



# Summary Minutes

**Board Meeting**  
**July 25, 2024**

## Call to order

The meeting was called to order at 1:33 p.m. by Chair Dow Constantine and was available for viewing in person and online.

The meeting was recorded and can be found at <https://www.soundtransit.org/get-to-know-us/board-directors/livestream-video>.

## Roll call of members

Chair	Vice Chairs
(P) Dow Constantine, King County Executive	(P) Kim Roscoe, City of Fife Mayor (P) Dave Somers, Snohomish County Executive

Board members	
(P) Nancy Backus, City of Auburn Mayor	(A) Roger Millar, WSDOT Secretary
(P) Claudia Balducci, King County Councilmember	(P) Ed Prince, City of Renton Council President
(A) Angela Birney, City of Redmond Mayor	(P) Dan Strauss, City of Seattle Councilmember
(A) Bruce Dammeier, Pierce County Executive	(P) Dave Upthegrove, King County Council Chair
(P) Cassie Franklin, City of Everett Mayor	(A) Peter von Reichbauer, King County Councilmember
(P) Christine Frizzell, City of Lynnwood Mayor	(P) Kristina Walker, City of Tacoma Councilmember
(P) Bruce Harrell, City of Seattle Mayor	(P) Girmay Zahilay, King County Council Vice Chair
(A) Jim Kastama, City of Puyallup Mayor	

Katie Flores, Board Administrator, announced that a quorum of the Board was present at roll call.

## Report of the Chair

### Monthly Contract Report

The meeting packet included the monthly CEO contract report for June 2024.

## CEO Report

Interim CEO Sparman provided the report.

### Plans for August Board meetings

CEO Sparman shared that work on technological upgrades to the Board room will require its closure for several weeks from August 14, 2024 to September 9, 2024. The August Rider Experience & Operations Committee and System Expansion Committee meetings will occur as normal, while the Executive Committee meeting will be canceled. For the August 22, 2024 Board of Directors meeting, Board members and staff presenters will need to participate fully virtually. Board Administration will provide the Santa Fe Room in Union Station for public viewing and in-person public comment. He also noted that the September meetings of the Executive and Rider Experience & Operations Committees are being pushed back to accommodate the work.

Additionally, Sound Transit will begin using Zoom to facilitate hybrid Board meetings in mid-August, which will allow the agency to retire the use of Webex.

#### Free Fares for Fleet Week

Sound Transit will provide free transit service to current and former members of the Armed Forces during SeaFair, from July 29, 2024 to August 4, 2024. Service members not in uniform are asked to show their military identification to the transit operator or fare ambassadors.

#### Souder Sumner Station Parking and Access Improvements Groundbreaking

On August 6, 2024, Sound Transit will celebrate the onset of heavy construction at the Sumner Parking and Access Improvement project with a groundbreaking ceremony. The project, baselined with an open for service date in Q1 2026, will provide much needed capacity for Souder riders.

#### Update on 2 Line Outages

On May 24, 2024, a seven-hour power loss resulted from a fault in the Spring District Traction Power Substation (TPSS). The fail-safe system is designed to de-energize power in both directions until the fault can be diagnosed and the system reset. A second fault occurred on June 18, 2024, but lessons learned reduced the system downtime to two hours. In both incidents, the built-in redundancy in the system allowed the agency to bypass the Spring District TPSS and return trains to service.

Sound Transit has already updated crisis communication procedures and increased operational readiness for these types of failures. On June 28, 2024, the vendor conducted a forensic analysis of the removed equipment to determine the root causes of the faults, which turned out to be settings within the equipment which allowed for conflicting data between the components. They have recommended updated settings to prevent this in the future and will be in the field next week to correct any other issues.

#### Vertical Transportation maintenance contracts

Noting that Motion No. M2024-49 is on the Consent Agenda, CEO Sparrman provided an abbreviated update on the Vertical Transportation program. The current portfolio of 223 assets will grow to 310 as the remaining ST2 light rail extension are built. Agency-wide assets have reached an average return to service time across all outage categories of less than 13 hours per occurrence for the first 6 months. He noted that the contracts for approval today will build upon the successful trends.

