

C-22	Infrastructure and Public Safety Priority	O’Leary	Article 6 New Section 6.26
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Amendment location: Packet Date – Page #

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This Amendment is a policy statement that asks for equity in consideration of motor vehicle planning and infrastructure. Current prioritization of Multimodal (walk, bike, transit) has dominated policy at a heavy cost to everyone. The Amendment contains no mandates but does have a reporting requirement.

Sponsor of Proposal

Commissioner Jerome O’Leary, District 1

Prior Action on Proposal:

Introduced and received 4 Vote sponsorship 3/23/2026. Amended during First Reading on April 13, 2026. Proposal for consideration at Second Reading is below.

Brief Summary of Proposal:

This amendment establishes a charter-level policy that prioritizes maintenance, safety improvements, and strategic modification of motor vehicle transportation infrastructure in unincorporated Pierce County are motor vehicle dependent and lack considerable alternatives to motor vehicle transportation and/or lack adequate stormwater and drainage systems. It emphasizes the importance of maintaining roads, bridges, and stormwater systems to support public safety, mobility, and economic activity.

Proposed Charter Amendment:

Add New Section:

Section 6.26 Infrastructure and Public Safety Investment Priority

- (1) Policy. It shall be the policy of Pierce County that public capital and maintenance expenditures give priority to the preservation, maintenance, improvement, and strategic modification of essential motor vehicle-oriented transportation and stormwater infrastructure serving the unincorporated areas of the county that lack considerable alternatives to motor vehicle transportation and/or lack adequate stormwater and drainage systems in order to improve public safety, mobility, and infrastructure reliability.
- (2) Priority of Existing Infrastructure. To the greatest extent permitted by

law and consistent with fiscal responsibility, county budgets and capital improvement programs shall prioritize:

(a) Maintenance, preservation, and rehabilitation of existing roadways and bridges supporting motor vehicle transportation in areas that lack considerable alternatives to motor vehicle transportation.

(b) Repair, replacement, and improvement of stormwater and drainage systems necessary to protect transportation infrastructure and reduce roadway hazards in areas that lack adequate stormwater and drainage systems.

(c) Safety improvements to roadway infrastructure, including intersection improvements, bridge safety improvements, visibility improvements, and other measures intended to improve public safety.

(3) Strategic Modification. When population growth, safety conditions, or economic development needs justify additional capacity, the county may prioritize the modification or modernization of motor-vehicle roadway, bridge, and related stormwater infrastructure serving the unincorporated areas that lack considerable alternatives to motor vehicle transportation and/or lack adequate stormwater and drainage systems.

(4) Implementation. Nothing in this section shall:

(a) Require the county to appropriate funds beyond those lawfully available.

(b) Conflict with state or federal law or grant requirements.

(c) Limit the authority of the County Council to adopt the county budget or capital improvement program.

(5) Reporting. The County Executive shall periodically report to the County Council on the condition, safety needs, and funding requirements of roadway, bridge, and stormwater infrastructure serving the unincorporated areas of the county.

Rationale for Proposal:

Residents of unincorporated Pierce County rely primarily on motor vehicle transportation for daily travel, emergency services access, and economic activity. Many areas are motor vehicle dependent. Aging roadways, bridges, and stormwater infrastructure require ongoing maintenance and safety improvements. Establishing a charter-level priority for maintaining and improving this infrastructure helps ensure long-term planning, public safety and responsible investment in critical public assets.

DPA Review of Proposal

Date:

3/18/2026

Proposal No.:

C-22

Topic:

Infrastructure and Public Safety Investment Priority

DPA:

Katie Blinn

Legal Review:

The proposal adds a new section to the Financial Administration article of the Charter establishing priorities for capital and maintenance expenditures. These policy statements are within the authority of a Charter County.

Other Feedback/Comments/Recommendations:

Summary Points

- This is a policy statement. Not a mandate.
- Motor vehicle transportation is critical to everyone.
- Goods, services and emergency services are universally provided by motor vehicle.
- Many have no other options than motor vehicles.
- They have been penalized and endangered by excluding motor vehicle priorities.
- Multimodal (walk, bike, transit) has been overly prioritized.
- This has led to unsafe conditions.
- No matter how people travel, safe and reliable roads are essential.
- People rely on roadways every day.
- Roads and infrastructure have been neglected.
- Maintenance and proper planning are far less expensive than responding to neglect and emergencies.
- Promotes transparency and accountability through reporting.
- Seeks to maintain critical public assets, not limiting future choices.
- Allows for informed decision making.

Submit written testimony

By Email: katey.hobbs@piercecountywa.gov

By Web Form: <https://www.piercecountywa.gov/FormCenter/Charter-Review-41/Provide-Written-Public-Comment-893>

Submitted public testimony

Names in **RED** = CON

Names in **GREEN** = PRO

As of 4-24-26 = **1 CON** ~ **30 PRO**

3-30-26 Packet

John Leslie

john@thetruthpage.org

Thursday, March 26, 2026 12:15 PM

Proposed Charter Amendment C-22

I fully support proposed Amendment C-22 brought by Jerome Oleary

Everyone is motor vehicle dependent. Even home bound and those who use other modes of transportation rely on motor vehicle transportation. No one is exempt. All goods and services are supplied by motor vehicles and cannot be provided by other means. From the food we eat to the waste we generate and all other life sustaining necessities in between, motor vehicles are inescapable and irreplaceable.

Grocery store shelves are not stocked by bicycles and the home bound do not receive care by pedestrian providers.

While some dense urban environments can provide for some alternatives, even those depend on motor vehicles in the end.

