

News from your Pierce County Councilmember

# Roger Bush – District 3

Serving the communities of

Ashford, Eatonville, Elbe, Elk Plain, Frederickson, Graham-west, Harts Lake, Lacamas, Roy-east, Spanaway-east and South Hill.



## Committee Assignments

### Chair

Emergency Preparedness Committee

### Chair

Economic and Infrastructure Development Committee

### Member

Community Development Committee

### Member

Public Safety and Human Services Committee

## To contact Councilmember Bush

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May 2008

## Traffic congestion and recreational opportunities: How we are taking positive action to fix 30 years of neglect for our county roads and parks.

It's certainly not a surprise to any of us that three decades of neglect have created traffic congestion challenges that are costing us thousands of hours and dollars every day. Nor do we need a crystal ball to see that during that same time span recreational opportunities have been denied to all of us who call Pierce County home. But now we have created plans - and appropriated the money to implement the plans - that are designed to make all of our lives better.

Since you elected me to represent you on the County Council just over three years ago, I have worked with the other six council members on many issues important to our district. Solving traffic congestion and building first-class recreational opportunities have been high on your list of priorities ... and mine.

I invite you to take a few minutes to read the information in this report on what we're doing to fix these two key challenges. Also, on page four there's a brief story about protecting the needs of property owners - another important concern we all share.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Roger Bush". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Your County Councilmember

**P.S.** A word of caution: Current economic trends may affect the timetable for some of the projects highlighted in this report. I assure you if that happens I will vote for cost reductions that keep the county's budget in balance **without tax increases**.



## A comprehensive road plan to relieve traffic congestion. Funded within existing revenues ... no new taxes.



Councilmember Bush checking final construction prior to opening a new half-mile of Canyon Road between 192nd and 200th Streets.

In what *The News Tribune* labeled “A hard-won major accomplishment,” we have taken strong action to build and/or widen nearly 50 roadways and rebuild about 135 intersections in unincorporated Pierce County. Some of these projects are completed. More are coming on line every day.

And our efforts to relieve the traffic congestion that we all love to hate will be paid for without raising taxes. Existing funding sources that will pay for the projects include state and federal transportation grants; traffic impact fees from developers; a portion of the county’s real estate excise tax paid by property and home sellers; and a portion of the gas tax approved by the Legislature.

**Here’s a quick report on some of the scheduled road work:**

### Extending Canyon Road south to 224th Street

Expanding the Canyon Road north-south corridor from 192nd to 200th Streets has just

been completed.

For phase II from 200th to 224th – where there is no road at all now – we have secured all right-of-way, finished preliminary engineering, funded final engineering, and plan to fund construction by late 2009.

Finally, construction on Canyon Road between 160th-116th Streets East will be completed this fall, providing major relief for drivers in South Hill and Parkland-Spanaway.

### Cross-base Highway construction started

Using previously appropriated funds, construction steps for the first segment of SR 704, the Cross-base Highway, will be taken this summer. Phase I of the project includes dual right-turn lanes to Pacific Avenue southbound from the Loop Road. Afternoon commute backups should be greatly reduced when this work is done.

### Contract awarded to widen 94th Avenue

Work to widen 94th Avenue from two lanes to five is now under construction. This is another key project designed to enhance safety and improve traffic flow.

The project will run from 116th Street East to 136th Street East. A center two-way lane, new curbs, gutters, street lights and sidewalks for both sides of the avenue will be included on this busy route.

### Expanding 176th Street between Meridian-Pacific

Clearing and site work on the eastern half of this main east-west corridor running from Spanaway to SR 161 (Meridian) in South Hill begins later this summer. When completed, 176th Street will have two lanes each way, plus center turn lanes. Target date for completion is 2011.

The 176th Street expansion also will connect with the Cross-base Highway to relieve traffic congestion and improve access to the Frederickson industrial area.

### Realignment to eliminate hazardous ‘dog-leg’

Phase I of the 122nd Avenue East at Reservoir Road is currently underway and will be completed this fall. The work includes a new traffic signal and realignment to eliminate the existing hazardous “dog-leg.” Phase II, to the immediate north and the next intersection, is scheduled for next year.