#### Souder South discussions with BNSF

After receiving the support of the System Expansion Committee last month, staff have begun initial discussion with BNSF regarding the potential for additional trips on the S Line.

#### Projects in Planning Public Engagement

This month, the agency initiated public engagement for infill stations at Boeing Access Road and Graham Street, as well as for access improvements in the Tacoma Dome and King Street station areas. There are also several efforts underway to engage on the ongoing South Downtown Hub Planning process to prioritize potential improvement projects and public transit connects in the Chinatown-International District and Pioneer Square neighborhoods. Information on these opportunities can be found on the Sound Transit website.

#### Introducing Board Relations Specialist Hunter Rancipher

CEO Sparrman introduced Hunter Rancipher to the Board and the public as a new addition to the Board Administration team. He will be supporting the Rider Experience & Operations and Finance & Audit Committees, as well as meeting of the Executive Committee, as a Board Relations Specialist. Mr. Rancipher previously worked as a Supervisor in the Fare Ambassador program and has been with his

new team for the last month. Mr. Rancipher introduced himself and stated his excitement to support the Board.

## Public Comment

Chair Constantine announced that the Board was accepting public comment via email and verbally through the virtual meeting platform.

The following people provided written public comment to the Board:

Joe Kunzler

The following people provided in-person verbal public comment to the Board:

Betty Lau  
Brien Chow  
Liam Foy-McAuliff  
Ted Lehmann  
Marykate Ryan

The following people provided virtual verbal public comment to the Board:

Joe Kunzler

## Consent Agenda

Voucher Certification: June 2024

Minutes: Minutes for the June 27, 2024, Board of Directors Meeting

Motion No. M2024-40: Authorizing the chief executive officer to amend the 5th Street Crossing Construction and Maintenance Agreement with BNSF Railway Company and the City of Puyallup for additional scope related to rail crossing safety improvements for the Puyallup Station Parking and Access Improvements project in the amount of \$247,900, for a new total authorized agreement amount not to exceed \$1,099,718, all within the Board approved project budget.

Motion No. M2024-41: Authorizing the chief executive officer to amend the 7th Street Crossing Construction and Maintenance Agreement with BNSF Railway Company and the City of Puyallup for additional scope related to rail crossing safety improvements for the Puyallup Station Parking and Access Improvements project in the amount of \$164,300, for a new total authorized agreement amount not to exceed \$982,360, all within the Board approved project budget.

Motion No. M2024-42: Authorizing the chief executive officer to (1) execute an amendment to Task Order B-11 under the Umbrella Agreement GCA 3361 with the Washington State Department of Transportation to provide construction administration and construction services for the East Link Extension rights-of-way adjacent to or within SR-520 in the amount of \$300,000, for a total authorized amount of \$2,076,430, all within the Board approved project budget; and (2) execute future amendments to this task order consistent with current agency delegations of authority detailed in Resolution No. R2023-30, Sound Transit's Procurement, Agreements and Delegated Authority Policy.

Motion No. M2024-47: Authorizing the chief executive officer to (1) modify an agreement with King County to extend Sound Transit's participation in a reduced fare program managed and administered by King County to support no to low-income riders in King, Snohomish and Pierce counties until the end of 2025, or until a permanent program is approved, and (2) execute further modifications to the agreement with King County that do not change the original amount of the agreement..

Motion No. M2024-48: Authorizing the chief executive officer to execute an Intergovernmental Agreement with Community Transit to provide complementary paratransit services in support of the extension of Link light rail into Snohomish County.

Motion No. M2024-49: Authorizing the chief executive officer to execute individual five-year contracts with Schindler Elevator Corporation and Mid-American Elevator to provide systemwide elevator and escalator maintenance and repair services with individual contract amounts that may exceed \$50,000,000 each provided that the aggregate total of the two contracts does not exceed \$73,610,000, plus applicable taxes.