In the vast rural environments across Pierce County, residents are completely dependent on motor vehicles. To say their very lives depend on them is not an overstatement.

These facts have been ignored and deprioritized to the cost and detriment of everyone.

This proposal does not seek to force any actions other than reporting. Rather, it establishes the critical nature of motor vehicle transportation. At its core, C-22 is about something very simple: taking care of what we already have and keeping people safe.

Again, it does not dictate, but allows for strategic expansion when it's justified by real needs like safety or growth.

Because motor vehicle transportation affects every citizen in Pierce County, a policy statement like this in our charter is not only appropriate, but much needed.

I urge the commissioners to consider these critical needs and support this Amendment.

Sincerely,

John Leslie

Elvin Lerew

etlerew@hotmail.com

Wednesday, March 25, 2026 7:15 PM

I strongly encourage the Charter Review Commission to approve the amendment to the proposed county charter that adds a New Section 6.26 that is intended to make Infrastructure and Public Safety Investment a Priority. As a resident of South Hill I see what appears to be uncontrolled development with little regard to the current transportation inadequacies. The 122nd avenue corridor is a prime example of kicking the can down the road to future years. Public works has most recently stated that the work on the corridor would restart in the first quarter of 2026 but there is no indication that this will happen in the next six days. As a resident of unincorporated Pierce County, and specifically South Hill, we really need improvements to our transportation network to be a priority, especially those areas that have no other transportation options other than driving our cars. Please consider approving this amendment.

Richard Mordini

richardmor@sbcglobal.net

Sent: Thursday, March 26, 2026 6:27 AM

I'm writing to express my support for charter amendment 6.26. I would also like to see that Pierce county start an annual reporting requirement that measures congestion as it relates to travel time. There has been much frustration and tears in my family dealing with congestion in rural Pierce county. Missing children's athletic events due to being stuck in traffic is heartbreaking. Then there is the overwhelming fear of being trapped in traffic during a Lahar event and not being able to reach a evacuation route in time. We need congestion relief. Thank you.

Robb Krehbiel

robb.krehbiel@gmail.com

Sent: Monday, March 23, 2026 12:13 PM

I'm writing to express my concerns with Proposal C-22, Infrastructure and Public Safety. I understand the goal of ensuring residents across Pierce County can easily access services and businesses through

a well maintained transportation system, I am concerned with the proposals focus on “car-dependent” areas.

The long term direction and vision for Pierce County should be to reduce car dependency, not perpetuate it. This proposal could require the county to invest transportation funds on maintaining roads for a handful of single occupancy vehicles at the expense of public transportation expansion and improvement. By introducing terms like “vehicle-dependent,” this proposal may also lock in long-term planning and development decisions that disincentive public transportation investments in parts of the county. If parts of the county are designated/recognized as “car dependent,” then projects to expand light rail or bus service to those areas will be deprioritized. Why invest in transit where the stated policy goal/level of service is for single occupancy vehicles.

The proposal also would have the county prioritize expanding roads for more vehicles instead of investing in transit oriented development, thus creating a conflicting goal with several regional plans and state law.

As many of you know, road networks create a host of environmental and public health problems, and the county is already working to offset these existing impacts. Prioritizing road-building and car-centric designs threatens the health of county residents, reduces public safety due to more vehicle collisions, and discourages the development of walkable neighborhoods and business districts (which attract small, local businesses).

I encourage the commission to instead prioritize expanding the public transit network and increasing the level of service to reduce car-dependency throughout Pierce county. I also encourage the commission to prioritize transit-oriented development and investments in green infrastructure (trees, rain gardens, etc) to reduce the impact of the development and support neighborhood walkability.

From: SJ T <sj30aa@gmail.com>

Sent: Tuesday, March 24, 2026 7:24 PM

Subject: C-22 Infrastructure and Public Safety Priority

Please support this proposed amendment from Commissioner O'Leary.

C-22 Infrastructure and Public Safety Priority O'Leary Article 6 New Section 6.26

Amendment location: Packet Date – Page # 3/23-75 Amendment Tracking No. C-22

Sponsor of Proposal: Commissioner Jerome O'Leary, District 1

I believe this amendment provides a clear, responsible framework to ensure that critical infrastructure in unincorporated Pierce County is maintained and improved, directly supporting public safety and reliable transportation. By prioritizing maintenance and strategic upgrades, it protects existing investments while reducing long-term costs associated with deferred repairs and infrastructure failure. Ultimately, it strengthens mobility and economic stability for residents who depend on safe, functional roadways and stormwater systems every day. I respectfully request your support for this amendment. Thank you very much.

Sincerely,
SammieJo Thirtyacre Eatonville, WA

4-6-26 Packet

[Robertson Harding](#)

mayor@cityofbuckley.com

Thursday, March 26, 2026 12:45 PM

RE: C-22 O'Leary Infrastructure and Public Safety Amendment I am writing to support this amendment for the following reasons: 1. It establishes a Pierce County Charter policy prioritizing maintenance and safety improvements. 2. It also acknowledges the importance of roads, bridges and stormwater systems to economic activity in the entire County.

[Neyens](#)

kndwood@msn.com

Wednesday, April 1, 2026 8:50 PM

I writing to you to support the Proposed Amendment to Charter
Section(s): Article VI – Financial Administration
New Section 6.26 – Infrastructure and Public Safety Investment Priority

It was approximately 20 years ago now that the largest planned residential community in this state (most probably largest in the entire Pacific Northwest!) was approved and permitted. Since then, about 10,000 new residential units have been built and with all the amendments and modifications that have since been approved, I've lost count on just how many more are yet to follow in that one development. In addition to that one very large community there have been numerous other large developments planned and permitted for the surrounding area.

