

**Improving the Speed of Project Delivery
Recommendations from Technical Advisory Group (TAG)
Implementation Dashboard - September 2023**

MONTHLY SUMMARY
<p>- Following Board guidance in early August, agency staff created this template for ongoing monthly progress tracking of the agency's implementation of action items recommended by the Board's Technical Advisory Group (TAG). Features include a red-yellow-green dashboard-like update on status and a brief description of current or future planned actions related to each recommendation and action item.</p> <p>- This is a refresh of the earlier format last shared at the August 3, 2023 System Expansion Committee meeting.</p> <p>- Staff will collect progress monthly and distribute the most current written update monthly, to the Executive Committee and System Expansion Committee.</p>

Status Legend
Need Board guidance
Not started / depends on earlier step
Early investigation
In progress & on-track
In progress & at risk of delay
In progress & delayed
Complete

Original Recommendation from TAG	Action ID	Recommended Action from TAG	From Board Motion M2023-36 (if relevant)	Responsible Body/ Department	Responsible Staff	Planned Start	Planned Complete	Status	Highlights as of September 5, 2023
1: Rebuild trust and clarify the roles and responsibilities of the ST Board and staff.	1.01	From List in Report: Explicitly identify why trust has broken between Board and staff and how it can be rebuilt.		Board (Exec Committee?)	TBD by Board	2023-Q2	2024-Q1	Need Board guidance	Discuss this as a topic of February Board Retreat and New Member Orientation.
	1.02	From List in Report: Review and revise Board bylaws and procedures to focus on policy and major programmatic decisions. From Narrative Detail in Report: The TAG recommends that the Board focus on ST3 programmatic, freeing up needed capacity for policy debate and decision-making.		Board Exec Committee, Board Admin, Legal		2023-Q4	2024-Q1	Need Board guidance	This item needs guidance and is in early investigation and is conditional on the outcome of R2018-40.
	1.03	From List in Report: Limit the type of actions that require Board input and approval. From Narrative Detail in Report: The Board should set overall project budgets (including contingency), and leave project direction and spending decisions to staff, within Board-approved project and budget definitions. From Narrative Detail in Report: Once a project budget is authorized, ST's Real Property team should be authorized to acquire the properties it needs in the sequence that makes sense rather than seek approvals section by section with the exception of condemnations. The TAG recommends that staff have the authority to acquire any parcel needed and only bring forward condemnations.	Update the Board Procurement, Agreements and Delegated Authority Policy, Resolution No. R2018-40, including: - Reviewing and updating current delegation of authority level(s) between the Board and CEO (Q3 2023). - Streamlining the nature and number of actions that currently come to the Board for approval (Q3 2023).	Board Exec Committee, FAC		2023-Q2	2023-Q4	Need Board guidance	R2018-40 is moving ahead to the Finance & Audit committee per direction of the Executive Committee. Possible options for delegated authority were presented to the Executive Committee on August 3. It referred the topic to Finance & Audit Committee scheduled for September 8 for further discussion, with possible next steps to Executive Committee and full Board. Staff needs added context on the overall project budget recommendation. Is it meant that once the Board sets the Baseline Budget that every contract awarded under that is delegated to the CEO? This could include contracts valued at 100s of millions of dollars or more. Need clarity on whether the Board wants Staff to advance the Real Property recommendation.
	1.04	From List in Report: Include staff recommendations on all actions going to the Board.		CEO, Board Admin	All Exec Leadership	2023-Q2	Ongoing	In progress & on-track	This approach has commenced. It needs to be more consistently applied, with more standardized formats in all presentations and staff reports.
	1.05	From List in Report: Identify cost and schedule impacts of alternatives coming to the Board for decision, as well as the monthly cost of a delayed decision. Amend project schedules and budgets accordingly. From Narrative Detail in Report: The TAG strongly recommends that if the Board decides to extend a comment period or delay a decision for further study, the costs of such a delay be quantified and acknowledged by the Board with an amendment to the project budget.		CEO, Board Admin	All Exec Leadership	2023-Q3	Ongoing	In progress & on-track	Monthly issuance of Project Performance Tracker, including quarterly presentations in System Expansion Committee. Incorporated trend lines on schedule and budget in June report. Board Annual Program Review (BAPR) in May 2022 and 2023, leveraging feedback from Board's Independent Consultant to continuously improve. - Identify cost and schedule impacts of alternatives (we have started, but will continue to improve on being more explicit). - We have an order of magnitude cost of delay by month for megaprojects as of earlier in 2023. (~\$10-\$20 M or more per month on megaproject construction). This needs to be updated considering cost escalations this year to date.
2: Introduce an experienced megaproject capital	2.01	From List in Report: Create three executive positions: Executive Director of Capital Programs, ST 2 Deputy Director, and ST3 Deputy Director.	Sustain these positions in future budgets.			2023-07	Ongoing	Complete	Created all three positions, and budgeted for 2024 and onward. Assumed start date of April 2024, but can be hired at any time with CEO's discretion.

