



Summary Minutes

Board Meeting
February 27, 2025

Call to order

The meeting was called to order at 1:31 p.m. by Chair Dave Somers 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 Chairs
(P) Dave Somers, Snohomish County Executive	(A) Claudia Balducci, King County Councilmember (P) Ryan Mello, Pierce County Executive

Board members	
(P) Nancy Backus, City of Auburn Mayor	(A) Ed Prince, City of Renton Council President
(P) Angela Birney, City of Redmond Mayor	(P) De'Sean Quinn, King County Councilmember
(A) Dow Constantine, King County Executive	(P) Kim Roscoe, City of Fife Mayor
(P) Cassie Franklin, City of Everett Mayor	(P) Dan Strauss, City of Seattle Councilmember
(P) Christine Frizzell, City of Lynnwood Mayor	(P) Peter von Reichbauer, King County Councilmember
(P) Hunter George, City of Fircrest Councilmember	(P) Kristina Walker, City of Tacoma Councilmember
(P) Bruce Harrell, City of Seattle Mayor	(A) Girmay Zahilay, King County Council Vice Chair
(P) Julie Meredith, Secretary of Transportation	

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 January 2024. Today's packet also included the annual Procurement, Contracts, and Agreement Annual Report.

Farewell Jim Kastama – Chair Somers thanked Jim Kastama for his year of service to Sound Transit and his decades of leadership in Pierce County.

Welcome New Board members – Chair Somers welcomed newly-appointed Board members Hunter George and De'Sean Quinn. Board member George is a member of the Fircrest City Council and been active in the South Sound for decades. Board member Quinn is a newly appointed member of the King County Council and has experience working for King County Metro.

CEO Report

Interim CEO Sparrman provided the report.

Downtown Redmond Link Extension Opening Date

CEO Sparrman reiterated that the Downtown Redmond Link Extension would open for passenger service on May 10, 2025. He thanked Board members Somers, Balducci, Birney, and Constantine for

joining staff for the official announcement last month. More information on the events and festivities will be shared as opening day approaches.

Update on Ballard Link Extension Scoping Period

CEO Sparrman reported that the System Expansion Committee received an update on the conclusion of the NEPA Scoping process and comment period that took place in late 2024. The update included a summary of the feedback collected during the extended 45-day comment period from October 24 – December 9, 2024. The feedback does not indicate a need to add new alternatives to the Ballard Link Extension Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS).

Staff are not requesting Board action at this time, and the project team will move forward toward completion and publication of the DEIS later this year. This will prepare the Board to consider confirming or modifying the preferred alternative for the Final EIS, which is anticipated to be published in 2026.

West Seattle Link Extension Record of Decision Update

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) recently updated Sound Transit that the publication of the Record of Decision for the West Seattle Link Extension has been delayed by 30-60 days so that the FTA can work with the White House Office of General Counsel to ensure compliance with recent Executive Orders. The West Seattle Link Extension and Sound Transit are not exclusively impacted, and additional reviews are being applied broadly at this time.

Hard Hats with Heart program

On February 18, Sound Transit signed an agreement with the American Heart Association to officially become the first public agency sponsor of the Puget Sound Hard Hats with Heart program. Through on-site education programming, the Hard Hats with Heart program aims to reduce heart disease and stroke in the construction industry. Sound Transit's expansion plans will impact the lives of thousands of workers, and prioritizing the health and well-being of the region's workforce aligns with becoming an Agency of Choice.

New Agency Hires

CEO Sparrman welcomed two key leaders to the agency's Finance and Business Administration Department. Victoria Wassmer, Deputy CEO of Finance and Business Administration, most recently served as Chief Financial Officer as the US Department of Transportation. Her leadership spans federal, state, and local agencies, and Ms. Wassmer is well-versed in leading strategic departments with wide-ranging accountabilities.

Reporting to Ms. Wassmer, Hughey Newsome, Chief Financial Officer, will support and elevate the work of the talented Financial Planning & Analysis, Grants, and Controller teams. Most recently serving as CFO of Piston Group, Mr. Newsome has a strong track record in municipal financial leadership.