**The consent agenda was moved by Board member Walker and seconded by Board member Roscoe.**

**It was carried by the unanimous vote of the 14 Board members present that the Consent Agenda be approved as amended.**

## **Business items**

Motion No. M2024-45: Directing the chief executive officer to: (1) expand the geographic scope of Sound Transit's at-grade crossing program to not only include all Link light rail at-grade crossings, but also Tacoma Link and Sound Transit-owned Sounder at-grade crossings while still prioritizing improvements in the Rainier Valley; (2) accelerate current at-grade projects, and expand projects as needed; (3) conduct a comprehensive study of at-grade crossings in the Rainier Valley identifying short-, mid-, and long-term at-grade safety improvements; and (4) deliver a Rainier Valley safety master plan of potential at-grade safety improvements to the Board in October 2024 that prioritizes at-grade safety improvements where the most collisions occur (e.g. along MLK Jr. Way S. in the Rainier Valley), followed by a system-wide at-grade safety plan in November 2024, and provide regular progress reporting to the Rider Experience and Operations and System Expansion Committees until the safety master plans are transmitted.

Moises Gutierrez, Deputy CEO for Agency Oversight, and Victoria Morris, Acting Program Director, gave the staff presentation.

Board member Balducci noted that while staff have said that at-grade crossings along the T Link and Sounder lines are part of the safety work, she does not recall ever having them included in the discussion when reviewing at-grade crossing safety work, which tends to focus on light rail in the Rainier Valley. For that reason, she sees it as necessary to keep the language in the action related to Tacoma Link and Sounder crossing to ensure those get included in the future reports. She also inquired into what the Board will receive in October and November.

CEO Sparman concurred with Board member Balducci on the importance of including Tacoma Link and Sounder crossing information in the overall safety program. He asked the team to speak to the plan for the future reports.

Mr. Gutierrez laid out some related next steps. At the August Rider Experience and Operations committee meeting, the team will bring a short briefing related to public engagement in the Rainier Valley on at-grade safety. In September, the Annual Safety Plan will be brought to the Committee and Board, which will include some of crossing safety information, in the context of the larger safety program. He added that there will be presentations planned for the Master Plans in October and November, and the team is looking at enhancing current safety reporting, which may include additional executive summaries when transmitted to the Board or committees.

**It was moved by Board member Walker, seconded by Vice Chair Roscoe, that Motion No. M2024-45 be approved as presented.**

Board member Walker reported that the Rider Experience and Operations committee considered this action at its meeting earlier this month and unanimously recommended its approval by the Board. She thanked Board member Zahilay and Balducci for their work on drafting motions to direct this work. The Rider Experience and Operations committee considered a combined action that included some feedback from the System Expansion Committee provided via Board member Balducci. She highlighted the importance of focusing on the area most impacted by this issue in the Rainer Valley and to continue looking forward and system-wide to ensure lessons learned are being applied.

Vice Chair Roscoe drew attention to the fact that Motion No. M2024-45 is somewhat unclear with the use of “at-grade” vs “at-grade crossing” which mirrors a question she had at the Rider Experience and Operations Committee. She noted that she believes staff and the Board are on the same page, but suggested there is room for confusion when delivering the Master Plans.

Board member Balducci inquired if the program is currently limited to at-grade crossings or covers all at-grade portions of alignments. She added that it may be the case an amendment is warranted, or the Board could state in discussion it’s intent. Mr. Gutierrez responded that the staff understand this motion to pertain to at-grade crossings, and re-iterated that the Annual Safety Plan will also cover broader safety work. Board member Balducci asked if there is a marked issue with accident at non-crossing at-grade areas. Branden Porter, Acting Chief Safety Officer, responded that, in his estimate, 95% or more of the incidents occur at at-grade crossings.

Chair Constantine asked if it was clear to staff where the potential addition of “crossing” in the Motion would be needed. Mr. Gutierrez responded that he believes so, and that he would also confirm with Board Administration to ensure the meaning is met, whether a formal amendment is offered or not.

Board member Balducci stated that while she sees the crossings as the most important area to focus on, she would not necessarily want to preclude accidents that occur in non-crossing areas.

CEO Sparrman stated that in his conversations with Vice Chair Roscoe, she expressed some additional concerns, particularly along Sounder.

Board member Balducci briefly summarized the recent discussion as Vice Chair returned to the room.

Mr. Porter added that one specific type of incident that may occur on at-grade portions is when a rider pulls the emergency door release mid-bloc. Such an incident would be included in the Annual Safety Plan update.