As an area resident, I've always been concerned for this rural, agricultural environment, the infrastructure, public safety and quality of life for myself, my family and my community. As we've seen, very little has actually been done by Pierce County to prepare for or accommodate the additional traffic volumes generated by all of this new and future development. The only real significant contribution has been the cooperative effort of the one developer and county to build one elaborate 4 lane connection to a narrow, overburdened 2 lane state highway. Sure, there have been a few traffic lights and improved intersections to facilitate improved access to the development but nothing of any significance that will help relieve the traffic congestion, public safety and quality of life for the surrounding area. Nothing! Who was it that thought one could simply add 15-20,000 new homes and add an additional 90,000-120,000 vehicle trips a day and do nothing as far as transportation infrastructure improvements?

Out here in this part of Pierce County we really have no public transportation opportunities. What we do have is urban sprawl, congested and over-burdened roadways, loss of ecosystem, light and noise pollution, tons of frustration and a diminishing quality of life.

The state has done numerous studies of SR162 from roundabouts, to intersection improvements, to widening and traffic studies. They still haven't made a decision of any significance that will help this

area. So far what we've seen and what they have planned will only negatively impact our quality of life and exasperate current traffic congestion issues.

We desperately need Pierce County to extend 128th St. west from SR162 and on up to South Hill. We need Pierce County to do something with McCutcheon Rd. E., the only alternative north-south option to the overburdened SR162. We need Pierce County to widen and make the improvements to Military Rd. and make it a suitable arterial to handle the truck and car traffic we see today and what we'll have in the coming years.

Wouldn't it be nice if, for a change, we took a proactive approach to our traffic and congestions issues rather than constantly playing catchup and always being reactive?

Please help!

Sincerely,
Daniel J. Neyens
10812 McCutcheon Rd. E.
Bonney Lake, WA 98391
253-209-9528

Neyens
kndwood@msn.com

Thursday, March 26, 2026 8:22 PM

For the past 10+ years I have repeatedly submitted my concerns, input and requests for some roadway improvement considerations for McCutcheon Road E. in unincorporated Pierce County. Connecting the state's largest planned residential community on the Bonney Lake Plateau to SR162 via the new 128th Steet connection, adding roundabouts on SR162 and improvements at the SR162/SR410 intersection will do nothing but encourage commuter traffic to seek alternative routes from the congestion exacerbated by those changes. The ONLY north/south alternative in the valley for SR162 is McCutcheon Road. SR162 is already overburdened with the current traffic load. Planning on adding an additional 20,000+ vehicle trips a day to SR162 will plainly gridlock the entire valley. Where do you think that traffic will go? What do you think drivers will do to avoid the congestion and gridlock you're creating? I believe they will look for an alternative route. The only other option to go north/south is once again, McCutcheon Road. This roadway is in decent condition maintenance wise but very poorly designed for this kind of traffic load.

McCutcheon is/was a rural farm to market roadway and service road for the local residents living along the river. It was never designed for nor improved in any substantial way to accommodate the load demand you will be placing upon it. There are tight curves and narrow sections where today cars and school buses can't pass by each other without one or the other driving on the shoulder. There is a very narrow concrete bridge across Fennel Creek where the lanes with shoulders are barely 9 feet wide. The conditions out here are barely acceptable today with the current level of use. We sincerely fear that this roadway will become a growing safety hazard as soon the plateau connection is made connecting McCutcheon at 128th St. We desperately need your help!

Hill
dnmhill@comcast.net

Monday, March 30, 2026 11:23 AM

To: 2026 Pierce County Charter Review Commission

Regarding: Proposed Amendment to Charter Section(s): Article VI – Financial Administration New Section 6.26 – Infrastructure and Public Safety Investment priority

Finally, Pierce County is recognizing the plight of unincorporated Pierce County residents who are motor vehicle dependent and experiencing a failing transportation network. This deficiency includes public safety issues, from bridges to stormwater issues. Mobility issues from overcapacity commute corridors to inadequate traffic management. The economic impact is being felt by all businesses using this transportation network and those it serves. I fully support this amendment proposal to the 2026 Pierce County Charter.

Sincerely,

David R. Hill

15710 106th St E

Puyallup, WA 98374

Ehnat

karenehnat@yahoo.com

Monday, March 30, 2026 10:05 AM

Re:Pierce County Charter.

I live in Bonney Lake, a rapidly expanding city which does not have the infrastructure to support the growth. The city is not walking friendly. It sorely lacks public transportation resulting in an excessive amount of vehicle traffic to go anywhere within or outside of the city. We do have a park and ride in the edge of the city to catch a bus out but that is it. Parents are having to take their children to every activity adding more cars in the roads at various times and clogging traffic. The food bank is located between Bonney Lake and Buckley on hwy 410 but there is no bus to take people who need the food Tehaleh, in Bonney Lake, is in unincorporated Pierce Co., has hundreds of homes and will eventually have almost 10 000 homes, most with children. We need bus transportation desperately to reduce traffic, increase the ability to go places throughout the city and beyond, and reduce air pollution and gas usage. I urge this goal be part of Pierce County's charter.

Sharp

kathie@kathiesharp.com

Sunday, March 29, 2026 6:45 PM

It is important to balance improvements for transportation with growth and development. We moved to Trilogly in 2019 and were promised there would be a road that would connect us to Highway 162.

That has not happened. Since, there is massive developments being built and more families moving into this area, what would happen if we needed to evacuate? Please provide a budget to maintain and expand vehicle infrastructure in Pierce county.