CEO Sparrman also re-introduced Bernadette McDermott and John Martin as Executive Directors in the Capital Delivery Department, reporting to Deputy CEO Mestas.

Souder Service Update

CEO Sparrman shared that Amtrak Leadership has dedicated extensive resources to solve the challenges stemming from the lapse of maintenance checks for a portion of the Souder Fleet. As of yesterday, Amtrak has successfully moved 22 carts into Federal Railway Administration compliance since February 14.

Slightly reduced service is anticipated to continue into next week as Amtrak continues its work. For Souder North passengers, the agency is running six of the normally scheduled eight trains. For Sound

South passenger, the agency is running 24 of the 26 daily scheduled trains. CEO Sparrman thanked the public for their patience and full service is restored.

Public Comment

Chair Somers 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:

Bill Hirt
Andrew Velasquez
Ella Shi and Brien Chow
Betty Lau
Marilyn Kennell, Donna Popich, and Jan Roberts
Kit Burns
MaryKate Ryan

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

Paul Sweam
Kit Burns
Erin Rubin
Keira Hamalian
Brien Chow

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

Merilyn Kennell
David Sott

Consent Agenda

Voucher Certification: January 2025

Minutes of the January 23, 2024, Board of Directors Meeting

Motion No. M2025-08: Authorizing the chief executive officer to execute a license agreement with Microsoft Corporation for Microsoft's use of two bus bays and the shuttle loop at Redmond Technology Station for transit vehicle queuing, for a total authorized amount of approximately \$3,160,928 paid to Sound Transit.

Motion No. M2025-09: Authorizing the chief executive officer to increase certain Downtown Redmond Link Extension contract and/or agreement amounts as necessary, for a total authorized cumulative increase not to exceed \$25,000,000, all within the Downtown Redmond Link Extension approved baseline budget.

Motion No. M2025-10: Authorizing the chief executive officer to increase certain Federal Way Link Extension contract and/or agreement amounts as necessary, for a total authorized cumulative increase not to exceed \$60,000,000, all within the Federal Way Link Extension approved baseline budget.

The consent agenda was moved by Board member Birney and seconded by Board member Backus.

It was carried by the unanimous vote of the 13 Board members present that the Consent Agenda be approved as presented.

Business items

Resolution No. R2025-03: Authorizing the chief executive officer to acquire certain real property interests, contingent on receipt of any necessary federal approvals, including acquisition by condemnation to the extent authorized by law, and to reimburse eligible relocation and reestablishment expenses incurred by affected owners and tenants as necessary for the West Seattle Link Extension project.

Clint Dameron, Acting Real Property Director, gave the staff presentation.

Board member Birney asked if the delay to the West Seattle Link Extension (WSLE) Record of Decision (ROD) impacts staff's ability to move forward with the acquisitions. Mr. Dameron responded that the action is written to allow staff to be able to pursue a Determination of Categorical Exclusion, and the agency will work with FTA to determine which path is more expedient. Board member Birney asked if the contingency language could be removed from the action or if it is required, given that the property owners know they will be affected by the project. Mr. Dameron confirmed that federal approval is necessary to proceed. Board member asked what the timeline of day is expected to be. Jason Hampton, WSLE High-Capacity Transit Development Manager, referenced back to interim CEO Sparrman's report that the delay for the ROD is expected to be 30-60 days but further engagement with partners at FTA is needed to gain more clarity.

Vice Chair Mello asked for staff to speak to the balancing act of timing early acquisitions such that they meet specific needs without de-activating local community. He also asked if early acquisitions are expected for other corridors. Mr. Dameron noted that early acquisitions extend protections and services to owner and tenants which is best received as early as possible. He stated that preparing the site for construction activities also includes safety and security precautions as necessary. He acknowledged that the construction schedule does not always line-up with the needs of those being displaced. To the second question, Mr. Dameron stated early acquisitions in other corridors are likely but are considered on a case-by-case basis due to strict regulations and guidance.

