



Summary Minutes

System Expansion Committee Meeting February 8, 2024

Call to order

The meeting was called to order at 1:30 p.m. by Committee Chair Balducci.

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 Chair
(P) Claudia Balducci, King County Councilmember	(P) Kim Roscoe, Fife Mayor

Board Members	
(A) Nancy Backus, Auburn Mayor	(P) Bruce Harrell, Seattle Mayor
(P) Cassie Franklin, Everett Mayor	(P) Dave Somers, Snohomish County Executive

Alejandro Monzon, Board Relations Specialist, announced that a quorum of the System Expansion Committee was present at roll call.

Report of the Chair

Agency Progress Report

The meeting packet included the December agency progress report, as well as a link to the Project Performance Tracker. Chair Balducci reminded the Committee that the Board will be receiving a monthly contract in the materials for the full Board meetings going forward.

CEO Report

Chief System Quality Officer Moises Gutierrez provided the report.

Activation Update

Mr. Gutierrez reported that the agency is nearing a decision on a revenue service date for the East Link Starter Line. Currently, the project is in the end stages of simulated service.

Systems integration testing continues on the Lynnwood Link Extension and pre-revenue activities are advancing. Mr. Gutierrez noted that staff will provide an update on the conversations with Community Transit and King County Metro regarding transit service in the North corridor in March as part of the decision on the second phase of the 2024 Service Plan.

Public comment

Chair Balducci announced that public comment would be accepted via email to meetingcomments@soundtransit.org and would also be accepted verbally.

Written public comments:

John Ho
Kyle Jacobson and Steve Savage
Gordon Werner

In-person Verbal Public Comments:

Alex Tsimerman

Committee Chair Balducci announced that Mr. Alex Tsimerman would be excluded from providing verbal public comment to the Sound Transit Board of Directors and Committees for a period of 180 days. The exclusion was based on Mr. Tsimerman's violation of the Board Rules and Operating Procedures, which require that comments be related to an agenda item(s) or matters designated for public comment and also prohibit derogatory remarks.

Betty Lau
Brien Chow

Virtual Verbal Public Comments:

MaryKate Ryan

Project Performance Tracker Update

Moises Gutierrez, Chief System Quality Officer, shared that the information for the most recent update to the online Project Performance Tracker is from the end of December 2023 and was updated on February 5, 2024. Beginning with Projects in Planning, Mr. Gutierrez reported that there were no status changes to report this month.

For Projects in Construction, Mr. Gutierrez noted that there were two status changes. For the Stride Bus Base North project, the schedule risk status has shifted from green to yellow, due to additional time needed to address comments from the 90% design review and to secure the conditional use permit. For the Sumner, Kent, and Auburn Stations Parking and Access Improvements project the schedule risk status has shifted from green to yellow, due to a delay in issuing the Notice to Proceed to the contractor for the Auburn Station stemming from right-of-way acquisition delays. Mr. Gutierrez noted that Ron Lewis, Executive Director of Design, Engineering, and Construction Management (DECM), would have a presentation on Project in Construction later in the meeting and would provide additional information and context.

In concluding, Mr. Gutierrez highlighted other work. In response to the Board's feedback from the Annual Program Review, staff are conducting an in-depth review of the agency's cost estimating methodology, specifically assessing construction market factors as each new Opinion of Probable Cost is developed. The Executive Director of Planning, Environment, and Project Development (PEPD) Don Billen will be continuing a quarterly update on Projects in Planning that will highlight some of this information.

Additionally, Mr. Gutierrez noted that beginning this spring a new metric related to quality will be added to the tracker. He will share more information on that metric over the next few months.

Business items

For Committee Final Action

Minutes: January 11, 2024 System Expansion Committee meeting

It was moved by Board member Roscoe, seconded by Board member Franklin, and carried by unanimous voice vote that the minutes of the January 11, 2024, System Expansion Committee meeting be approved as presented.