Finlayson

Lauire.finlayson@gmail.com

Saturday, March 28, 2026 7:12 PM

Please prioritize unincorporated South Pierce County for transportation infrastructure by including the new "Section 6.26 – Infrastructure and Public Safety Investment Priority" in the Pierce County Charter. So many new homes are being built (Tehaleh is expanding) without addressing roads, schools, and other infrastructure. Thank you.

Thoren

thorenleer@gmail.com

Wednesday, April 1, 2026 2:23 PM

I want strongly support the proposed Charter Review new section 6.26. Infrastructure and Public Safety Investment Policy. Affordable residential homes/growth in Pierce County now, and in the future, will require road infrastructure to support increasing multi family and single family residential living and the retail and commercial support that accompanies it.

Personal and commercial vehicle use will continue to increase and the safety issues that are related. While mass transit is desperately needed it is cost prohibitive and not a practical solution. Road infrastructure improvement and safety are the obvious priorities for the future benefit of county residents.

Blomquist

bloms6@yahoo.com

Sunday, March 29, 2026 9:59 AM

We need a higher priority for roads in East Pierce County where a large expansion of homes have provided more traffic than the current infrastructure was designed to hold. In keeping with the need to fund these road improvements the County should increase charges to developers.

Herbert-Hill

mherberthill@hotmail.com

Monday, March 30, 2026 11:40 AM

Share your Comments here. REGARDING Article VI, New Section 6.26 -- Infrastructure and Public Safety Investment Priority

There's probably a dozen reasons this is an important Amendment to the County Charter, but here are a few:

1. Economic Vitality: To maintain a strong economy in our county, we must have an effective, efficient transportation network. The current quality of our transportation in the unincorporated county is compromising the vitality of our economy. The county must address this issue and prioritize transportation funding to improve corridors that serve the economic sectors beyond the urbanized areas.

2. Quality of Life: Access to services is critical to a quality living environment. The county's transportation network currently is compromising that aspect of a quality life. There is a dread when you

must meet an appointment or run errands. The stress of traveling the county's corridors wears on one's health, mental and physical. Patience is pushed to the limit, compromising mental attitude and physical health. The county must address this by prioritizing improvements to the transportation network to relieve this condition.

3. Time to Destination: Traffic congestion has increased in recent years to a point now where it is completely unacceptable in some areas. Congestion must be assessed by time to destination, selection specific points and determining how long it takes to travel that distance. For example, how long does it take to travel Shaw Road from East Main in Puyallup to Military

Road on South Hill? How long does it take to travel from Shaw Road to Sunrise Bolivard on Military Road/122nd Ave. E? Choose other congested locations in the unincorporated county.

4. Connecting Corridors: The development the county has allowed has created residential centers that need to connect to urban areas which have loaded the connecting corridors. These corridors are easily identified and well known. Focus needs to be made to the improvement of these corridors. Prioritize these corridors for improvement with action, not by just listing them.

5. Permitted Development: The county has not made an honest assessment of the impact of the development that been permitted in the unincorporated county areas. Planning and Public Works needs to be looking more closely at these impacts and address the true demands these developments are requiring now and in the future when they are fully built out. Put effort into resolving the overburdening of the corridors impacted by these developments before it happens.

6. Environmental Impacts: Congested corridors increase air pollution, even as electric vehicles are increasing. This impacts quality of life for people as well as the birds and the bees and other wildlife in our less urbanized areas of the county.

7. Public Transportation: A majority of the unincorporated county does not have public transportation of any kind and is very unlikely to have any for decades. This large area of the county with tens of thousands of people must travel by motor vehicle. This portion of the county's population has been treated as second class citizens at best with the absence of support in improving the transportation system as the population has continually increased. It's time to realize defaulting to future public transportation is a no-go. Public transportation will be inadequate as buses can move only as fast as the traffic will allow. Further, buses most often do not run to the destinations and with the frequency that the public demands.

8. Active Transportation: Using bikes or other methods on nonmotorized transportation is recreation, not transportation to do errands or travel to work. There are many limitations that make AT not an option: distance to destinations, weather, physical ability to use them, time to destination (even if you like to ride a bike, etc., and sometimes might seem faster than a car, there is no ability to carry "cargo" like groceries or other products).

This raises the need for the county to focus on dedicating action to improving the transportation network in unincorporated Pierce County.

Thank you.

Respectfully,
Maxine Herbert-Hill

Mosby

paul.mosby@comcast.net

Wednesday, April 1, 2026 9:22 PM

I am strongly in Favor of proposal C-22 concerning the infrastructure and public safety amendment. It's a long time coming for Pierce Co., all Counties, to get their infrastructures up to dependable, safe, working order. This amendment sums it up well. For do the the leadership in Pierce County has neglected our roads, bridges, and more.

Jones

Bojones327@icloud.com

Tuesday, March 31, 2026 4:07 PM

I live off SR162 1 block north of the Military Road intersection. What with a curve north of the 115th St Ct E entrance and vehicles ignoring the request to slow to 40mph and the signals at Military, exiting my neighborhood can be frightful! Now, couple this with the increase in traffic the last 10 years and add the new Tehaleh Blvd opening in the. Ext year or so, traffic will be at a standstill. We are a rural community with farms scattered all along SR162 and are actually designated rural. There are people living in the vicinity of Bonnie Lake who want to drive west to Puyallup, Frederickson, and I-5, but to do this they have to head north on SR410, cross over SR167 and then enter SR512! It be much more efficient it the county were to extend 128th St across SR162 then go up the east Hill into South Hill then reconnect with itself via Reservoir Road. Also there has been 8 years of effort to convince WSDOT to widen SR162 to accommodate a third turn lane from Sumner to Orting. Then would lessen the inpact left turners put on traffic and would also, if provided, pullouts for school busses and one day transit.