Board member Strauss thanked staff for the map included today and reiterated his comments regarding the land use codes surrounding the parcels to be acquired. He stressed the importance of potentially looking for interim uses to ensure the area remains active until needed for construction.

Board member Roscoe, referencing Vice Chair Mello's question, noted that an early acquisition in Fife was approved and asked if a status update could be provided. Mr. Dameron noted that he could prepare a response for the Pierce County Board members but was unable to speak to that acquisition at this time.

Board member Franklin asked to confirm that the action today does not impact the long-term affordability of expansion projects. Mr. Dameron confirmed that the funds needed for this action are already included in the project budget and no additional funding is needed.

CEO Sparrman noted that the environment around early acquisitions, given the need for federal approval, is dynamic and committed to balancing it's use for affected property owners.

Chair Somers added that the Puget Sound Regional Council is also experiencing similar delays to federal review.

Board member Roscoe, Vice Chair of the System Expansion Committee, reported that the Committee considered this action earlier this month and unanimously forwarded the item with a do-pass recommendation.

Resolution No. R2025-03 was moved by Board member Roscoe and seconded by Vice Chair Birney.

Chair Somers called for a roll call vote on Resolution No. R2025-03.

Ayes

Nancy Backus
Angela Birney
Cassie Franklin
Christine Frizzell
Hunter George
Bruce Harrell
Ryan Mello

Nays

Julie Meredith
De'Sean Quinn
Kim Roscoe
Dan Strauss
Peter von Reichbauer
Kristina Walker
Dave Somers

It was carried by the unanimous vote of the 14 Board members present that Resolution No. R2025-03 be approved as presented.

Resolution No. R2025-04: Authorizing the chief executive officer to acquire certain real property interests, contingent upon receipt of any federal approvals necessary for early acquisition, including acquisition by condemnation to the extent authorized by law, and to reimburse eligible relocation and reestablishment expenses incurred by affected owners and tenants as necessary for the Ballard Link Extension project.

Clint Dameron, Acting Real Property Director, gave the staff presentation.

Board member Strauss also reiterated his comments from the System Expansion Committee for this action, detailing the neighborhood around the affected parcel. He advocated for finding an interim use for the site.

Board member Roscoe, Vice Chair of the System Expansion Committee, reported that the Committee considered this action earlier this month and unanimously forwarded the item with a do-pass recommendation.

Resolution No. R2025-04 was moved by Board member Roscoe and seconded by Vice Chair Birney.

Chair Somers called for a roll call vote on Resolution No. R2025-04.

Ayes

Nancy Backus
Angela Birney
Cassie Franklin
Christine Frizzell
Hunter George
Bruce Harrell
Ryan Mello

Nays

Julie Meredith
De'Sean Quinn
Kim Roscoe
Dan Strauss
Peter von Reichbauer
Kristina Walker
Dave Somers

It was carried by the unanimous vote of the 14 Board members present that Resolution No. R2025-04 be approved as presented.

Motion No. M2025-11: Updating committee chairs, vice chairs, members and meeting schedules.

Chair Somers explained that the motion adds the Board's newest members to Committees, names Christine Frizzell as Vice Chair of the Finance & Audit Committee (FAC), and codifies the FAC's meeting schedule that was adjusted last year to consider the Annual Budget in November.

Board member Walker requested that she be removed from the FAC and replaced with fellow Pierce County Board member Kim Roscoe. Board member Walker noted that Pierce County's delegation is in favor of the swap. Chair Somers accepted the change.

It was moved by Board member Mello, seconded by Board member Birney, and carried by the unanimous vote of the 14 Board members present that Motion No. M2025-11 be approved as amended.