Motion No. M2024-04: Authorizing the chief executive officer to execute a contract with Western Ventures Construction, Inc. to provide construction services for the temporary North Maintenance of Way facility in the amount of \$2,849,962 with a 10 percent contingency of \$284,996 for a total authorized contract amount not to exceed \$3,134,958.

Victoria Morris, Project Director, and Nick Datz, Senior Project Manager, gave the staff presentation for this action.

Vice Chair Roscoe inquired into when the facility is scheduled to be operational. Mr. Datz responded that the permanent facility is scheduled to be opened in 2027. The temporary facility that this action would support would fully open in August of this year, with limited support for pre-revenue service along the Lynnwood Link Extension beginning in April.

Chair Balducci asked, noting that this contract seems to be manageable even with the price exceeding the cost estimate, if the Board can expect similar actions down the line. Ron Lewis, DECM Executive Director, responded that the current construction market is putting pressure on the capital program so it may be possible that similar actions are brought to the Committee. He also referenced his presentation later in the meeting as a venue for mentioning some of those impacts.

Board member Harrell arrived at this time.

It was moved by Board member Roscoe, seconded by Board member Franklin, and carried by the unanimous voice vote of all committee members present that Motion No. M2024-04 be approved as presented.

For Recommendation to the Board

Motion No. M2024-05: Authorizing the chief executive officer to execute a contract modification with HNTB Corporation for advancing the design of integrated transit-oriented development for stations along the alignments of the West Seattle and Ballard Link Extensions in the amount of \$6,798,391 for a new total authorized contract amount not to exceed \$326,492,144.

Sandra Fann, Project Director, and Kristin Hoffman, Joint Development Manager, gave the staff presentation for this action.

Chair Balducci asked about the decision to conduct this work on stations in preliminary engineering, given the current discussions on station siting along the Ballard Link Extension. Ms. Fann confirmed that stations advancing to preliminary engineering would be the target for this specific work, and noted that additional transit-oriented development work has been completed throughout the environmental process for other stations as well.

Chair Balducci inquired into the potential pivot should the Board opt to select a station to be built that has not yet been the subject of preliminary engineering. Ms. Hoffman confirmed that additional resources would be needed to do similar work should a different station be selected. Chair Balducci noted that, based on the amount requested and the number of stations, the cost averages out to \$500,000 per station.

It was moved by Board member Roscoe, seconded by Board member Franklin, and carried by the unanimous voice vote of all committee members present that Motion No. M2024-05 be forwarded to the Board with a do-pass recommendation.

Motion No. M2024-06: Authorizing the chief executive officer to execute a Project Administration Agreement with the City of Everett for the Everett Link Extension and OMF North project.

Eric Widstrand, North Corridor Development Director, and Don Billen, PEPD Executive Director, gave the staff presentation for this and the following action.

Board member Franklin noted that the Everett City Council approved the agreement last week and she is very excited to begin this stage of project development.

Vice Chair Roscoe voiced her support for the Project Administration Agreement model, noting it has been beneficial to the City of Fife in its work with Sound Transit.

Chair Balducci asked for additional information on the schedule risks in the project overview, which shows red for progress to the next milestone but green for the final delivery date. Mr. Widstrand responded that early project development was disrupted by the COVID Pandemic and Realignment, as well as delays in reviews from third parties, such as the Federal Transit Administration.

Chair Balducci inquired into the siting discussions for the Operations and Maintenance Facility (OMF) North with the local jurisdictions. Mr. Widstrand answered that there is no ideal site for the OMF North, with each having unique challenges.

It was moved by Board member Somers, seconded by Board member Franklin, and carried by the unanimous voice vote of all committee members present that Motion No. M2024-06 be forwarded to the Board with a do-pass recommendation.

Motion No. M2024-07: Authorizing the chief executive officer to execute a Project Administration Agreement with Snohomish County for the Everett Link Extension and OMF North project.

Chair Balducci noted that the previous presentation included the information for this action.