My request to you is to approve this amendment as it will help lessen the stain of traffic in this area

Terry Carter

cartert@bonneylake.gov

Tuesday, March 31, 2026 12:58 PM

Greetings,

My name is Terry Carter. I am the Mayor of Bonney Lake. I am writing to you today in support of Commissioner O'Leary's Charter Amendment Proposal.

The proposal indicates the policy of Pierce County should be that public capital and maintenance expenditures give priority to preservation, maintenance, improvement, and strategic expansion of essential automobile-oriented transportation and stormwater infrastructure serving the unincorporated areas of the county in order to improve public safety, mobility, and infrastructure reliability.

This is important to the region of Pierce County I represent as unincorporated growth has occurred at an alarming rate. We barely have roads for all the traffic but we don't have sidewalks, proper stormwater mitigation, bike lanes, bus service or light rail. People in this area commute by automobile even if it's to a Park and Ride. I would ask that the large swath of unincorporated Pierce County not get lost and left behind.

Please vote yes on this proposal of policy. This would help the growing number of citizens throughout our area of East Pierce County.

Thank you for your service to Pierce County,

Terry Carter

Bush

tom.bush3331@hotmail.com

Monday, March 30, 2026 2:20 PM

March 30, 2026

As an Orting resident, I strongly support the proposed amendment to Section 6.26 of the Pierce County Charter. Establishing a clear policy priority for preserving, maintaining, improving, and strategically expanding essential automobile-oriented transportation and stormwater infrastructure in Pierce County's unincorporated areas.

Residents across incorporated cities and unincorporated areas rely heavily on personal vehicles for daily mobility, work, school, emergency services, and commerce. Outside of key urban corridors, transportation across Pierce County is exclusively dependent on roads. Prioritizing the maintenance and safety of existing roadways, bridges, and drainage systems is common-sense governance that directly protects public safety and prevents further deterioration of critical infrastructure.

This policy focuses first on preservation and rehabilitation of what we already have — fixing potholes, upgrading unsafe intersections, repairing stormwater systems that cause flooding and road damage, and improving bridge safety. These investments reduce accidents, improve emergency response times, and lower long-term repair costs. Only when justified by growth, safety needs, or economic development should strategic expansion occur.

Elevating this policy to the Pierce County Charter is a wise and responsible step. Unlike ordinary code provisions that can shift with each administration, a Charter amendment provides lasting, voter-approved protection that transcends changing political priorities and individual County Executives. It would enshrine a fundamental commitment to responsible stewardship of our existing transportation infrastructure. I respectfully request that the Commission recommend this Charter amendment for placement on the November 2026 ballot.

Thank you,

Tom Bush

Resident, Orting, WA

Council District 1

Shields

ybshields.op@gmail.com

Sunday, March 29, 2026 8:24 PM

We moved to unincorporated Pierce County (in Bonney Lake) over 8 years ago. We are totally dependent on our roads and bridges in Pierce County to get to work, school, church, doctor offices, etc. There are very few options for mass transportation without driving half an hour or more, and then the mass transit usually goes into Seattle. The White River Bridge incident and the flooding last December that impacted some of our major roads made our household realize that we are at the mercy of our infrastructure. Please make maintenance of our infrastructure a priority. Improvement of our roads is also needed with the growth of our area.

4-13-26 Packet

Daniela Wever

d.c.wever@gmail.com

Friday, April 3, 2026 10:46 PM

My husband & I have been living right outside of Orting for over 2 decades. We love it, but with the tremendous growth in the area (South Hill, Graham, Bonney Lk, South Prairie & Sumner) the traffic has become unbearable. Even though we are retired & can choose when to drive somewhere, it is still horrific. Pls support expanding 128th, 122nd, Military Rd & other roads to make this beautiful area more livable again. Thank you in advance for your assistance, Daniela & Bob Wever-Berg

Lucas Rambo

lukerambo253@gmail.com

Friday, April 3, 2026 9:09 AM

Transportation around East Pierce County is unbearable at times. There are tens of thousands of new homes being built, and no new roads. We have logjams and bottlenecks everywhere, caused by lack of turn lanes, lack of traffic signals, and too many cars. It can sometimes take 45 minutes to drive the short 4 miles from 122nd St E & Shaw Rd to Emerald Ridge High School because of the intense traffic problems that exist. With the new Tehaleh road going in soon, it will place thousands more cars on the road coming from Bonney Lake onto SR 162/Orting Hwy. Many of those cars will be travelling up Military Rd E/122nd St E toward South Hill for shopping, entertainment, etc., which will cause further congestion. That old, steep, curvy road is not capable of handling this increased demand.

There needs to be another egress out of the Orting Valley and by extending 128th St E across SR 162 up toward Reservoir Road would help tremendously. The residents of East Pierce County are all in alignment and public opinion/preference is overwhelmingly in favor of creating this new road rather than increase the traffic on the existing pathways. For lahar safety reasons alone, it is the right thing to do. Please build the new road from 128th St E at SR 162 to continue up and connect with Reservoir Rd E on South Hill.

Road construction and infrastructure improvement in East Pierce County has not kept up with the unabated residential construction in our community. There are road projects that have started and now seem entirely halted. We hear there is no funding, we hear there is a plan, we hear lots of things... But we do not see solutions. There are major problems with road rage and people running red lights. People just want to get home but the bottlenecks are incapacitating. Safety should be of paramount concern for those who make decisions about our community development, but all we see is more and more residential housing going in, with incongruent and insufficient improvements made to our roadways. This needs to change now. The residents of East Pierce County will reach a breaking point if things don't change. We have a wonderful, vibrant community. We need to build for our happy future here, rather than just continuing to approve new housing communities to line the pockets of developers.