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program executive team.	2.02	<p>From List in Report: Recruit executives from outside the agency with successful mega transportation program experience for the roles.</p> <p>From Narrative Detail in Report: ST needs to create and hire an Executive Director of Capital Program who reports directly to the CEO and is solely responsible for the capital program, with other corporate responsibilities kept to a minimum.</p> <p>From Narrative Detail in Report: The TAG also recommends creating and hiring new ST2 and ST3 deputy directors who report to the Executive Director of Capital Programs. These two deputies will manage project directors who will lead projects from start to finish, supported by ST staff from Planning, Environment, and Project Development (PEPD), Design, Engineering, and Construction Management (DECM), Operations, and other relevant departments.</p>	<p>In partnership with Board leadership, hire an experienced megaproject capital program executive and two deputy executives, select an executive search firm, establish hiring/selection criteria, and review recruitment marketing materials.</p> <p>Provide regular updates to the Executive Committee on the progress of developing the position and hiring.</p>			2023-07	2024-Q2	In progress & on-track	<p>Procurement for recruitment team posted in July 2023. Received RFP responses in mid-August for the selection of a Recruiting Firm to lead the recruitment of Megaproject Executive(s).</p> <p>Shortlist of proposers furnished to Board Leadership in August 2023 for review. Issuing "Notice of Intent to Award" on Sep 7.</p> <p>Once awarded, the firm will initiate search for DCEO/Chief Level Position.</p>
	2.03	<p>From List in Report: Vest the executive team with authority to make decisions.</p> <p>From Narrative Detail in Report: It is the TAG's recommendation that these new positions would be empowered and expected to give a clear yes or no to changes during the planning stages and subsequently empower other staff to lead consultants effectively during the design stage.</p>				Ongoing	Ongoing	Need Board guidance	<p>Current capital team is already vested with decision making authority within the parameters of established scope, schedule, and budget. However, they are not empowered to make tradeoffs between scope, schedule, or budget that impact the safety or quality of the Board-approved project or future system operability.</p> <p>This is an item that requires further clarification and discussion. If implemented without clear guardrails, this level of authority can compromise future operations and maintenance needs of the system. This has been a problem that prior planning and capital teams have been empowered to make decisions, and those decisions are having consequences on current operations and future operability.</p>
3: Implement procedures that push decision-making down to the lowest level practical and foster and environment that encourages decision-making in general.	3.01	<p>From List in Report: Modify procedures to authorize project decisions at lowest level possible.</p> <p>From Narrative Detail in Report: Project decisions should be made by staff, with a hierarchy of decision-making authority that promotes and supports decisions to be made at lower levels, as appropriate. At present, private sector construction contractors reported that their resident engineers in the field have decision-making authority of up to five million dollars, while their agency counterparts only have decision-making authority up to \$50,000. As a result, the contractor's resident engineer can make decisions quickly to match the needs and pace of the project while the agency's resident engineer is required to run any changes over \$50,000 up the chain, which inevitably takes time.</p>				2023-Q3	Ongoing	Early investigation	<p>This needs further review and investigation to identify where decisions are currently being made and if they are at the proper level. Also needs to be balanced with reasonable "guardrails" to aid staff in elevating decisions that are outside prior approvals or allowed contingency budget. In some cases, the authority is already well established but is not used by staff out of risk-aversion or lack of clarity around competing, contradictory recommendations. This will be an ongoing and iterative process.</p> <p>This needs additional consideration and assessment regarding changes to level of budget authority changes allowed if implemented to put "guard rails" and clear upwards reporting requirements for decisions being made. Currently, there is no set process or practice for communicating project changes up to CEO/Exec Leadership.</p>
	3.02	<p>From List in Report: Conduct training and coaching program to promote staff-level decisions.</p> <p>From Narrative Detail in Report: The TAG recommends ST develop a robust "lessons learned" process that assesses all decisions - good and bad - and uses that experience to promote better outcomes in the future.</p>				2023-Q4	Ongoing	Not started / depends on earlier step	<p>Training program depends first on completion of 3.01.</p> <p>Incorporate continuous improvement results into agency processes and procedures by Q4 2023 and launch improvements in Q1 2024.</p> <p>The agency's relatively new Sound Transit Evolving Practices (STEP) program (lessons learned) is being more fully embraced by agency staff. PSO will further develop and implement in 2024.</p>