It was moved by Board member Franklin, seconded by Board member Somers, and carried by the unanimous voice vote of all committee members present that Motion No. M2024-07 be forwarded to the Board with a do-pass recommendation.

Reports to the Committee

Status of Implementing the Technical Advisory Group recommendations

Moises Gutierrez, Chief System Quality Officer, provided the presentation. He noted agency efforts had been reset following the December 2024 committee meetings which included affirming the current implementations and how future progress was shared with the Board and the Technical Advisory Group (TAG). This reset was directed by Interim CEO Goran Sparrman. CEO Sparrman had voiced these efforts as a top priority and communicated his vision and expectations with the agency. Mr. Gutierrez acknowledged the new format of the implementation table that was provided in the committee's meeting packet. This new format was created to reflect clarity and urgency.

For Recommendation 1: Rebuilding Trust, the Board's policy to increase the chief executive officer's delegated contracting authority limits went into effect on January 1, 2024. With that, administrative steps are underway to ensure that further delegation flows down to the appropriate level of the agency. Additionally, a boarder programmatic workplan of key discussions is being developed from the Committee workplans and other feedback. Lastly, improvements regarding recommendations and cost of delays for project-specific decisions are coming to staff reports and presentations.

For Recommendation 2: Hiring a Mega-project Executive, Mr. Gutierrez stated that the final round of interviews is expected to be complete this month, highlighting the effort invested by the Board and TAG in this process. Initial steps are being taken to begin the recruitment of the two deputies who will report to the Deputy CEO for Mega Capital Project Delivery. Additional organizational changes are being reviewed by the CEO and Chief Human Resources Officer.

For Recommendations 3 & 4: Internal Improvements, staff have aligned their effort around the TAG's priorities to focus on goals in 30, 60, and 120 day timeframes. Work is currently occurring on improving

the timely processing of invoices and following-up on payment of subcontractors by the prime. Mr. Gutierrez noted that the effort has been focused on the Link Light Rail program and wished to dive deeper on this successful work. In late 2022, the average timeframe for issuing payment was 32 days, and in late 2023, that fell to 28 days. The TAG report, issued between the two dates, stated a 30-day target. Mr. Gutierrez highlighted the work of the Accounting and Finance teams in making process improvements.

For Recommendation 5: Strengthening the Agency Betterment Policy, an internal assessment of existing policies has been conducted, and staff are identifying gaps and opportunities for further improvement. Staff are preparing to brief the Executive and System Expansion Committee on an update to the betterments policy framework.

For Recommendation 6: Regarding Federal Partnership, there is a cleaning up of the approach to engaging with FTA, with CEO Sparrman taking ownership of the reset with the agency. Mr. Gutierrez reaffirmed CEO Sparrman's and the agency's commitment to implementing the TAG recommendations.

Chair Balducci thanked the staff for the work on the hiring for the Mega Project CEO and the updated formatting for ease of information.

Vice Chair Roscoe inquired into the anticipated next milestone on the bullet on slide 9 related to "Station Design Standard interviews." Mr. Gutierrez noted that the end product, expected later this year, is technical drawings that will inform procurements for station-related contracts. Vice Chair noted some inconsistency at stations on bike runnels on stairways.

Project in Construction quarterly report

Ron Lewis, Executive Director of Design, Engineering, and Construction Management, began the presentation noting that this is a more detailed quarterly report that goes into the Project in Construction, in addition to the monthly status changes reviewed earlier in the meeting.

For the Hilltop Tacoma Link Extension project, revenue service began in September 2023 and remaining open work items are being completed, including relocating antenna wires and conducting studies related to noise and traffic impacts. There is an anticipated legal claim that leadership continues to work with the Legal department on and will elevate to the Board at the proper time.

