce County Council

2009 ANNUAL REPORT

The Pierce County Council is the legislative branch of government for the second-largest county (*population 813,600*) in Washington. For more information, visit www.piercecountywa.gov/council.



Welcome to the Pierce County Council's 2009 Annual Report, a summary of major legislation the council passed during the previous year. Topics are listed alphabetically; for more information, visit www.piercecountywa.gov/council.

2009 budget supplements

The council approved three 2009 supplemental budgets:

- On March 31, the council approved a supplemental budget that reduced 2009 spending by \$7.7 million ([2009-16s](#)) (*video*);
- A second supplemental budget approved on June 16 cut \$4.5 million by reducing county departments' budgets by 1.25 percent ([2009-7](#)) (*video*); and
- A third supplemental budget eliminated Department 9 of Superior Court (following Judge Michael Hecht's resignation) and directed the department's remaining \$19,000 to the hiring of pro-tem judges ([2009-105](#)). The council approved the proposal on Nov. 3, it was vetoed by the County Executive on Nov. 16, and the council voted to override the veto on Nov. 24. (*video*)

2010 budget

In anticipation of continued tough times in 2010 due to the current economic recession, the council's \$269.3 million general-fund [budget](#) (adopted Nov. 10) cut \$2.8 million from the County Executive's proposal and puts

PIERCE COUNTY COUNCIL MEETINGS

The Pierce County Council meets Tuesdays at 3 p.m. in the Council Chambers on the 10th floor of the County-City Building (930 Tacoma Ave. S., Room 1045) in Tacoma, Wash.

Its standing and select committees meet at other times throughout the week (visit www.piercecountywa.gov/council for schedules and agendas).

HOW TO WATCH

All meetings are broadcast live and replayed on Pierce County TV (channel 22). They also are streamed live and archived on PCTV's Web site, www.piercecountytv.org.

\$1.5 million into reserves without raising taxes. (*video*)

Anderson-Ketron Islands Community Plan

Approved on March 17, the county's 11th community plan supplement to the 1994 Comprehensive Plan governs land use on Anderson and Ketron islands ([2009-9s](#) and [2009-10](#)). (*video*)

Auditor appointment

On Jan. 13, the council appointed Jan Shabro to succeed previous Auditor Pat McCarthy, who was elected County Executive (R2009-187). Julie Anderson was elected auditor in November.

Charter amendment

The council on Feb. 10 approved a proposal ([2009-1](#)) that would place before the voters an amendment to the Pierce County Charter repealing Instant-Runoff Voting and reinstating the primary election in Pierce County. Voters approved the proposal in November but

rejected two other proposed charter amendments that would have moved county elections to odd-numbered years and extended term limits for county officers to three consecutive four-year terms. (*video*)

Comp plan amendments

Considered on a two-year cycle, the 2009 amendments to the county's comprehensive land-use plan received final council approval on Oct. 13 after 22 public meetings. The legislation ([2009-71s](#)) included 33 separate amendments that fell into four categories; changes to the county's urban-growth boundary, text-only amendments, reclassification of zoning districts, and changes to community plans. The executive vetoed the legislation on Oct. 28 and the council voted to override the veto on Nov. 24. (*video*)

Development application deadline extension

Due to the downturn in the construction industry, the council on Sept. 1 approved a

temporary extension (until Dec. 31) of the expiration date of certain development applications ([2009-67s](#)).

Development regulations

The council on June 9 gave final approval to this legislation ([2009-18s3](#)) that makes a variety of changes to titles 18, 18A, 18B, 18E, 18F, 18H and 18J of the Pierce County Code concerning development regulations. ([video](#)) (*see also "regulatory streamlining"*)

E-Verify

Approved Oct. 6, the legislation ([2009-74s](#)) requires the county to participate in E-Verify, a federal Internet database that instantly confirms whether or not job applicants have established their eligibility to work in the U.S. ([video](#)).

Housing affordability

The Housing Affordability Task Force was re-established by this resolution ([R2009-37](#)) – approved on June 23 – so it can complete its recommendations for implementing its March 2007 report. The task force will sunset on Dec. 31, 2010.

Instant-Runoff Voting

(*see "Charter amendment"*)

Law Enforcement Support Agency (LESA)

The council negotiated and approved on Dec. 8 an amendment ([R2009-129](#)) to the LESA Interlocal Agreement to revise LESA governance and include representatives from the County Council, Tacoma City

Council, and city of Lakewood on the LESA executive board.

Open space

Approved Sept. 29, this legislation ([2009-45s](#)) amends portions of the County Code to reflect consistent priorities for acquiring open-space, elevating in priority marine waters, prairie land, archaeological sites and historic landmark sites. The council on Oct. 27 also adopted a resolution ([R2009-97s](#)) creating an open-space task force that will review resources related to open space and prepare draft acquisition recommendations by October 2010. A final report and funding plan are requested by May 2011.