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4: Align key procedures with industry best practices, eliminating unnecessary steps and associated delays.	4.01	From List in Report: Establish timeline goals for key procedures, such as invoice processing (30 days), change order processing (60 days) and contract close-out (120 days) based on industry best practices. From Narrative Detail in Report: The TAG recommends that the CEO champion a disciplined baseline evaluation of current processes, such as invoice processing, change order management, and project close out, and assess against industry best practices. From Narrative Detail in Report: Benchmarking against other agencies that are considered owners of choice is recommended. From Narrative Detail in Report: ST should make more effective use of standardized unit costs to facilitate more efficient change order processing.				2023-Q3	2024-Q4*	In progress & on-track	Established workplans in close partnership with ACEC to explore best practices based on industry feedback. These have informed ST-ACEC engagement in 2023 and are scheduled to conclude by Q4 2023. Devising a multi-department suite of continuous process improvement efforts to address streamlining procurement, agreements, contracting and invoicing/payments. Targeted to commence in September 2023, such that initial recommendations can be incorporated into agency processes and procedures in Q4 2023 and launch in Q1 2024. This is also dependent on input from new DCEO/Chief of Capital.
	4.02	From List in Report: Revise procedures to meet the goals by eliminating unnecessary steps and parties.				2024-Q1	2024-Q4*	Not started / depends on earlier step	Depends first on completion of 4.01. This is also part of Capital Program Process Improvement review initiated in August 2023. This is also dependent on input from new DCEO/Chief of Capital.
	4.03	From List in Report: Clarify how procedures are measured (e.g. when does a change order start), and ensure consistency across the program.				2023-Q3	2024-Q4*	In progress & on-track	Established workplans in close partnership with ACEC to explore best practices based on industry feedback. These have informed ST-ACEC engagement in 2023 and are scheduled to conclude by Q4 2023. Devising a multi-department suite of capital program focused process improvement efforts to streamline internal controls such as procurement, agreements, contracting and invoicing/payments. Commenced in August 2023, such that initial recommendations can be incorporated into agency processes and procedures in Q4 2023 and launch in Q1 2024.
	4.04	From List in Report: Train staff on the new procedures.				2023-Q4	2024-Q1	Not started / depends on earlier step	Depends first on completion of 4.01-4.03 See above on training
	4.05	From List in Report: Monitor performance, recognize successes and assess failures for improvement.				2023-Q3	2024-Q4*	Not started / depends on earlier step	Depends first on completion of 4.01-4.03
	5: Strengthen and enforce an agency betterment policy.	5.01	From List in Report: Establish ST design standards (e.g. stations and parking structures)	Review, reform, and strengthen the agency's betterment policies and/or permitting authority (Q1 2024)			Underway	2025-Q1	In progress & on-track

