



Summary Minutes

Board Meeting
December 18, 2025

Call to order

The meeting was called to order at 1:32 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	(P) Claudia Balducci, King County Councilmember (A) Ryan Mello, Pierce County Executive

Board members	
(P) Nancy Backus, City of Auburn Mayor	(P) Teresa Mosqueda, King County Councilmember
(P) Angela Birney, City of Redmond Mayor	(P) Ed Prince, City of Renton Councilmember
(P) Steffanie Fain, King County Councilmember	(P) Kim Roscoe, City of Fife Mayor
(P) Cassie Franklin, City of Everett Mayor	(P) Dan Strauss, City of Seattle Councilmember
(A) Christine Frizzell, City of Lynnwood Mayor	(A) 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 Executive
(P) Julie Meredith, WSDOT Secretary Alternate	

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 November 2025, as well as the new monthly Multiple Award Task Order Contract (MATOC) report.

Updated Standard Acquisition Threshold – Chair Somers noted that the materials included a memo informing the Board that the federal Standard Acquisition Threshold for procurements has been raised to \$350,000, effective October 2025. Sound Transit's Procurement and Contracts division intends to adopt the threshold in the new year and must inform the Board of the change prior to updating internal processes. Next year, the Monthly Contract reports will not include contracts under the new threshold.

Flood Impacts – Chair Somers acknowledged the response to and damage from the flooding across the region and offered his thanks to first responders, dedicated volunteers, and kind neighbors.

Recognizing Departing Board members – Chair Somers recognized Board members Nancy Backus, Bruce Harrell, and Christine Frizzell and thanked them for their service as members of the Sound Transit Board.

Welcoming New Board members – Chair Somers welcomed King County Council members Teresa Mosqueda and Steffanie Fain to the Board.

CEO Report

CEO Constantine provided the report.

Welcome and Thank you to Board members – CEO Constantine echoed the thanks and welcome messages from Chair Somers.

Flooding recognition – CEO Constantine thanked staff that kept service running and supported passengers throughout the storms, as well as the first responders and operating partners.

Federal Way early metrics – CEO Constantine reports that early ridership numbers show a positive reception of the extended 1 Line to Federal Way. On opening day, there were nearly 16,000 boarding across the three new stations. He thanked the Board for its leadership and vision, as well as staff for their dedication and resolve in completing the project.

Crosslake Connection pre-revenue operations – CEO Constantine shared that progress continues on the Crosslake Connection of the East Link Extension. Critical testing has been completed, and the agency has secured the necessary approvals to begin pre-revenue operations, scheduled for Monday. People will soon see trains running across the I-90 bridge with greater frequency.

Remembering Shawn Yim – CEO Constantine reflected on the one-year anniversary of King County Metro Operator Shawn Yim's death. He added that Sound Transit has been joining with other regional transit agencies and partners to coordinate a more robust regional approach to transit safety.

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:

Stephen Fesler
John Ho
Mike Orr
Bill Hirt
Greg Rogers
Wesley Win
Paul R. Sweum
Betty Lau

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

Betty Lau
Paul Sweum
MaryKate Ryan
Joshua Cheatham
Day-Z Gould-Wong
Zella Urqhart
Kirk Hovenkotter

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

Nathan Dickey
Joe Kunzler

Consent Agenda

Voucher Certification: November 2025

Minutes of the November 13, 2025, Board of Directors Retreat

Minutes of the November 20, 2025, Board of Directors Meeting

Motion No. M2025-67: Authorizing the chief executive officer to increase the cumulative contingency amount authorized to increase certain Federal Way Link Extension contract and/or agreement amounts as necessary, by an amount of \$50,000,000 for a new total authorized cumulative contingency expenditure not to exceed \$110,000,000, all within the Federal Way Link Extension approved baseline budget.

Resolution No. R2025-31: Authorizing the chief executive officer to increase Sound Transit staffing levels to transition the operations of the Sound Transit Mobile Security Patrol from contracted staff to full-time employees and assign them to the Field Activity Specialist Team within the existing budget approved by the Board for contracting these services.

Resolution No. R2025-32: Authorizing the chief executive officer to acquire certain real property interests, subject to and contingent upon obtaining any and all 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 construction, operation and maintenance of the Operations and Maintenance Facility South project.

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

It was carried by the unanimous vote of the 14 Board members present that the Consent Agenda be approved as presented.

Business items

Resolution No. R2025-30: Amending the T-Link Trains and Trackway Program by (a) increasing the authorized project allocation by \$24,633,550 from \$5,759,058 to \$30,392,608, and (b) increasing the annual project allocation by \$16,422,417 from \$1,169,427 to \$17,591,844 to allow for the execution of a streetcar purchase, sale, and transfer agreement with the City of Portland.

