



Summary Minutes

Rider Experience and Operations Committee Meeting August 1, 2024

Call to order

The meeting was called to order at 1:00 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	(P) Ed Prince, Renton Council President

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

Hunter Rancipher, Board Relations Specialist, announced that a quorum of the committee was present at roll call.

Report of the Chair

None.

CEO Report

Interim CEO Sparrman provided the CEO Report.

Update on Security Progress

CEO Sparrman reported that the Public Safety and Emergency Management Gap Analysis had been completed, and an update would be provided at the next committee meeting.

Activation Update

CEO Sparrman provided information on the status of pre-revenue service for the Lynnwood Link Extension and on testing for the Downtown Redmond Link Extension.

Update on Safety Engagement with Underrepresented Communities

CEO Sparrman provided information on a memo responding to queries from Committee Vice Chair Prince and Committee Chair Walker on how the at-grade crossing program engages with underrepresented communities during public outreach periods. He also invited Leda Chahim, Deputy Executive Director of Government and Community Relations, to provide a short presentation outlining

the agency's current efforts.

Ms. Chahim noted that the agency has engaged in two phases. The first took place in the Winter of 2022, which included engagement with community-based organizations, link operators, public surveys, and a partnership agreement with the Seattle Department of Transportation. The second phase, which began in 2023 and is ongoing, has focused on engaging and maintaining established relationships with the aforementioned groups, while providing insight into internal efforts to address community concerns.

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.

The following person provided written comments:

John Slyfield

There were no in-person or virtual comments submitted.

Business Items

For Committee final action

July 18, 2024, Rider Experience and Operations Committee meeting minutes

It was moved by Board member Birney, seconded by Board member Upthegrove, and carried by the unanimous vote of all committee members present that the minutes of the July 18, 2024, Rider Experience and Operations Committee meeting be approved as presented.

Motion No. M2024-51: Authorizing the chief executive officer to execute a seven-year contract, with two one-year options to extend, with Stacy & Witbeck, Inc. to provide track, signal, and bridge maintenance services for Sound Transit's Lakewood Subdivision and Sounder Everett Yard right-of-way for a total authorized contract amount not to exceed \$35,572,574 plus applicable taxes.

Martin Young, Director of Sounder Operations, provided the presentation for Motion No. M2024-51.

Board member Roscoe asked if changes to Sounder service would impact the contract. Mr. Young replied that these contracts are fixed based on federal guidelines and would not be impacted by changes to service.

It was moved by Committee Vice Chair Prince, seconded by Board member Zahilay, and carried by the unanimous vote of all committee members present that Motion No. M2024-51 be approved as presented.

For Recommendation to the Board

Motion No. M2024-52: Approving the submittal of the Transit Development Plan 2024-2029 to the Washington State Department of Transportation.

Brian de Place, Director of System and Service Planning, provided the presentation for Motion No. M2024-52.

Committee Chair Walker noted operational challenges that have been faced in the region, particularly regarding operator shortages. She asked whether the agency would encounter any issues with expanding service in the future based on this action. Mr. de Place answered that this action would not prohibit the agency from expanding in the future.

Committee Chair Walker also asked for clarification on the role of the Transit Development Plan (TDP) versus operational plan regarding the relocation of stop locations for bus routes. Mr. de Place noted that operational changes like stop relocation is not part of the TDP but would be included in service plans that are brought before the committee.

Board member Roscoe asked if there were any updates both for the agency and regionally regarding the ongoing operator shortage. Mr. de Place noted that this information would be spoken to later in the committee meeting during a presentation on the Draft 2025 Service Plan.

Motion No. M2024-52 was moved by Board member Roscoe and seconded by Board member Birney.

Committee Chair Walker called for a roll call vote.

Ayes

Angela Birney
Ed Prince
Kim Roscoe
Dave Upthegrove
Girmay Zahilay
Kristina Walker

Nays

It was carried by the unanimous vote of 6 committee members present that Motion No. M2024-52 be forwarded to the Board with a do-pass recommendation.

Reports to the Committee

Preview of the 2025 Draft Service Plan

Brian de Place, Director of System and Service Planning, provided the report. Mr. de Place highlighted the anticipated opening of the Downtown Redmond Link Extension in the Spring of 2025, which will add a 3.4-mile extension to the 2 Line with two new stations and projected daily weekday boardings between 6,900 and 8,200 by Q4 of 2025. He also highlighted changes to ST Express routes operated by Pierce Transit, including the permanent suspension of Route 580, as well as the removal of bus stops in downtown Tacoma and reduced weekday service frequency for Route 590. Mr. de Place then provided an outline of the completion of ST2 projects, and the process of community engagement followed by approval of the full 2025 service plan later in 2024.

