

Sound Transit Citizen Oversight Panel Virtual Meeting Summary

September 15, 2021

COP Members Present: Fred Auch, Scott Lampe, James Peyton, Helen Powell, Larry Sauvé, Joe Scorcio, Paul Thompson

COP Members Absent: None

Others Present: Kathy Albert, Katie Flores, Adam Montee

Jurisdictional Communications and Collaboration

- Carrie Avila-Mooney – Director of Regional Government and Community Relations
- Karen Kitsis – Deputy Executive Director of Capital Project Development

Carrie Avila-Mooney and Karen Kitsis described Sound Transit’s jurisdictional communications and collaboration program, which is a strategic priority designed to strengthen the certainty and timeliness of project delivery, and thereby facilitate the aggressive timeline of ST3. Growing jurisdictional partnerships was identified as a crucial component of the system expansion improvement program (SEIP) created to streamline schedule and budget. Three groups were formed to help meet the goals:

- Interagency groups composed of senior Sound Transit staff and their counterparts at partner city, county, transit, state, and federal permitting agencies. The groups conduct technical examinations, identify issues, and negotiate key components of partnering and permitting agreements.
- Elected leadership groups composed of Sound Transit Board members and other local elected officials in a corridor, who grow project awareness and consensus and work through project issues.
- Stakeholder advisory groups composed of riders, businesses, residents, and community-based organizations, who perform roles similar to the elected leadership groups, in addition to identifying a preferred alternative to present to elected officials including the Board.

To date, the three groups have been involved in Stride BRT, the Tacoma Dome/OMF-S, Everett Link, and the West Seattle and Ballard Link projects.

A partnering agreement is proposed at the beginning of each new project in order to clarify expectations and schedules. The agreement includes engagement activities, project scope, schedule, budget, key milestones, and dates for future concurrence and agreement actions such as the development of streamlined permitting processes and the identification of preferred alternatives. Partner responsibilities include providing information on existing conditions and planned projects within the larger project area.

While the Agency’s jurisdictional engagement process necessarily changed with the onset of the pandemic, an early investment in the development of online tools has facilitated a robust series of stakeholder engagement events. An online town hall meeting held in May 2020 was attended by 78 elected officials and staff. Fifty-four briefings with city and county councils and staff, commissions, and regional elected officials have taken place. More than fifty-five stakeholder briefings have taken place with chambers of commerce, health care industry leaders, rotaries, transportation advocates and

accessibility advisors. More than 70 letters and emails have been received by Board and/or Agency leadership.

Vertical Conveyances

- Amy Lindblom – Director of Enterprise Asset Management
- John Carini – Deputy Director of Vertical Conveyances

Amy Lindblom and Jon Carini gave an overview of the Agency’s asset management framework, which is based on a conceptual model developed through The Institute of Asset Management. The conveyance team developed a vision statement to guide work creating a passenger focused vertical conveyance program centered on safety and reliability. Leveraging maintenance, technology and data will optimize performance and keep all stakeholders better informed.

There are currently 190 assets in the vertical conveyance portfolio, including those in the Northgate Link extension and the Downtown Seattle Transit Tunnel (the DSTT). Roughly half of the current assets are elevators and half are escalators. The fleet is expected to grow by 60 percent, to 575, by 2041.

Transfer of the DSTT from King County Metro to Sound Transit was completed on January 1, 2021, when the Agency assumed 58 pieces of equipment, 28 of which were inoperable. A three-pronged approach was implemented to address the problems. State of good repair and life extension investments were made to make equipment safe, operable, and available for passengers. A maintenance program was established to integrate operable assets into the Agency’s existing maintenance contract. A vertical conveyance replacement program was developed to strategically prioritize replacement.

Performance in the DSTT has improved significantly since the transfer. Elevator ability has increased from about 82 percent to 98 percent overall, escalator availability has improved from about 30 percent to 75 percent overall, and inoperable units have declined from 28 of 58 to eight of 58. In addition, the Board approved a DSTT repair budget of \$3.2 million for 2021, which is being used to replace critical components such as chains, bull gears, door equipment and handrails. Safety equipment is also being upgraded.

Specifications and design for future equipment will take place early in the planning, construction, and design phases of project development. Regular inspections will be conducted during construction, and observations will take place at initial testing and commissioning events. Information will be identified and maintained on manufacturer recommended spare parts and maintenance, as well as critical components of all assets. Maintenance and repair will take place at regularly scheduled intervals using contracted response times. An annual asset prioritization assessment will be used to determine what assets are most in need of replacement.

Significant data gathering, analysis and reporting protocols are in place. Equipment outages are reviewed each business day and documented by time, category, and resolution. Monthly reports are available on the Sound Transit website. Continuous process improvement will enhance data reporting, improve understanding of component service life expectancy, decrease the number of unplanned outages, increase communication with stakeholders, and facilitate the piloting of new technologies.

Discussion

Jurisdictional Communications and Collaboration – COP members noted the complexity of the topic and its importance throughout the realignment process, when enhanced communications and continuity in

processes were needed. The presenters made clear that improvements have been made in many areas, thanks to engaged leadership and innovations identified as part of the SEIP.

Vertical Conveyances – COP members noted the significant progress made since the previous briefing and complimented the team for its accomplishments.

The summary of the September 1, 2021, virtual COP meeting was approved.

Member Reports

Paul Thompson had recently visited the Overlake Station area, where he met an artist working onsite. The bridge at the station appeared to be nearing completion.

2021 Focus Areas

- Adequacy and appropriateness of station access, including use of emerging technologies
- Monitoring and review of social equity, racial equity, fare enforcement, and inclusion policies
- Uses of peer comparison data
- Asset management plan progress
- Reliability and availability of federal, state, local, and third-party funding sources
- Customer experience focused metrics across the RTA region and transit agencies within it
- COVID-19, contingency planning, and disaster preparedness
- Program realignment, interagency cooperation and interoperability
- Coordination with local jurisdictions to mitigate impacts of unauthorized parking around stations

Outstanding Questions

Does the jurisdictional communications group use metrics to measure its performance?

Next Virtual Meeting: Wednesday, October 6, 8:30 – 11:00 AM