For the East Link Starter Line, the Redmond Technology Station garage opened in October 2023, pre-revenue service began as planned in November, simulated service began as planned in January, and the Overlake Village Pedestrian Bridge was opened in January. There continues to be work on pedestrian crossing safety enhancements and the project is on track for a spring 2024 opening. For risks and mitigations, Mr. Lewis noted that a top risk related to the Downtown Bellevue tunnel smoke control system was closed in November. Remaining work includes safety enhancements, platform tile replacements, punch list and warranty work, and collaboration with WSDOT on Air Space Lease amendments.

For the I-90 segment of the East Link project, concrete plinth demolition is 95% complete and reconstruction is 64% complete, as of January 29, 2024. The forecasted completion for this work slipped from April to July but still supports a 2025 opening. The nylon insert replacement work was also complete on the floating bridge. For risks and mitigations, Mr. Lewis highlighted the ongoing post-tension cable investigation at the approaches to the floating bridge, the completion of the polyurea coating in summer of this year, and tie-in work at the International District/Chinatown station to connect to the 1-Line.

The Downtown Redmond Link Extension is 85.4% complete and on track for a spring 2025 opening. For risks and mitigations, Mr. Lewis noted Puget Sound Energy delays for power service due to the local storm response priorities, deferred tile work to mid-March due to the weather impact, testing/repairing of the system ductbank. He highlighted the possibility of an early start to System Integrated Testing.

The Federal Way Link Extension is 83% complete, with advancing integrated construction, substantial completion of a light rail vehicle storage track, and construction begin on the long span at Structure C. The project is tracking to a 2026 opening. For risks and mitigations, Mr. Lewis noted close coordination with WSDOT and contractors near SR509, being prepared as early as possible to pre-revenue service, and advancing bus loop activation in downtown Federal Way.

The Lynnwood Link Extension project is 97% complete, on track for a summer/fall 2024 opening. System integration testing began in October 2023 and is planned to complete in March 2024. The Finishes contract for the NE130th Street Infill station was executed and the station is tracking for a 2026 opening. Mr. Lewis highlighted securing Certificates of Occupancy and the complexity of active construction near operational rail traffic as potential risks.

Manufacturing and Assembly of the Series 2 Light Rail Vehicle Fleet Expansion project is approximately 88% complete, with 124 vehicles delivered and 103 conditionally accepted for revenue service. Additionally, the Automatic Train Protection retrofit for the Series 1 vehicles is expected to be complete in December 2024. Currently, warranty issues are limiting vehicle availability and there are known capacity constraints at the OMF Central for commissioning work until the I-90 segment is opened.

For Sumner, Kent, and Auburn Station Parking and Access Improvements project, the Sumner station is progressing to 100% final design with construction starting in Q1 2024, the Kent Station design-build contractor was issued a Notice to Proceed on December 21, 2023, and the Auburn Station contractor Notice to Proceed was issued on January 16, 2024. Mr. Lewis noted permitting and right-of-way acquisition concerns that may have impacts at a later date.

For the Stride BRT Program, Mr. Lewis noted that several portions of the program were moving through final design with the design-build contractor and noted several contract awards are expected this year. Mr. Lewis raised concerns with permitting on timelines, noting that close corroboration is underway to mitigate. Additionally, there has been delay in the right-of-way acquisitions and market conditions continue to drive cost pressures. Mr. Lewis also spoke to the STart program, which features pieces along the four Link extensions and the Sounder Garages.

Discussion on the 2024 System Expansion Committee Workplan

Chair Balducci re-iterated that will today is the "final" review of the Workplan, but members could request additional special topics throughout the year. She also noted that the Workplan should be updated to reflect that the Monthly Contract report will now be received by the Board and not the Committee.

Executive session - None.


Other business - None.

Next meeting

Thursday, March 14, 2024
1:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.
Ruth Fisher Board Room & Virtually via WebEx

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 3:06 p.m.



Claudia Balducci
System Expansion Committee Chair

ATTEST:



Kathryn Flores
Board Administrator

APPROVED on March 14, 2024, AJM.