Mohamed Marikar

akmalmarikar@gmail.com

Monday, April 6, 2026 10:32 AM

Dear Charter Commissioners:

I am writing to support the Charter Amendment C-22 – Infrastructure and Public Safety Priority, New Section 6.26 related to the transportation network in unincorporated Pierce County.

For more than 20 years the county has been approving and permitting development in the rural areas of the county without addressing the impact that development has on the transportation network. We are now at a stage in the increasing traffic from this continuing development that is at true crisis level.

Many people work in seattle or near and with continued efforts by corporations to encourage returning to office as opposed to work from home, combined with the increasing housing developments in the area, traffic is set to bring everyone to a stand still. The concept of rush "hour" is basically flipping and unless you are commuting at 4 am or after 8pm you are hitting traffic. I try to take the sounder but just getting back from the train to my house can take 35 to 40 minutes. And god forbid you have kids who have to go to school forcing you into to specific drop off and pick up times which can eleminate the ability to leave early.

As you can see from what I have noted here, we truly are at a crisis point where the county must prioritize these roads for improvement to support the need created by the permitted development. I urge you to include this Amendment in the revised County Charter.

Very respectfully, Mohamed Marikar

Richard Mordini

richardmor@sbcglobal.net

Monday, April 6, 2026 10:19 AM

I'm writing to express my support for extension of 128th street off of State route 162. This extension would be vital to the residents of the greater Orting community. This would also provide another Lahar evacuation route. This extension would provide much needed relief for congestion. Last week there was an accident on 162 that shut down the highway. My son missed his baseball practice because there is no other practical way to go around. I wish this was an uncommon situation but it's becoming increasingly common. There has been many tears shed in my family from missing children's school and athletic events due to the ever worsening congestion. So please extend 128th. Thank you.

4-20-26 Packet

Cherie Kuranko

Thursday, April 16, 2026 4:59 PM

PRO C-22 Written Testimony to Support Amendment

ATTN: Commissioners C Fellow Pierce County Citizens

I wholeheartedly support C-22.

Proposed Charter Amendment C-22 for Pierce County establishes a clear policy priority: public capital and maintenance expenditures must focus first on preserving, maintaining, improving, and strategically modifying **essential automobile (motor vehicle) transportation and stormwater infrastructure** in the unincorporated areas. These are the vast rural, suburban, and country regions where residents have few or no realistic alternatives to driving motorized vehicles.

The amendment (new Section 6.26) emphasizes:

- Maintenance and rehabilitation of existing roadways and bridges in motor-vehicle-dependent areas.
- Repair and improvement of stormwater/drainage systems to protect roads and reduce hazards (critical in rainy Western Washington).
- Safety upgrades like intersections, bridge work, and visibility improvements to meet acceptable levels of service.
- Strategic capacity additions only when justified by growth, safety, or economic needs.

It includes a reporting requirement for transparency on infrastructure conditions and needs, while explicitly stating it does **not** mandate new spending, override state/federal laws, or restrict the County Council's budget authority. It simply directs priorities toward the transportation mode that actually serves unincorporated Pierce County.

Why This Priority Makes Sense for Unincorporated Pierce County

Unincorporated Pierce County is **not** a dense urban city like Tacoma or Puyallup. It spans enormous stretches of rural and suburban land—Pierce County's total land area is about 1,668 square miles, with substantial rural and unincorporated portions (including agricultural lands and communities far from city centers). Residents here live across thousands of acres connected primarily by roads designed for motor vehicles. Daily life depends on cars and trucks: commuting to jobs, dropping children at daycare, shopping on the way home, hauling livestock/horses, hay, feed, farm equipment, manure, or other materials that buses, trains, or bikes simply cannot handle.

Public transit options (buses, light rail, subways) fail in these areas for practical reasons:

- Low ridership and inability to cover costs—even in dense cities, farebox recovery is often poor.
- Inability to transport heavy or bulky loads essential to rural economies and lifestyles.
- Mismatch with real-world needs in a spread-out landscape where stops and schedules cannot replicate the flexibility of personal vehicles.
- Persistent safety concerns on mass transit that cities have struggled to resolve.

Washington's near-constant rain exacerbates the issue. Wet conditions demand reliable paved roads and functioning stormwater systems to prevent flooding, potholes, and washouts. Yet resources have been diverted for years to walk/bike paths (often recreational rather than utilitarian) and transit projects that see limited use outside urban cores. This has left core motor vehicle infrastructure neglected for decades.

Without strong roads and bridges, basic activities grind to a halt: getting to work for a good-paying job, emergency services response, farm operations, and family logistics. Imagine rural families unable to drive children to daycare or access medical care because bridges fail or roads flood—exactly the scenario deferred maintenance risks creating.

Prioritizing motor vehicle infrastructure is not anti-transit or anti-bike; it is pro-reality and pro-equity for the majority of unincorporated residents who have no viable alternative. It restores balance against decades of policies that favored urban multimodal projects over the backbone that keeps rural and suburban Pierce County functioning.

Evidence of Neglect: Washington's Failing Roads and Bridges

Washington State has chronically under-prioritized core road and bridge maintenance, even as spending has risen and gas taxes remain among the nation's highest. A March 2026 Reason Foundation 29th Annual Highway Report ranked Washington's highway system 48th out of 50 states for overall condition and cost-effectiveness—only California and Alaska fared worse. The state ranked dead last in maintenance disbursements, capital disbursements, and bridge disbursements. Pavement quality is poor, and efficiency is abysmal despite high spending (much of which goes to non-core projects like ferries, electrification, fish barriers, and climate initiatives).