Board member Walker introduced the action and reported that the Rider Experience and Operations Committee considered this item and unanimously forwarded the resolution with a do-pass recommendation. She noted that staff were present to address any questions.

Resolution No. R2025-30 was moved by Board member Walker and seconded by Board member Birney.

Chair Somers called for a roll call vote on Resolution No. R2025-30.

Ayes

Nancy Backus
Claudia Balducci
Angela Birney
Steffanie Fain
Cassie Franklin
Hunter George
Bruce Harrell

Nays

Julie Meredith
Teresa Mosqueda
Ed Prince
Kim Roscoe
Dan Strauss
Kristina Walker
Dave Somers

It was carried by the unanimous vote of the 14 Board members present that Resolution No. R2025-30 be approved as presented.

Vice Chair Balducci exited the virtual meeting during the following presentation.

Motion No. M2025-62: Authorizing the chief executive officer to execute 22 individual Multiple Award Task Order Contracts for five years, each with two one-year options to extend, with Cooper Zietz Engineers, Inc. DBA Akana, Axiom Consulting and Project Management, LLC, Bechtel Infrastructure Corporation, Cumming Management Group, Inc., EPC Consultants, Inc., Ergosync, LLC, Furtado & Associates, Inc., H.W. Lochner, Inc., HDR Engineering, Inc., Hill International, Inc., HNTB Corporation, Jacobs Project Management Co., KBA, Inc., Morgner Technology Management DBA Morgner Construction Management, Mott MacDonald, LLC, PGH Wong Engineering, Inc., Ramos Consulting Services, Inc., Simpson & Simpson Management Consulting, Inc., Stantec Consulting Services Inc., United Construction Management Corporation DBA United ECM, US Rail Systems Inc, and VSCE, Inc. to provide Sound Transit with project management/construction management services such that the aggregate total amount of the 22 contracts does not exceed \$1,000,000,000 over the potential seven-year period, and that task orders exceeding \$10,000,000 or are restricted by Resolution No. R2021-05 are subject to Committee or Board approval.

Terri Mestas, Capital Delivery Deputy CEO, Hughey Newsome, Chief Financial Officer, and Amanda Lanier, Design and Construction Contract Procurement Director, provided the staff presentation.

On behalf of Vice Chair Balducci, Chair Somers shared that the System Expansion Committee considered this item and unanimously forwarded the Motion with a do-pass recommendation.

It was moved by Board member Birney, seconded by Board member Strauss, and carried by the unanimous vote of the 13 Board members present that Motion No. M2025-62 be approved as presented.

Motion No. M2025-64: Directing the chief executive officer to (1) conduct a fare gate retrofit implementation study; (2) if study findings support further action, develop a fare gate retrofit pilot proposal; and (3) report the fare gate retrofit implementation study findings to the Board and provide a staff recommendation that may include a fare gate retrofit pilot proposal based on the study findings.

Brian de Place, Acting Security & Fare Engagement Executive Director, and Gavin Schaefer, former Principal Architect for Station Designs, provided the staff presentation.

Chair Somers thanked staff for the initial work completed and noted that additional analysis would help the Board to decide on a long-term solution to ensure appropriate payment for utilizing Sound Transit services.

Board member Birney asked that staff include comparisons to other systems with only some stations having faregates when the findings of the study are brought back to the Board.

Board member Mosqueda asked that comparisons to international, not just North American, systems be brought back with the results of the study, as well as the projections related to generating revenue from the faregates.

It was moved by Board member Birney, seconded by Board member Franklin, and carried by the unanimous vote of the 13 Board members present that Motion No. M2025-64 be approved as presented.

Motion No. M2025-66: Approving a performance rating, merit increase and performance award for Dow Constantine, Sound Transit Chief Executive Officer.

Chair Somers reported that the Executive Committee considered this item and unanimously forwarded the Motion with a do-pass recommendation. He explained that the Committee is recommending that CEO Dow Constantine be given a performance rating of Outstanding, and CEO Constantine informed the Committee that he intends to decline both a merit raise and performance award this year as there is more work to be done toward accomplishing the larger goals established.

Board member Walker noted her support for the postponement of considering a merit increase or performance award given the bulk of the work to achieve the CEO's goals is still ahead. She stated her support for the work by CEO Constantine to date and believes he is well-positioned to lead the agency through the Enterprise Initiative.

Chair Somers thanked CEO Constantine and his team for excellent communication and coordination.

Noting his initial reservations, Board member George thanked CEO Constantine for raising to the challenge and aiming to address the long-term challenges laid out in the Enterprise Initiative, as well as smaller day-to-day improvements for riders.

Board member Backus highlighted CEO Constantine's passion for transit and serving the region.