Board member Walker stated that the discussion at the Rider Experience and Operations Committee was heavily focused on addressing at-grade crossings. With Vice Chair Roscoe back in the room, she deferred to her on a potential amendment, but noted that adding “crossing” where applicable in the Motion would be consistent with the Committee’s discussion and intent.

Vice Chair Roscoe stated her desire to stay focused on the issues of at-grade crossings in the work being directed by this motion.

**It was moved by Vice Chair Roscoe and accepted by Board member Walker as a friendly amendment to amend Motion No. M2024-45 by substituting “at-grade safety” with “at-grade crossing safety” where applicable to clarify the scope of the work being directed.**

Board member Zahilay stated that since joining the Board this year, he has hosted two community listening sessions and two town halls related to this topic. He noted that there is a feeling of injustice in South Seattle due to the not pedestrian-friendly corridor along MLK Way due to light rail operations and heavy freight traffic. He encouraged Sound Transit and the Seattle Department of Transportation to protect the people in the corridor. He thanked Board members Walker and Balducci for their help in prioritizing the Rainer Valley, while also keeping eyes on the rest of the current and future system. He

noted the difference between improvements that seek to correct human behavior and those that would be structural in nature, such as grade separation.

Board member Balducci added that a system relying on perfect human interaction with infrastructure is doomed to have incidents and supported the work of looking in the feasibility of larger improvements. She asked for updates on what the Board will see in October to be provided at some point along the way to ensure the team is on the right track, and she encouraged support for the motion.

Chair Constantine thanked all the Board members who contributed to the final language in the motion and thanked Board member Harrell and the Seattle Department of Transportation for their partnership.

**Chair Constantine called for a roll call vote on Motion No. M2024-45, as amended.**

**Ayes**

Nancy Backus  
Claudia Balducci  
Christine Frizzell  
Bruce Harrell  
Ed Prince

**Nays**

Kim Roscoe  
Dan Strauss  
Dave Upthegrove  
Kristina Walker  
Girmay Zahilay  
Dow Constantine

**It was carried by the unanimous vote of the 11 Board members present that Motion No. M2024-45 be approved as amended.**

Motion No. M2024-50: Appointing Trevor Reed to the Community Oversight Panel to serve a term of three years beginning August 1, 2024, and expiring July 31, 2027.

Board member Balducci introduced the action and nomination on behalf of the East King County Board members.

**It was moved by Board member Balducci, seconded by Vice Chair Roscoe, and carried by the unanimous vote of the 11 Board members present that Motion No. M2024-50 be approved as presented.**

## **Reports to the Board**

### Status of Implementing the Technical Advisory Group recommendations

Terri Mestas, Deputy Chief Executive Officer for Capital Delivery, began the presentation by noting an updated version of the tracking table was included in the member's packets. She added that today's report will include information on the updated TAG Action plan approach and format.

Ms. Mestas briefly provided an overview of the work completed to-date in 2024 in pursuit of implementing the recommendations from the Technical Advisory Group. She highlighted the Board's recent adoption of an updated Delegated Authority Policy. She also previewed the main initiatives that the agency will pursue going forward to create lasting change and move Sound Transit to be the owner of choice in the region.

Reviewing the newly unveiled TAG Action Plan table included in the materials for the meeting, Ms. Mestas described that the Action Plan is broken into six initiatives with the applicable TAG recommendations mapped to each, the description of each initiative, followed by targeted outcomes and schedule information at the bottom. She highlighted that these initiatives are supported and delivered by multiple departments within the agency. She noted that the Action Plan will be updated with progress and other key information on an ongoing basis.

The first initiative is the adoption of a Project Management Information System or "PMIS". This technology platform will allow the agency to manage all information, for all projects, from conception to

completion, in one place to create a transparent single source of truth. Progress is underway on identifying the PMIS tool that will best fit the agency's needs.

The second initiative relates to Change Management. The agency is currently working on delegations of authority beneath the CEO and executive level staff to create clear and timely decision-making at the lowest possible level. This could also surface additional discussion with the Board on potential updates or additions to the Delegated Authority policy to better support staff in their work.