Other recent data confirms the crisis:

- As of mid-2025, 9.9% of WSDOT's 3,427 bridges were in poor condition (up from 8.5% the prior year), with 342 bridges at least 80 years old (average bridge lifespan ~75 years) and an estimated \$9.2 billion replacement cost.
- Statewide, hundreds of bridges show advanced deficiencies; preservation funding has lagged far behind needs, leading officials to describe the system as in the "early stages of critical failure" due to deferred maintenance.
- Local roads face similar backlogs—e.g., King County (neighboring Pierce) reports needing ~\$200 million annually for maintenance/safety while its capital budget falls drastically short.

These problems hit rural and unincorporated areas hardest: longer commutes, heavier agricultural/commercial loads, and greater exposure to weather-related damage. State and county focus on urban transit, bike paths, and other non-motorized projects has diverted attention and dollars from the roads, bridges, and drainage that rural/suburban families and businesses actually use and rely on every day.

Support Amendment C-22 to Restore Common-Sense Priorities

Adopting this charter amendment sends a strong message: Pierce County will no longer allow urban centric policies to undermine the safety, mobility, and economy of its unincorporated majority. It demands transparency through regular reporting and focuses limited dollars where they deliver the most value—keeping motor vehicle roads, highways, bridges, and stormwater systems reliable in the rain soaked, spread-out reality of rural Pierce County.

Residents in these areas pay taxes and deserve infrastructure that matches how they live and work. Buses, trains, and recreational paths have their place in cities, but they are not substitutes here. They will never work here. And the very unrealistic idea of “15-minute cities” will never work here either. Prioritizing what works—personal and commercial motor vehicles on well-maintained roads—is essential for public safety, economic vitality, family logistics, and agricultural productivity.

Vote for or support C-22 to ensure Pierce County's charter explicitly recognizes and protects the transportation backbone of its rural and suburban communities. Neglect has gone on long enough; it's time to fix the roads that actually get us where we need to go.

I am including the link I referenced of the recent coverage on Washington's poor road/bridge conditions (March 2026 Reason Foundation report):

<https://www.spokesman.com/stories/2026/mar/24/wa-bridges-roads-among-worst-in-us-for-condition-n/>

Please support C-22 and thank you for your time and consideration.

Cherie Kuranko

Lifelong Unincorporated Pierce County Citizen for near 60 years.

John Sharp

johnsharp5213@gmail.com

Wednesday, April 15, 2026 9:57 AM

Of all the proposed amendments, I feel Amendment C-22 is the most important and it definitely needs to be included on the ballot for the public to vote on.

Maxine Herbert-Hill

mherberthill@hotmail.com

Tuesday, April 14, 2026 2:52 PM

My comments relate to Amendment C-22 – Infrastructure and Public Safety Investment Priority

While I can only speak specifically for East Pierce County, I am sure what I am saying would resonate throughout the unincorporated areas of the County.

The county knew 20 years ago that we would have a transportation crisis as Tehaleh and the permitted developments on South Hill were built out. Yet the county has done nothing to address the increasing traffic. Now we face the worst case scenario anticipated 20 years ago. A Commissioner commented at the meeting April 11th that the TIP already states the unincorporated county road have priority. It is apparent those words have had no impact on the decisions that have been made over the past 20 years, since the projects that have been identified and funded are not being done.

Because of this negligence, the county must be pressed into addressing this “oversight” by including this Amendment in the County Charter. Without this compelling directive, the county is very likely to continue to slow-walk any changes to the transportation system. This Amendment would provide some leverage to press the county into action.

Another Commissioner asked, “Where are we going to get the money to do these projects?” Considering that a couple of them are already funded, you don’t need to search for more funding. And another Commissioner commented that suspending the “Complete Streets” from the rural corridors would save us a lot of money for most of these projects. She is exactly right. Complete Streets has no place in the rural areas. Bikes are not a mode of transportation. They are recreation.

That is the purview of the Parks Department, not transportation.

The county focuses its interest and funding toward public transportation (though the county has nothing to do with Pierce Transit). Yet, what’s so incredible, is that even if we had public transit, it wouldn’t help without a significant improvement in the transportation network. We must get serious about pressing the county to give priority to the broader unincorporated area in bridges and paved arterials to serve both the commuting public as well as our economy. Cost of doing business is increasing with the delay this traffic causes and is reflected in increased cost of goods and services.

Safety is a very high concern on these over-congested networks. Access to highways from homes, side roads, and businesses is very risky. While Pierce County talks about Project Zero where there are no serious or fatal accidents, they are completely unconcerned with the multitude of minor accidents that have a significant impact of the victims’ daily lives and to their insurance premiums. As the insurance actuaries analyze their claims and the areas of greatest occurrence, premiums go up whether you have an accident and a claim or not. The congestion on our corridors will continue to increase the minor accidents as patience wears thin and the proximity of vehicles increases.

Another topic that is not often addressed but occurs nearly every year is that of surface water management. Many of our county roads are flooded whenever we have significant rainfall, when we have an “Atmospheric River” or “Pineapple Express” event. The recent experience is a case in point. Residents are isolated, surrounded by flood/standing water. If you are at work all day, you can’t go home. If you are at home, you can’t get out. Many of the areas have been assessed and alternatives proposed but nothing has been done. It is past time to take action.

So safety, public transportation, our local economy, and business vitality are all at risk – in addition to flood/surface water management issues and insurance rates. This amendment is necessary to focus the transportation dollars to this critical and immediate need. It is essential in the best interest of the citizens of the county and a primary purpose of our government. Thank you for your support in this critical Amendment to our County Charter.