Committee Chair Walker shared an update from the CEO of Pierce Transit noting a net gain in operators this year.

Board member Roscoe asked about operator shortages from a nationwide perspective. Mr. de Place replied that while not having exact figures, operator shortages do appear to continue to be a nationwide issue, which is further exacerbated in the Puget Sound due to high demand between multiple agencies and modes of service. CEO Sparrman also spoke to the issue, noting that it continues to be a struggle, but that positive progress is continuing to be made.

Communication Upcoming System Changes to Riders

Luke Lamon, Executive Director of Communications, Marketing, and Engagement; and Marie Olson, Chief Passenger Experience and Innovation Officer, provided the report. Mr. Lamon provided information on the changes that will accompany the opening of the Lynnwood Link Extension in late August, including bus service changes, the adoption of a \$3 flat fare on Link Light Rail, the renaming of University Street Station to Symphony Station, and the transition from pictograms to station codes. He highlighted the agency's multi-phase engagement approach, which consists of 3 phases: the first being an awareness campaign in the month leading up to the opening of the Lynnwood Link Extension, a post-

opening phase that will serve to educate riders between the opening and service changes, and a 3-6 month post opening phase that will consist of a new rider etiquette and education campaign.

Marie Olson provided information on how Passenger Experience would be involved as a partner in further the agency's outreach efforts, which include the utilization of volunteer staff and Fare Ambassadors to engage with members of the community on board ST services and at key stations.

Passenger Impact Portfolio Plan

Pamela Wrenn, Service Delivery Deputy Project Director, provided the report. Ms. Wrenn highlighted ongoing work on tile repairs at Columbia City Station, as well as upcoming work on the 2 Line Tie-In work in the Downtown Seattle Transit Tunnel. The work being done will be conducted in two phases, with both phases requiring closures of the tunnel. She noted that weekend closures would be coordinated to minimize impacts as much as possible. Ms. Wrenn also noted multiple accomplishments including the procurement of necessary resources, as well as the establishment of multiple standards to assist in measuring passenger impacts during service disruptions.

Fare Ambassador Quarterly Update

Sean Dennerlein, Deputy Director of Passenger Success; and Sanford Slack, Fare Resolutions Program Manager, provided the report. Mr. Dennerlein provided highlights for the program, including increased rates of fare inspections and fare compliance. Mr. Slack provided an overview of the current state of the Fare Resolutions program and the resolution options provided to non-fare-compliant riders. Mr. Dennerlein also provided updates on Fare Ambassador operations and the launch of a Platform Inspection pilot process.

Board member Roscoe highlighted the difficulty of the Fare Ambassador role and thanked the people involved for their work.

Committee Chair Walker asked for additional detail regarding riders inspected without identification. Mr. Dennerlein noted difficulties that the program has had in identifying certain riders due to current limitations in process and Board policy. He also noted that an increase in accuracy would come with new technological developments that would be deployed within the program.

Committee Chair Walker also asked about staffing within the Fare Ambassador program. Mr. Dennerlein noted that the program is currently lacking approximately 7 staff members, while also highlighting the start of a new round of hiring along with increase individual staff performance. He also noted that an analysis is ongoing to determine the proper staffing level required to ensure that the program meets Board set targets.

REO Metrics – Ridership

Russ Arnold, Deputy CEO of Service Delivery, provided the report. He provided information on ridership on the 2 Line, as well as highlights on increasing levels of ridership along the 1 Line that are reflecting a continued growth of general ridership of Link services. He also noted that ST Express ridership is outpacing projections by about 20 per cent.

Board member Zahilay asked about the drivers of increased ridership across Sound Transit's services. Mr. Arnold replied that he believes that a combination of factors, including return to work policies and the consistent level of Sound Transit's service, for why the agency is seeing this increase in ridership.

Executive session – None.

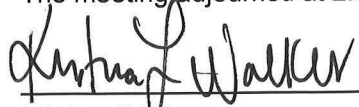
Other business – None.

Next meeting

Monday, September 23, 2024
1:00 to 3:00 p.m.
Ruth Fisher Boardroom and Virtually via Zoom.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 2:37 p.m.



Kristina Walker
Rider Experience and Operations Committee Chair

ATTEST:



Kathryn Flores
Board Administrator

APPROVED on 9/23/24, HRR.