It was moved by Board member Birney, seconded by Board member Strauss, and carried by the unanimous vote of the 13 Board members present that Motion No. M2025-66 be approved as presented.

Reports to the Board

Downtown Tunnel Analysis

Alex Krieg, Enterprise Planning Deputy Executive Director, and Brad Owen, Capital Delivery Executive Director, gave the presentation and noted that the report will provide an update on work responding to questions from the Board about the feasibility and cost-savings potential of operating all three future light rail lines through the current Downtown Seattle Transit Tunnel (DSTT). Mr. Krieg detailed the teams who collaborated on the study, as well as the overall scope of the assessment. He also noted several caveats, including the planning-level analysis done, which means the implications are only preliminary and that many components would require considerable additional study and design to validate this analysis.

Mr. Krieg explained the planned operating system assumed to be in place following the opening of the 2 Line Crosslake connection and the recent extension of the 1 Line to Federal Way. He also recapped the history of the DSTT. Not directly related to today's main study, the existing DSTT contributes significantly to overall system resiliency work. The lack of crossover tracks and the current signaling system are constraints, and the ongoing program resiliency work will identify potential investments that can modernize and extend the DSTT's useful life. Other system constraints – at-grade sections, insufficient ventilation zones, etc. – also affect service reliability.

Looking to future expansion work under ST3, Mr. Krieg laid out the current expansion assumptions, including the spine segmentation that is planned to occur in 2039 when the Ballard Link Extension and the second tunnel become operational. The 1 Line (Tacoma-Ballard) would operate in the newly constructed tunnel, while the 2 Line (Redmond-Mariner) and 3 Line (West Seattle-Everett) would run in the DSTT. Benefits of this approach include manageable line lengths, fewer maintenance facilities, balanced rider volumes, and additional operational flexibility. Trade-offs include more transfers, less operational choice, and consistent fleet requirements across all light rail vehicles.

The second Downtown Tunnel is currently in planning as part of the Ballard Link Extension project (BLE) and is envisioned as rail-only. The current BLE cost range, without applying cost-savings opportunities, is \$20.1 – 22.6 in 2025\$. The project intends to publish the Draft Environmental Impact Statement in Q1 2026.

Mr. Owen provided additional insight and explanation on the background of the study and the scope of the assessment. The study looked into two additional concepts beyond the current ST3 plan: Interline and Stub-end. The interline concept would see all three Link lines would operate through the current

DSTT, while the stub-end concept would have service from Ballard ending at Westlake station with a transfer to the current DSTT for connecting to the other lines, with the 1 Line not diverting to Ballard.

The interline concept would route the 1 Line to Ballard between Symphony and Westlake stations under 3rd Avenue. Transfers to the rest of the system can occur at Symphony station and further south. This concept would eliminate the need for BLE stations to be constructed at Westlake, Midtown, and Chinatown-International District, while potentially requiring capacity improvements at the existing DSTT stations. The interline concept would require suspending service on both the 1 and 2 Lines and the 3rd Avenue Busway while construction occurs. Additionally, the closure of the 1 and 2 Lines would sever the current Operations and Maintenance Facilities from the north half of the system. There is also risk of damaging the DSTT.

The stub-end concept would see a Ballard line terminate at Westlake Station, with a transfer to the rest of the system. Most construction and property considerations are similar to the current BLE assumptions, while additional considerations regarding forward-compatibility would need to be accounted for if there are plans to eventually complete the second tunnel. As the stub-end would be disconnected from the rest of the system, a dedicated Operations and Maintenance Facility would be required.

Before reviewing the findings, Mr. Owen noted that the information has been organized into 7 categories: cost savings, passenger transfers, future tunnel completion, construction disruption, maintenance facility needs, system reliability and resilience, and project schedule delay. Both projects may realize cost savings when compared to the full-build BLE, while there are partial offsets by costs of new construction, new right of way, service disruptions system upgrades, and project delays.

The interline concept projects approximately \$0 - 4.5B in savings, allows same-platform transfers between the 1, 2, and 3 Lines at International District, Pioneer Square, and Symphony stations, could allow for future extension of the Ballard tunnel from Westlake to SODO, requires existing Link service to be suspended and the 3rd Avenue Busway to be closed for an extended period of time during construction, does not require an additional maintenance facility, requires upgrades to the current DSTT, and likely delays the schedule by at least two years.

The stub-end concept projects approximately \$0 – 4B in savings (including consideration of an additional maintenance facility), requires transfer from the standalone Ballard Line to the remaining system, facilitates future extension of the tunnel from Westlake to SODO, avoids impacts to currently Link service, requires the construction of an additional maintenance facility along the Ballard line (including additional environmental review), requires upgrades to the current DSTT, and likely delays the schedule by at least two years.