Reports to the Board

Capital Delivery Programmatic and Project-level Work Plan update

Deputy CEO Terri Mestas began the presentation by sharing that today's presentation will provide an update on the committee on programmatic cost-savings opportunities, as well as zoom in on project-specific opportunities for the West Seattle Link Extension. She shared that there are currently 500+ opportunities being examined. She was joined by Brad Owen, Executive Director over the West Seattle Link Extension (WSLE) and Ballard Link Extension (BLE). Ms. Mestas reminded the Board of Motion No. M2024-59, which directed staff to develop a workplan on the programmatic, financial and project level measures and opportunities to improve the agency's financial position for the capital program.

She began by showing a snapshot of the dashboard that is used to track, monitor, and report on the many cost-savings opportunities being pursued. She added that project staff have been trained on the tools, processes, and target savings to ensure consistent effort across projects.

To-date, about 100 programmatic opportunities have been identified for examination, with the bulk of the opportunities falling into the Design phase, split between indirect costs and design optimization. In the Preconstruction phase, she highlighted opportunities to optimize real property acquisitions and maximize competition through strategic contract packaging. In the Construction phase, opportunities related to construction efficiencies make-up about 8% of the total opportunities.

Ms. Mestas walked the Board through the process that her team is using to evaluate the opportunities. While most of the opportunities are still early in the process, 19% of the 94 cost-savings opportunities are currently ranked as high benefit. Some opportunities are closed since they were deemed insufficient or duplicated. Ms. Mestas showed a partial list of the programmatic opportunities and stated that the presentation will cover a sample of those.

Beginning with Station Optimization, Ms. Mestas noted that the stations make up roughly 15% of construction costs, but the current estimates are about 18% for WSLE. The program has developed seven station prototypes, aiming to account for all conditions along ST3 alignments. She hopes to share more information on the cost-savings estimates from that work in the Q2 update.

Ms. Mestas stated that staff hope to return to the Board with additional updates to the Delegated Authority Policy, to build upon the work of pushing decision-making to the appropriate levels. She noted a desire to ensure the Board has the information at the project-level to exercise oversight without needing to delve into as many contracts.

Looking toward the end of a project, Ms. Mestas described an effort to streamline commissioning and handover to reduce the length of the pre-revenue phase. She highlighted potential options to use simulators to train operators.

Also in development is the implementation of an Owner Controlled Insurance Program (OCIP), which would cover General Liability including builder risk, pollution liability and professional liability. The agency has used OCIP in previous projects, but the approach would be to standardize its implementation. The target savings associated with implementing OCIP is \$25-35 million. An additional benefit of this program would be to attract a greater number of subcontractors to the projects.

Board member Strauss asked if the cost-savings figures were cumulative. Ms. Mestas confirmed they are cumulative. Board member Strauss followed-up by asking if these measures are exclusively financially driven or if other benefits will be realized. Ms. Mestas noted that some of the work is primarily to become an Owner of Choice and mitigate community impacts.

Pivoting to focusing on project-specific opportunities, Ms. Mestas shared that there are now 400 project opportunities under development across all projects in the ST3 portfolio. Of these opportunities, more than 90% are tracked within the Design Phase, split between indirect costs and design optimization.

Less than 1% of the opportunities are related to right-of-way activities and market conditions, each. And 6% fall within seeking construction efficiencies. These project-level opportunities follow the same evaluation process as the programmatic opportunities, and 10% of the current cost-savings measures are ranked as high benefit. She handed the presentation over to Mr. Owen to review three WSLE-specific opportunities that amount to a target savings of \$290 million.

Mr. Owen noted that staff expect to bring an action to the Board to approve a contract for design services to dive into design optimization work to confirm value engineering opportunities.

Discussing aerial guideway optimization opportunities, the project intends to look into converting the viaduct and Duwamish River crossing from a cast-in-place to pre-cast delivery model. This would allow for the casting to be done in a safer, controlled environment, without impacting the progress of the rest of the alignment. He added that there is an additional benefit of less community impact with pre-cast pieces. Currently, it appears that this opportunity could save about 9 months of construction time and \$60-70 million.

