



Summary Minutes

Rider Experience and Operations Committee Meeting January 16, 2025

Call to order

The meeting was called to order at 1:10 p.m. by Committee Chair Walker 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/meeting-videos>.

Roll call of members

Chair	Vice Chair
(P) Kristina Walker, Tacoma Councilmember	(A) Ed Prince, Renton Council President

Board Members	
(P) Angela Birney, Redmond Mayor	(A) Peter von Reichbauer, King County Councilmember
(P) Christine Frizzell, Lynnwood Mayor	(A) Girmay Zahilay, King County Council Vice Chair
(P) Kim Roscoe, Fife Mayor	

Hunter Rancipher, Board Relations Specialist, announced that a quorum of the committee was not present at roll call.

Report of the Chair

None.

CEO Report

Interim CEO Sparrman provided the CEO Report.

Link Resiliency Study Update

CEO Sparrman reported that staff has commissioned an independent emergency assessment of link light rail service reliability. He shared that the draft assessment is being finalized and that the study will summarize recent unplanned service interruptions as well as describing their root causes.

CEO Sparrman noted that in March, Deputy CEO Moises Gutierrez will present the final results of the assessment and the agency's plan to strengthen link light rail resiliency.

CEO Sparrman also provided details on actions that are being taken to improve system reliability immediately. This includes: the cleaning of rails in the Downtown Seattle Transit Tunnel, replacement of OCS wire near the University of Washington Station, installation of signage in areas reminding operators to coast in areas with new wire, tensioning of OCS wires, and the creation of a network modernization plan.

CEO Sparrman reiterated the agency's commitment to provide reliable service for its riders, while noting that there is significant work to be done.

Public comment

Committee Chair Walker announced that public comment would be accepted via email to emailtheboard@soundtransit.org, in person, and would also be accepted virtually.

There were no public comments of any type given.

Reports to the Committee

Chair Walker noted that due to the lack of a quorum of Committee members, business items would be held until a quorum was achieved, with reports to the Committee to take place first.

Passenger Impact Program

Pamela Wrenn, Service Delivery Deputy Project Director, provided the report.

Ms. Wrenn provided updates on upcoming work requiring service disruptions. Topics covered included Phase 2 of 2-Line integration, the 130th Infill Station Roofing project, and UWS area OCS repair.

Ms. Wrenn noted that the 130th Infill Station Roofing project would take place from January 4, 2025, to February 27, 2025, with single tracking occurring on Weekdays from 5:30 p.m. to the end of revenue service. She noted that this work is needed to install roofing to the station, allowing for further construction efforts as the station continues towards completion.

Ms. Wrenn reported that Phase 2 of 2-Line integration would cause disruptions on the following weekends: January 10 – 12, 2025; January 17 – 19, 2025, and February 14 – 16, 2025. The first weekend will include a bus bridge running from Westlake to SODO stations, with the second and third weekends having bus bridges from Capitol Hill to SODO stations. This work is needed to complete the full integration and testing of signal and electrical systems of the 2-Line tracks into the currently existing Downtown Seattle Transit Tunnel infrastructure.

Ms. Wrenn also reported that a full closure between Capitol Hill and U-District Stations would occur on February 1 and 2, 2025, as overhead catenary wires are replaced in that area. This is needed to allow trains to operate at normal speeds in the area, as well as reduce the likelihood of future impacts of excessive OCS wear. During this disruption, a bus bridge will be deployed to assist riders who need to traverse that area during the disruption.

Business Items

For Committee final action

December 5, 2024, Rider Experience and Operations Committee meeting minutes

It was moved by Board member Roscoe, seconded by Committee Vice Chair Prince, and carried by the unanimous vote of all committee members present that the minutes of the December 5, 2024, Rider Experience and Operations Committee meeting be approved as presented.

For Recommendation to the Board

Motion No. M2025-04: Adopting the permanent station name for the NE 130th Infill Station, located in north Seattle on the Lynnwood Link Extension.

Candace Toth, Wayfinding and Signage Deputy Director, provided the presentation on the action.

Chair Walker asked for clarification on when final station names are decided in the process of developing an alignment. Ms. Toth responded that prior to 2021, final station names were decided later in the process, at around the 60% design point, but that the change in policy has moved that forward to begin as soon as the project to be built decision is adopted by the Board.

Ms. Toth noted that Pinehurst and Pinehurst / 130th both were supported by public feedback, but Pinehurst is the name recommended by staff since it best meets the policy criteria.

It was moved by Committee Vice Chair Prince, seconded by Board member Roscoe, and carried by the unanimous vote of all committee members present that Motion No. M2025-04 be forwarded to the Board with a do-pass recommendation.

Reports to the Committee

REO Metrics

Raj Cheriell, Essential Data and Analytics Director, and Martin Young, Commuter Rail Operations Deputy Director, provided the report.

Mr. Cheriell provided introductory remarks noting that this presentation will focus on Sounder consist length and utilization, showing how staff utilize data to monitor impacts to service once a decision is made.

Mr. Young highlighted the change in consist length over time, with a change in mid-2022, which moved Sounder trains from seven to five car consists. He provided additional context of how this change has impacted ridership, utilization, passenger complaints, and service reliability.

Mr. Young noted that the change from seven to five car consists has had little impact on the aforementioned categories. He highlighted a reduced rate of mechanical failures year-over-year.

Board member Roscoe asked for further detail on the causes of mechanical failures on Sounder trips. Mr. Young replied that approximately 90% of all mechanical failures in the last four years are due to issues on the locomotive.

Board member Roscoe also asked what mechanical failures looked like pre-pandemic. Mr. Young stated that he believed that there were approximately 25-29 failures in 2019, and that specific data could be presented following the meeting. He also noted that the rate of mechanical failures has dropped nearly 50% between 2023 and 2024, specifically highlighting that disruptions were not correlated with consist length.

Chair Walker asked whether the data being presented was inclusive of both Sounder North and South trips. Mr. Young replied that only data for Sounder South was included in this presentation.

Board member Roscoe asked how passenger complaints correlated with consist length. Mr. Young noted that some complaints were due to special event trains, which were seven car consists, remaining in service for the week following the game, and then would be removed afterwards, causing a change for regular commuters. He also noted that other complaints were tied to a service change period where the agency was planning to return to full seven car consists for all trains, as well as instances where riders would need to be accommodated on the following train if a trip was canceled, leading to crush loads on some trips.

Discussion on Draft Rider Experience and Operations Committee Workplan

Chair Walker went over the draft version of the 2025 workplan for the Committee, highlighting new topics of special interest to the Committee such as 2026 World Cup preparations, and the At-Grade Crossing 5 Year Master Plan.

Board member Roscoe asked if any topics were carried over from the previous year, specifically unique actions items that were supposed to be covered in 2024. Chair Walker requested that staff provide a copy of the workplan to Committee members showing what, if any, topics were carried over from the previous year.

Executive session – None.

Other business – None.

Next meeting

Thursday, February 6, 2024

1:00 to 3:00 p.m.

Ruth Fisher Boardroom and Virtually via Zoom.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 2:09 p.m.



Kristina Walker

Rider Experience and Operations Committee Chair

ATTEST:



Kathryn Flores

Board Administrator

APPROVED on February 6, 2025, HRR.