Chair Somers thanked staff for the presentation and work to date. He also asked if the assumed two-year delay with both concepts was factored into the potential cost savings. Mr. Krieg explained that the cost-savings range includes the two-year delay at the high-end while the low-end of the range assumes a four-year delay. He also inquired into whether adopting either new concept would prompt additional environmental/planning work for the other ST3 projects. Mr. Krieg responded that it is a potential concern and that more discussion with Federal partners would be necessary.

Board member Fain asked if subarea cost-sharing information for the two concepts is available. Mr. Krieg responded that analysis has not yet been completed on that aspect, which is another consideration for the Board to potentially weigh.

Board member Strauss noted that two tunnels would better serve his residents than one tunnel, but stressed that the North King subarea does not likely have the funds to fully construct both BLE and the West Seattle Link Extension (WSLE), as currently envisioned. The North King subarea is also slated to contribute 51% of the cost for the second tunnel. He explained that the discussion on the second

downtown tunnel is key, among other discussions, to bringing the subarea into financial stability. He sees an inherent trade-off between completing BLE and WSLE on time and building a second tunnel. He pointed out the potential of acquiring the soon-to-be vacated National Guard Armory as the site for a Maintenance Facility. While he may not enjoy changing the plans for BLE, he stated his support for bringing the subarea back into balance so that the two projects can be operational as early as possible. He also added that should the region decide to continue with the second tunnel, then the cost-sharing model must change so that the North King Subarea could reach financial balance, given historical choices that allocated the costs to refurbish the tunnel for rail use to King County subareas.

Vice Chair Balducci returned to the Board room at this time.

Chair Somers inquired into the basis for the current subarea cost allocations for system-wide share assets. Mr. Krieg responded that the allocations were based on estimated ridership in preparation for the 2016 ballot measure.

Board member Franklin stated her support for moving forward with two tunnels to avoid additional delays in completing the regional light rail spine, which would likely drive-up costs for other projects. She also stated the resiliency benefits of having two downtown tunnels.

Board member Birney noted the long-term need for a second tunnel and that deferring construction at this time will likely mean a more expensive project in the future.

Board member Walker thanked staff for the study and board members who pushed for the study. She expressed that moving to a single tunnel to support ST3 service is not viable and shares Board member Birney's concerns about long-term needs.

Vice Chair Balducci noted that the push to look into potentially removing the second tunnel from the ST3 plan was spurred to address the rising financial pressures and that further decisions will be needed to bring the expansion plan into balance. She noted that having as much information as possible on all decisions that could be made will be key and doesn't want to officially rule out a change at this point. She understands the concerns related to potential project delays and also noted that 50 percent of estimated trips would be impacted if either tunnel is not operational in the future. She asked the Board to remain open to drastic changes to address the financial constraints.

Board member George asked if keeping an open discussion on the change would impact federal partnerships. Mr. Krieg responded that additional conversations would be needed with partners at the Federal Transit Administration. Board member George asked what implications for the existing tunnel were spurred by this analysis. Mr. Krieg responded that colleagues in the Service Delivery Department and State of Good Repair program are incorporating the findings into their near-term work and their Enterprise Initiative work.

Vice Chair Balducci added that having the information about current tunnel improvements and potential impacts would greatly support the conversation on the second tunnel.

Board member Harrell noted that, disregarding any subarea bias, the one tunnel solution could present plenty of issues. He added that he expects that the Board will have to revisit the cost sharing allocations for the tunnel as the Enterprise Initiative plays out. He echoed Vice Chair Balducci's comments about needing as many tools as possible to address the financial constraints.

Board member Strauss added that when King County transferred the tunnel and its infrastructure to Sound Transit, the cost was \$1.

Chair Somers asked if there was a staff recommendation.

CEO Constantine appreciated the Board's discussion and the work completed by staff. Noting that the findings are preliminary and additional work would be needed to validate the information, the Board

would need to take a step to direct staff to complete further study and define the scope of that assessment. In the context of the Technical Advisory Group recommendations, he stressed the importance of avoiding delays that drive up costs and push-back service dates. He added that this discussion among Board members is key to addressing the Enterprise Initiative and the future of the agency.

Chair Somers stated that, while there is potential to save roughly \$4 billion dollars by removing the second tunnel, that amount doesn't solve the cost issues for the North King subarea or the rest of the region. His concern also extends to the other ST3 projects that have advanced with the assumption of a second tunnel and whether a shift in system design would delay those projects, as well. He sees pivoting away from a second tunnel as not viable at this point.

Executive Session

Chair Somers noted that there was no need for an Executive Sessions.

Other business – None

Next meeting

The next Board meeting would be held on January 22, 2026, from 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 3:59 p.m.

ATTEST:

Dave Somers
Board Chair

Kathryn Flores
Board Administrator

APPROVED on _____, AJM.