The third initiative is to better the agency's procurement and contracting methodology. Staff have started a robust training program on collaborative project delivery. There is also an effort underway to look at better utilization of bench contracts or multiple award contracts. These types of contracts can be structured to create more meaningful opportunities for diverse, smaller, local, historically underutilized business as well as create an efficient and nimble contract approach.

The fourth initiative is the restructuring of Sound Transit. At the end of June, the CEO's leadership cabinet completed a full functional analysis of all the departments, resulting in the creation of a functional framework for the future state of the agency. Additional work on the next level of detail is underway so that the implementation of changes can begin over the next few months.

The fifth initiative pertains to Betterments. The Board took action last month to supersede and build upon existing policy with the System Expansion Scope Control and Betterment policy. Staff are now working on reviewing lessons learned from past experiences, developing metrics that will be expressed in the new reporting dashboard, and training on the updated policy.

The sixth initiative is strengthening the partnership with the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). FTA recently joined agency staff in the training on collaborative delivery methods and conversations took place related to improved reporting, the PMIS, quality, and other areas. Additionally, joint offices are being planned to house FTA staff alongside Sound Transit employees and project contractors.

On June 24-25, 2024, Deputy CEO Mestas met with members of the TAG at Sound Transit offices for a Capital Program Workshop. She thanked the members for their time and valuable input over those two days covering the states of the ST2 and ST3 programs, lessons learned from ST2 projects that could be applied to ST3 projects, ST3 readiness for the jump in work expected to delivery those projects, and the tools needed to implement the changes and set the agency up for future success.

Additionally, the discussion included current opportunities and observations on the state of the system expansion program and mapped-out strategies on how to leverage those opportunities to create a more robust path to being the owner of choice. Becoming the owner of choice includes more targeted strategies on how the agency will use the capital program to create opportunities for historically underutilized businesses, job creation, and how exposing local youth to careers in architecture, engineering, and construction through agency procurements and partnerships can be accomplished. Ms. Mestas highlighted the signing of the Equity and Infrastructure Pledge at the end of August which will codify those discussions.

Going forward, Ms. Mestas plans to bring detailed briefings on each of the initiatives over the coming months to demonstrate progress and show a timeline of completion for each. Also included will be information on who to monitor performance and achievement against the planned targeted outcomes.

Vice Chair Roscoe inquired into the metrics that the Board will see and how those will show progress in the implementation work. Ms. Mestas responded that each area would have tailored key performance indicators, such as the number of days it takes to pay invoices or execute change orders. These metrics will be shared with the Board to ensure it aligns with expectations.

## Update on fare capping and reduce fare simplification

Alex Krieg, Director of Access, Integration, and Station Area Planning, began the presentation by noting this update is in response to direction by the Board in Resolution No. R2023-37 to analyze the feasibility of fare capping, efforts to simplify reduced fare program administration, and whether or not to recommend a regional fare forum to address the two issues.

Mr. Krieg defined fare capping by stating that passengers will pay the lowest possible fare for trips within a given time period, typically over the course of a day or month. The fare payment system would automatically not charge for additional trips once the identified threshold is met. Passenger benefits include guaranteeing the best fare and ensuring riders don't pay more than is necessary, as well as saving on upfront costs for pass products. The agency would seek to achieve equity outcomes by ensuring riders have the lowest cost for their trips and to incentivize ridership by reducing costs for riders.

When discussing the feasibility of quickly implementing fare capping, Mr. Krieg advised that staff do not recommend moving forward with fare capping on only Sound Transit services at this time. He flagged that Sound Transit pursuing fare capping through ORCA, without the other agencies, would result in higher costs and longer implementation, which could come at the expense of other regional needs and priorities. Mr. Krieg noted that moving forward with an ORCA-based regional solution could better meet this goal.

Mr. Krieg summarized the main reasons for why fare capping may be difficult without full ORCA participation, including the apportionment of ORCA revenues. Currently, 85% of Sound Transit paid boardings use ORCA media and 27% of Sound Transit ORCA trips interface with transit operation by other agencies, which is expected to grow as the system expands. Policy also calls for consensus and collaborative decision-making within ORCA and the applicable agencies. The last regional fare forum in 2016-2017 issued policy direction to not pursue fare capping during the initial design of next generation ORCA. While staff believe it may be time to pursue a regional discussion on fare capping, individual fare policies would need to be updated to align with the regional direction. Additionally, future enhancements to the ORCA system to allow for fare capping would need to be funded. Mr. Krieg stated that staff believes a regional approach for fare capping would support a higher likelihood of success.