Prosecutor appointment

The council on Sept. 1 appointed Mark Lindquist as prosecuting attorney to fill the vacancy caused by the retirement of Gerald Horne ([R2009-83](#)).

Regulatory streamlining

On June 9, the council adopted a resolution beginning a process to reduce the complexity of the county's development regulations ([R2009-56](#)); the first recommendations were requested by July 31. ([video](#))

Sign-code enforcement

The council extended the sunset date for interim regulations governing temporary portable signs to Oct. 1 ([2009-21](#)). In addition, Public Works and Utilities staff on Aug. 12 began a three-week cleanup of signs illegally placed in the county right-of-way and at 15 of the worst intersections. After that,

those intersections will be revisited monthly and high-volume arterial roads will be swept quarterly. Repeat offenders will be warned and may be cited and fined. ([video](#))

Tacoma Narrows Airport

By resolution ([R2009-131s](#)), the council on Dec. 1 approved an application for a state grant to fund an economic feasibility study for the Tacoma Narrows Airport, which the council purchased in 2008.

Tourism Promotion Area

The council on May 19 passed a resolution ([R2009-32](#)) announcing the county's intent to create a Tourism Promotion Area (TPA), which allows the increasing of hotel room rates to fund tourism promotion activities. The council held a public hearing on June 9 and adopted a resolution ([R2009-119](#)) on Nov. 24 that creates a TPA with DuPont, Fife, Gig Harbor, Lakewood, Puyallup, Sumner and Tacoma.

Transfer/purchase of development rights

On April 14, the council adopted an ordinance ([2009-24s](#)) that clarifies the role of the Transfer of Development Rights committee and ensures that transactions can occur between private parties. The Transfer/Purchase of Development Rights (TDR/PDR) program was created in 2007 to preserve farmland; it allows Pierce County to compensate farmers for the value of their

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land in exchange for development rights to parcels in higher-density areas.

Transportation

The council took a number of actions to help move people and goods in our community including Transportation 2040 (R2009-101s), issuing \$24

million in transportation bonds (2009-54), authorizing another \$24 million in bonds in 2010 (R2009-130), and approving the Transportation Improvement Program. (2009-82s) ([video](#))



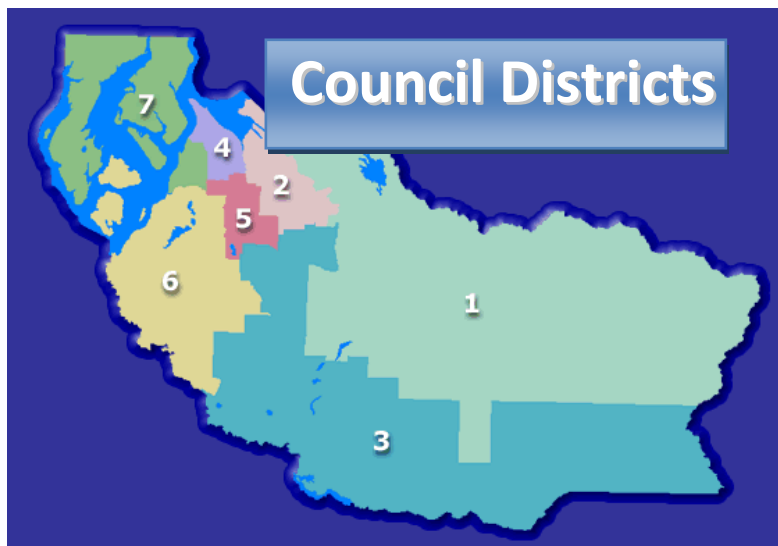
Pierce County Council, 2009: (back row, left) Joyce McDonald, District 2; Shawn Bunney, District 1; Barbara Gelman, District 5; Tim Farrell, District 4; (front row, left) Dick Muri, District 6 (executive pro tem); Roger Bush, District 3 (council chair); Terry Lee, District 7 (council vice chair)

District 7 – Gig Harbor and Key peninsulas, part of west Tacoma, Fircrest, University Place and Fox Island

District 4 – North and central Tacoma and Ruston

District 5 – South Tacoma, part of east Tacoma, Parkland, Midland, and part of Spanaway

District 6 – Lakewood, Steilacoom, DuPont, Roy, McKenna, Joint Base Lewis McChord, and Anderson, Ketrion, and McNeil islands



District 2 – Browns Point, Dash Point, Fife, Puyallup, northeast and east Tacoma, Summit View and Summit-Waller

District 1 – Buckley, Wilkeson, Carbonado, Bonney Lake, Sumner, Edgewood, Milton, South Prairie, Orting and eastern Graham

District 3 – South Hill, Ashford, Elbe, Eatonville, Elk Plain, Frederickson, western Graham and eastern Spanaway