Still focusing on the viaduct and Duwamish crossing, Mr. Owen pivoted to optimizing the foundations and ground improvements. On top of aiming to reduce the size of the spans, he noted that additional information is needed to understand the ground conditions, and that a design contractor, once on board, will be able to help collect that data to inform potential improvements. Reducing the size of the foundations cuts back on the material needed to construct the project and could help shift place of some of the spans into less sensitive right-of-way. Total savings is currently targeted at \$100-130 million.

Board member Quinn asked how the Board would be kept informed of changes due to soil conditions. Mr. Owen responded that part of the Design work will be to take bored soil samples to inform the project, in addition to any available information. Coordination with other Sound Transit departments will take place as design progresses to calculate any impacts to expected service.

Speaking to station optimization at SODO, Mr. Owen explained that part of the feasibility assessment framework is to consult with internal agency partners in operations. While aiming to provide the service expected by riders, Mr. Owen shared an effort to reduce station sizes and footprints. This could have significant schedule savings and provide a safety construction environment. In the SODO area, the WSLE projects also wants to mitigate impacts to the Lander and Holgate overpass bridges. This is also paired with potentially moving the SODO station foundations from a deep foundation to a shallow foundation, assuming the station size can be reduced. The two opportunities have a combined target savings between \$100 - \$165 million.

To provide an example from another project, Mr. Owen spoke to the Operations and Maintenance Facility South (OMFS) project team's work to reduce wetland impacts. By modifying the layout and positioning of the OMFS on the selected site, staff were able to realize about \$22 million dollars in savings and reduce impacts to wetlands.

Ms. Mestas closed the presentation by sharing that she intends to return in Q2 with more details on the programmatic opportunities and financial information. Additional quarterly updates will occur in the Summer and Fall.

Chair Somers stated that the information in the work plan will be invaluable to the Board as it continues to advance projects and grapple with expected costs pressures.

Board member Roscoe asked about a term used by Deputy CEO Mestas at the SEC, related to being able to stop work or pause projects. Deputy CEO Mestas responded that Sound Transit has the ability to terminate any contract "for convenience" but there are also plans to utilize Limited Notices to Proceed to ensure that chunks of work are being completed without committing to future phases or needs.

Board member Strauss thanked the staff for their presentation and stated his excitement with the opportunities staff are investigating.

Board member Frizzell asked if there could be additional information and details on potential off-ramps. Deputy CEO Mestas stated that she would provide that information but would need to compile it. As an individual example, she referenced the design validation work for WSLE that would allow staff to return to the Board with more concrete information on the cost-saving potential prior to committing additional funding for more expensive work.

Board member Birney thanked staff for the presentation and it's easy to understand delivery to both the System Expansion Committee and Board. She asked that more wholistic information on the ST2, ST3, and general system plan would be helpful to hear in the coming months to help provide a larger context for newer Board members. Deputy CEO Mestas that they are working on finalizing the ST2 performance metrics, which will allow staff to report out on the program and what was learned.

Chair Somers agreed with Board member Birney, noting that the larger context will be helpful for decisions expected in the coming year.

Executive Session to discuss litigation to which the Agency is, or is likely to become, a party as authorized under RCW 42.30.110(1)(i)

Chair Somers advised that the Board was going into executive session. He introduced Amy Pearsall, Sound Transit Deputy General Counsel, who explained that the Board was allowed to enter into executive session under RCW 42.30.110(1)(i) to discuss litigation to which the Agency is, or is likely to become, a party.

Chair Somers explained that the Board would be in executive session for 15 minutes. The executive session began at 3:11 p.m. and was scheduled to end at 3:26 p.m.

The executive session ended at 3:26 p.m. At 3:26 p.m., Chair Somers called the meeting back to order.

Other business

None.

Next meeting

The next regular Board meeting would be held on March 27, 2025, 1:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. in the Ruth Fisher Board Room and as a virtual meeting via Zoom.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 3:26 p.m.

ATTEST:

Dave Somers
Board Chair

Kathryn Flores
Board Administrator

APPROVED on _____, AJM.