In the interim, Sound Transit is working with partners to reduce the cost of regional day passes, with potential launch by early September, and to move forward with a proposal to reduce the adult fare on ST Express to \$3.

Shifting to simplifying the administration of reduced fare programs, Mr. Krieg highlighted the Regional Reduced Fare Permit, for seniors and people with disabilities, and the Free Youth Transit Pass. Both of these programs are available on all ORCA agencies. ORCA Lift provides reduced fares for passengers earning less than 200% of the federal poverty line and is available on all ORCA agencies except Washington State Ferries. Additionally, the Subsidized Annual Pass provides free rides for passenger earning less than 80% of the federal poverty line and enrolled in one of six state benefit programs. This pass is available on Sound Transit, King County Metro, Seattle Streetcar and Monorail, and Everett Transit services.

Simplifying reduced fares can help to meet passenger needs, ease administrative burdens, increase access and enrollment, and respond to technological advances. Mr. Krieg added that a King County Metro-led effort is underway, with all ORCA agencies participating. Through engagement with local agencies, passengers, and community service partners to consider challenges with the current reduced fare products, the effort hopes to recommend changes using a human-centered, design thinking



approach. A passenger survey is underway, and a two-day design workshop is planned for October. Recommendations and an implementation plan are expected in January 2025.

Based on staff's engagement, those recommendations are likely to include simplifying reduced fare types and pass options, considering income eligibility changes, making purchasing and distributing reduced fare products easier, and modernizing products and processes to bring into the ORCA system. These efforts will require regional collaboration.

In the past, regional fare forums have been called so that policy makers provide regional direction related to fares. Past fare forums took place in 1997-1998, 2007, and 2016-2017 which led to the creation of ORCA and next generation ORCA. In response to direction in Resolution No. R2023-37, Mr. Krieg explained that staff do recommend the calling of a regional fare forum to discuss the topics of fare capping and reduced fare program improvements.

In concluding, Mr. Krieg summarized next steps including the implementation of reduced regional day pass pricing with a target launch of early September, initiation of the process to changes regular fare rates on ST Express, and planning for a regional fare forum with a target of Q4 2024 for the first meeting.

Vice Chair Roscoe whether the current next generation ORCA is funded. Mr. Krieg explained that the current next generation ORCA is fully funded and most of the tangible upgrades have been implemented. Any additional enhancements would require funding. Vice Chair Roscoe also requested that the regional fare forum include representatives from the participating agencies' equivalent of the Community Oversight Panel.

Board member Frizzell added that believes that fare capping is a tool to support increased mass transit ridership and that her participation on the Community Transit Board has also revealed the inherent complexities. She thanked staff for being engaged and presenting a plan to discuss these issues.

Board member Walker agreed with other sentiments expressed and stated that any changes from these discussions should be grounded in the passenger experience.

Chair Constantine thanked staff for their presentation and work on these topics. He expressed dissatisfaction with being unable to roll out fare capping before the opening of the Lynnwood Link Extension and the shift to a flat \$3 fare on Link but recognized the reasons for the long lead time. As the Chair of the largest ORCA body and regional transit agency, Chair Constantine endorsed the staff recommendation to convene a regional fare forum. He will reach out to leaders of the other ORCA agencies, taking note of Vice Chair's Roscoe recommendation to include oversight panel members, to begin the planning. Noting that the last regional fare forum resulted in next generation ORCA which has the board approval of passengers, Chair Constantine expressed hope that this forum would lead to similarly popular and necessary improvements for riders and the agencies.

## **Other business**

None.

## **Next meeting**

The next regular Board meeting would be held on August 22, 2024, 1:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. as a virtual meeting via an online meeting platform. The Santa Fe Room in Union Station will be available for public viewing and in-person public comment.

## **Adjourn**

The meeting adjourned at 3:16 p.m.

ATTEST:

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Dow Constantine  
Board Chair

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Kathryn Flores  
Board Administrator

APPROVED on \_\_\_\_\_, AJM.