# Pierce County parks and recreational facilities: On the grow to improve our quality of life.

I promised in my last newsletter that I would give you an update on parks and trails funded in the 2008 budget.

In addition to the projects highlighted below, we also have budgeted \$8 million this year to purchase more Conservation Futures properties for new open space and park projects. The Northwest Trek expansion, plus the 40-acre Amphitheater/Meridian Habitat Park, are excellent examples of projects funded through this program.

## Ashford Community Park construction underway

The first phase of a 35-acre destination park west of the Ashford Fire Station has been launched with construction scheduled to start in June. The Ashford Community Park will be a spectacular addition for our community. Not counting land donated by Champion Lumber, \$2.5 million has been appropriated to develop the park.

We've also approved \$400,000 in seed money to leverage up to \$1.5 million from federal, state and private foundation grants for the \$5.5 million Ashford Cultural Center and Mountaineering Museum in the park.

## South Hill Community Park and Frontier Park expansions dedicated

The new restroom building to serve South Hill Community Park is now completed. Dedication ceremonies are scheduled for June. Frontier Park has been upgraded and expanded by five acres and has included a remodel/addition of the existing Frontier Park Lodge. The new 4,310-square-foot facility is already serving a wide variety of activities and community groups.



*Above and left: New walking paths, restrooms and playground at Spanaway Lake Park. Right: Getting ready for the grand opening of the combined road shops in Frederickson.*

## Sprinker Recreation Center renovation work budgeted

The 2008 budget includes money for design and planning to begin replacing the ice arena, make roof repairs and seismic and utility upgrades for one of our area's unique facilities that serves thousands of families every year. Our hope is to award construction contracts late next year.

Also, a May ribbon-cutting ceremony is scheduled for a new playground structure at Sprinker. In addition, we have partnered with Home Depot and Thompson Elementary to create a new family picnic area in the park

that includes raised-bed gardens with native plants and trees.

## Spanaway Lake Park ready for us to enjoy

The final phase of this reconstruction project to replace the bulkheads and boat launch ramp, shoreline restoration and a new fishing pier are just being completed for your use this summer. Earlier work to expand the pedestrian trail system, build new ADA accessible restrooms, picnic facilities and a giant new children's play area were finished last winter.



Pierce County Council

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Councilmember  
**Roger Bush**  
Pierce County Council  
District 3

Working to fix 30 years of neglect  
for our county roads and parks

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## Citizens' Advisory Committee to hear property owners' concerns

I sponsored and the County Council has approved a resolution establishing a 12-member Citizens' Advisory Committee to ensure property owners' concerns are addressed before we take any action affecting their rights.

Earlier this year landowners in the upper Nisqually River valley were told by a county department they could not develop their property because it had been included within the boundaries of a "channel migration zone."

I'm pleased to report that we've put the brakes on their action until we've heard from the property owners affected. We want no one left out of the process. Specifically, the ad-hoc group will deal with property in county floodplains. The committee's goal is to balance the needs of property owners with the needs of the public at large.

The 12-member citizen panel will include property owners from the White, Nisqually, Carbon and Puyallup river areas and South Prairie Creek, floodplain management professionals, and members of watershed councils.

If you have ideas to share about this or any other issue, please contact me at the phone number or email address listed below. Thanks.

I appreciate hearing from you because it allows me to do a better job of serving you. Please feel free to contact me anytime:

**Phone 253-798-6626 or email [rbush@co.pierce.wa.us](mailto:rbush@co.pierce.wa.us)**



Pierce County

## Telephone Help Lines

Senior Assistance: 253-798-4600  
Health Department: 253-798-6500  
Domestic Violence: 253-798-4166  
Parks and Recreation: 253-798-4176  
Illegal County Dumping: 253-798-4636

## Pierce County Departments

General Information: 253-798-3200  
Assessor/Treasurer: 253-798-6111  
Auditor: 253-798-7427  
County Council: 253-798-7777  
County Executive: 253-798-7477  
Prosecuting Attorney: 253-798-7792  
PALS information  
(Planning and Land Services): 253-798-7200