Sarah Logan

Wednesday, April 15, 2026 12:51 PM

I am a resident of the Bonney Lake/Tehaleh area and a parent of young children. Traffic in our area has reached a point where it directly affects our daily lives and safety.

What should be short drives regularly turn into long delays due to congestion on SR-410 and surrounding roads. This impacts school drop-offs, childcare schedules, and access to essential services. More importantly, it raises serious concerns about emergency response times.

Our community continues to grow, but infrastructure has not kept up. Amendment C-22 is critical to ensure transportation and public safety investments are prioritized appropriately.

I strongly urge the Commission to include C-22 on the ballot so residents have a voice in addressing this issue.

Scott Drennen

s_drennen@comcast.net

Friday, April 17, 2026 8:10 AM

I am writing in support of Commissioner Jerome O'Leary's No. C-22 amendments. I am writing as the current Mayor of Orting whose citizens dependent on the maintenance and service levels of our roads and storm water services in rural Pierce County. The amendment's will better recognize the needs of our citizens and their need for maintained roads.

Tim Logan

Wednesday, April 15, 2026 12:52 PM

Amendment C-22 should be included on the ballot. Failure to prioritize transportation infrastructure in East Pierce County ignores a clear and ongoing public safety problem.

Residents are already experiencing the consequences of underinvestment: severe congestion, limited roadway capacity, and increasing delays that impact emergency services and daily life.

With continued population growth, these issues will worsen without action. The Commission has an opportunity to address this directly by advancing C-22.

This is not a secondary issue. It is one of the most immediate and measurable concerns affecting residents today.

4-27-26 Packet

Melinda Knobe

melinda.knobe@gmail.com

Wednesday, April 22, 2026 10:26 PM

I strongly support C22. Too much building has occurred without supportive infrastructure. Thank you

C-22 Objections and rebuttals

1. “Over-prioritizes cars”

Multimodal transportation is receiving an inordinate amount of priority to the detriment of everyone. That prioritization is inequitable and penalizes those who cannot utilize multimodal transportation.

- Reflects current reality: many residents depend on roads daily
 - Does **not prohibit multimodal investment**
 - Helps restore **balance where multimodal has been over-prioritized**
 - Addresses inequities for those who cannot access alternative transportation
-

2. “Too restrictive at the charter level”

There are no mandates or requirements other than reporting. There is no loss of flexibility in future code, budget or planning flexibility.

- **No mandates or spending requirements**—only policy guidance and reporting
 - Preserves full flexibility in:
 - Budgeting
 - Planning
 - Future policy decisions
 - Does **not constrain future councils or code changes**
-

3. “Skews funding away from urban areas”

Funding is already skewed toward urban and multimodal transportation. This proposal does not mandate anything. It allows for balance which is currently absent.

- Funding is already **heavily weighted toward urban and multimodal priorities**
 - C-22 does **not reallocate or mandate funding shifts**
 - Creates opportunity for **more balanced, equitable investment**
-

4. “Encourages sprawl”

GMA and regional mandates are not affected by this proposal, The nature of growth cannot be confined by mandates alone. Growth is critical to economic stability. Ignoring motor vehicle needs destabilizes growth and creates an unsustainable environment.

- Does **not override Growth Management Act (GMA)** or regional planning rules
- Growth patterns are driven by multiple factors—not infrastructure alone
- Supporting road infrastructure is essential for **safe, stable economic growth**

5. “Vague LOS standards”

The term LOS is a defining aspect of motor vehicle priority which can be used as a measure to gauge effective planning. No set level is defined intentionally to allow for interpretations that fit within existing state, regional and local mandates.

- LOS is a **recognized planning tool**, not arbitrary
- Flexibility is intentional to align with:
 - State
 - Regional
 - Local standards
- Avoids rigid thresholds that could conflict with existing frameworks

6. “Conflicts with climate goals”

Unrealistic climate goals have created dangerous conditions by penalizing motor vehicles leading to irresponsible maintenance and road conditions. This proposal does not directly address that cause of deficiency, but it does allow for ongoing evaluation in balancing climate actions with critical road and infrastructure needs.

- Does **not override environmental laws or mandates**
- Poor road conditions and deferred maintenance create **safety and environmental risks**
- Supports **balanced decision-making** between climate goals and infrastructure needs

7. “Redundant policy”

The proposal does not add any mandates but does propose evaluation of roads, bridges and capital improvements. No current or future planning is supplanted or duplicated.

- Adds **evaluation and visibility**, not bureaucracy
- Does not duplicate or replace existing planning processes
- Reinforces **long-term consistency and accountability**

8. “Legal or funding conflicts”

Because no mandates are included, present and future funding and planning are not directly affected.

- Contains **no mandates that would trigger conflicts**
- Explicitly allows compliance with:
 - State law
 - Federal law
 - Grant requirements
- Maintains full funding and planning flexibility

9. “Bias toward expansion”

The current planning model is already biased toward multimodal transportation. While no direct mandates are included in the proposal, the hope is more equitable decision making will ensue.

- Contains **no requirement to expand infrastructure**
 - Maintenance and preservation are clearly prioritized
 - Seeks to **rebalance existing bias**, not create a new one
-

10. “Lack of accountability”

The proposal is based on common sense and trust. There are no direct mandates and in keeping, no penalties or consequences either. The proposal seeks equity and balance, but there is no mechanism to demand this.

- Requires **ongoing reporting and evaluation**
- Enables transparency without rigid mandates
- Designed to guide **better decision-making, not impose penalties**