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	5.02	From List in Report: Establish protocols to address requests by Authorities Having Jurisdiction, including cost allocation and schedule constraints. From Narrative Detail in Report: The TAG recommends that ST establish or strengthen and adhere to the betterments policy that limits ST expenditures to the cost of essential transit improvements in accordance with ST3 based on design standards established by the agency, along with any mitigation measures required as a result of formal environmental review.	Review, reform, and strengthen the agency's betterment policies and/or permitting authority (Q1 2024)			2023-Q4	2024-Q1	Need Board guidance	The agency intends to initiate a dialogue with the Board by Q1 2024 to reflect TAG recommendations on what constitutes a betterment under current policies (including R2009-24 Scope Control Policy; M2002-22 Policy on Reimbursement to Sound Transit by Partner Agencies for Out of Scope Work; R2018-40 Procurement, Agreements and Delegated Authority Policy; and R2022-27 Amending the Board's Procurement, Agreements and Delegated Authority Policy), with a focus on limiting betterments within the appropriate bounds and during the permitting process. This needs more discussion with the Board on what limits the Board wants to (or can) impose on AHJs. Limitations put in these areas will limit the ability of staff to make decisions and keep projects advancing. Limitations in these policies could have the unintended consequence of pushing more decisions to the Board. Update will also include timely identification of issues by staff to CEO and Board, an escalation path to resolve disputes, and direct practices to face the challenges inherent in seeking permits across many jurisdictions.
	5.03	From List in Report: Take full advantage of agency's designation as an Essential Public Authority.				2023-Q4	2024-Q1	Need Board guidance	ST staff believe that this authority is already fully exercised, so could use guidance on what specific areas of authority the Board desires us to use that we are not already using or would need added Legislative Authority to more fully embrace.
6: Engage the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) as a delivery partner equally invested in delivering transit to the region.	6.01	From List in Report: Engage with FTA to set reasonable timelines and alternatives to be studied. From Narrative Detail in Report: The TAG recommends that ST support efforts to gain additional resources for the FTA as required to meet NEPA review timelines. The TAG recommends the following approaches: --Work with FTA to identify firm agreed-upon review times and establish an accountability protocol so that if FTA cannot meet that guideline, they must provide options for regaining time or use of alternative pathways including utilizing Section 139j, which is already utilized by ST, or other resources in more aggressive ways. --Continue partnering efforts currently underway, acknowledging that if FTA is not adequately resourced, ST cannot meet their commitments to the region. --Work jointly with FTA, supporting recent efforts to streamline reviews and to fully resource the agency in a way that recognizes the scope of work in coming years. --Engage Congressional delegation to support better funding and resourcing for Region 10.				Ongoing	Ongoing	In progress & on-track	CEO began meeting monthly with FTA Acting Administrator and initiated conversations on strengthening relationships at executive and staff levels. Quarterly FTA meetings continue to identify resource demands and commitments to delivery.
	6.02	From List in Report: Engage Congressional delegation to press FTA to prioritize and deploy sufficient resources for the ST program.	Work with interested Board Members, members of the Congressional Delegation, and other Federal Partners regarding opportunities to maximize FTA partnership and capacity.			Ongoing	Ongoing	Need Board guidance	Discussion advanced by CEO to congressional delegation to request support for added staff in Region X to support advancement of ST3 program. This has already resulted in more staffing at Region X and added staffing to the Transportation budgets. This has already been initiated by the CEO as part of her normal job duties and has resulted in support from the federal delegation for Region X. Need additional guidance on how the Board would like to engage and support this work.
Oversight: Continue oversight and tracking of TAG	7.01	Retain at least five members of the TAG to review implementation progress, provide continued monitoring, and report back to the Board in partnership with the independent consultant Dave Peters through December 31, 2024.				2023-Q3	2024-Q4	In progress & on-track	Contract modifications and extensions are underway. 5 out of 8 complete.

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recommendations and other continuous improvement efforts	7.02	Extend the scope of work for independent consultant Dave Peters to include quarterly reports to the Executive Committee of the Board in partnership with TAG scope above through December 31, 2024. Also extend the scope of work for independent consultant Dave Peters to include ad hoc high-level "second opinion" engineering approaches to				2023-Q3	2024-Q4	Complete	Contract extension is complete. Ongoing discussion to further clarify the scope of work is underway between the independent consultant and Board.

*working to refine timeline