About Pierce Transit

Pierce Transit improves people's quality of life by providing safe, reliable, innovative and useful transportation services that are locally based and regionally connected.

Founded in 1979, Pierce County Public Transportation Benefit Area Corporation (Pierce Transit) is a nationally recognized leader in the public transportation industry. Pierce Transit covers 292 square miles of Pierce County with roughly 70% of the county population. Serving Washington's second largest county, Pierce Transit provides three types of service: Fixed Route, Paratransit (SHUTTLE) and Vanpools that help get passengers to jobs, schools and appointments.

The agency provides a vital link in the regional transportation system by making connections with King County through express bus services. Pierce Transit is a municipal corporation, not part of the City of Tacoma, Pierce County or Sound Transit.

Pierce Transit is governed by a ten-member Board of Commissioners. The Board is comprised of elected officials representing fourteen jurisdictions within Pierce County and one non-voting Union Representative. The Board is responsible for adopting policies that govern the operation of the transit agency and its services and employs the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) to carry out the day-to-day management and administration of the agency.
Pierce Transit’s Sustainability Commitment

In the 1980s, Pierce Transit was among the first transit Agency in the nation to move most of our fleet to running on clean, compressed natural gas (CNG).

Today, 76% of Pierce Transit’s bus fleet runs on CNG, 13% are diesel-electric hybrids, 8% are diesels and 3% run on gas.

In 2018, Pierce Transit began a concerted effort to move a portion of its fleet to battery electric buses. The agency currently has three electric buses, with six more coming online soon.

Pierce Transit has signed onto the American Public Transportation Association’s Sustainability Commitment, committing to sustainable environmental practices.

Pierce Transit has an internal Green Team, which establishes sustainability outcomes and develops best practices, for example, upgrades to LED lighting, which reduced the agency’s carbon footprint by 14 metric tons.

Riders and where they are going

- 46% have been riding 5+ years
- 52% have no working vehicle
- 70% use ORCA card
- 67% from households with annual incomes below $35,000
- 51% commute to and from work
- 50% Medical appointments
- 72% Shopping and Errands
- 51% Fun, recreation and social
- 25% commute to school/college
About the Position

The CEO oversees an organization comprised of 960 budgeted positions, most of whom are represented by two labor unions; Amalgamated Transit Union and the International Association of Machinists. The 2021 approved operating budget is $148.4 million. The current executive team consists of a Chief Operations Officer and Executive Directors of Administration, Finance, Maintenance, and Planning and Community Development.

This position reports to and serves at the pleasure of the Pierce Transit Board of Commissioners.

The CEO develops broad policy and communicates the agency’s mission, vision and organizational values locally, regionally and statewide. Strategic management decisions are made daily that affect transit and the traveling public. These decisions require understanding of all aspects of a situation, analyzing options for effective solutions and the ability to negotiate and advance legislative, management and public relations issues and processes. The CEO must be able to identify and understand the near and far-term implications of program and project decisions.
The Ideal Candidate

This is an exceptional opportunity for a strategic, forward-thinking leader to shape the future of a growing transit agency and evolving industry. The ideal CEO candidate is a passionate transit advocate and an exceptional negotiator and balanced leader; comfortable with managing and leading in a complex and transparent environment; and someone who is capable of building bridges internally and externally, managing change, and implementing innovative solutions to create opportunities for advancement of the agency’s strategic objectives.

Pierce Transit values workplace diversity and has created an environment and culture that embraces employee differences. You will find an exceptionally diverse group of people at Pierce Transit with regard to culture, beliefs, communication styles, and life and work experiences. The new CEO will be expected to continue to support and enhance a diverse, equitable and inclusive workplace culture.

In addition, the next CEO will bring demonstrated and extensive experience working with diverse populations, particularly historically marginalized communities that have been underserved by public transit.
Pierce Transit is seeking a talented and unifying leader to bring innovative ideas and management to the agency and translate big picture transit vision and goals into realistic plans. Candidates should be dynamic, decisive and should excel in balancing both high-performing internal management and external relations. The overarching core competencies of this position are:

**Core-Competencies**

**Leadership:**
- **Inspiring and Courageous Leadership:** Ability to inspire, persuade, engage, speak straightforwardly about complex transit issues, make tough decisions and take difficult actions. Display balanced thinking that combines analysis, wisdom, experience and perspective. Produce data-informed decisions that withstand the “test of time.”
- **Creativity and Innovation:** Ability to generate new, innovative and visionary approaches to transit funding issues that are effective and responsive. Brings a perspective on emerging and leading transit trends and best practices.
- **Build a Talented, Effective Staff Team:** Hire, mentor, develop, retain, and manage a diverse staff. Assemble and reinforce a cohesive, dedicated, highly effective inter-disciplinary team. Ability to lead team through change processes.
- **Business and Management Acumen:** Ability to manage human, financial and information resources strategically. Brings innovative approaches and solutions, including grant sources and public/private partnerships, to transit funding challenges. Streamline and remove processes that do not bring value. Measure success based on results. Set high standards of performance, using accountability measures and benchmarks to track progress.
- **Strategic Vision:** Understanding of the changing landscape of transit, trends and innovations. The ability to articulate a big-picture vision and goals and translate into plans that are realistic and effective.

**Constituent Relations and Collaboration:**
- **Partnering:** Builds alliances and collaborates across boundaries to build strategic relationships. Brings diverse leaders together to discuss and resolve regional transportation issues. Inspires action without relying solely on authority. Good listener. Perceives the complexity of situations quickly.
- **Drive External Communications and Relationships:** Develop and nurture mission-critical relationships with labor, the media, business, political leaders, community groups, advisory groups and the public.
- **Cultural Competency:** Focus on racial equity in ways that enable effective working relationships in diverse communities and cross-cultural situations. Uses an equity lens to analyze the impact of policies on underserved and marginalized individuals and groups to identify and eliminate barriers.

**Values:**
- **High level of integrity, ethics, transparency and responsiveness.**
- **Commitment to the Environment:** Dedicated to creating a sustainable transit system that focuses on prevention, mitigation and adaptation.
- **Commitment to Safety:** Dedication to a transit system that is safe, efficient and accessible to all ages and abilities. system that is safe, efficient, and accessible to all ages and abilities.
- **Racial Equity:** Experience building strong relationships with marginalized communities. The ability to develop, articulate, and promote goals for Pierce Transit that are inclusive and supportive of diversity, equity, and inclusion.
Desirable Qualifications

A bachelor’s degree with at least seven years’ experience in a senior leadership role within a publicly accountable transportation organization that involves leading a diverse staff and management of significant funds. An advanced degree is a plus.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Persons interested in this position must submit a cover letter and a current resume.

If you have questions regarding this announcement, please call Marissa Karras at 360-956-1336. The position will remain open until filled; however, the screening process will move quickly. Please submit your application materials as soon as possible but no later than May 17th by visiting www.karrasconsulting.net and clicking on “view open positions.”

The salary for this position is competitive and depends on experience and qualifications. Pierce Transit offers a generous benefit package including medical/dental, retirement, life and disability insurance, paid holidays, vacation and sick leave, and optional deferred compensation.

Pierce Transit is an equal opportunity employer, values workplace diversity and seeks to create an environment and culture that embraces employee differences. All qualified applicants are considered in accordance with applicable laws prohibiting discrimination on the basis of race, religion, color, gender, age, national origin, sexual orientation, physical or mental disability, marital status or veteran status or any other legally protected status. We will provide assistance in the recruitment, application and selection process to applicants with disabilities who request such assistance.