



Summary Minutes

Rider Experience and Operations Committee Meeting March 7, 2019

Call to order

The meeting was called to order at 1:03 p.m. by Committee Chair Paul Roberts, in the Ruth Fisher Boardroom, 401 South Jackson Street, Seattle, Washington.

Roll call of members

Chair	Vice Chair
(P) Paul Roberts, Everett Councilmember	(P) Joe McDermott, King County Councilmember

Board Members	
(P) David Baker, Kenmore Mayor	(P) Kim Roscoe, Fife Mayor
(A) Dave Earling, Edmonds Mayor	(A) Dave Upthegrove, King County Councilmember
(P) Rob Johnson, Seattle Councilmember	(A) Peter von Reichbauer, King County Councilmember
(A) Kent Keel, University Place Mayor	

Paige Armstrong, Board Relations Specialist, announced that a quorum of the Committee was present at roll call.

Report of the Chair

Chair Marchione mentioned that the monthly contract reports, which detail all contracts approved and executed within the CEO's delegated contract authority, are included in the packets.

CEO Report

Downtown Seattle Transit Tunnel becomes rail only

Deputy CEO Kimberly Farley presented the report. A major service change happening this year is the transition of the Downtown Seattle Transit Tunnel (DSTT) becoming rail only. This service change impacts King County Metro bus routes, as well as the one ST Express route still operated in the tunnel. This conversion is necessary for the expansion of Link light rail service. While the changes in bus service will be an inconvenience to some riders, it should also be noted that Link service will become more reliable as a result of the removal of buses from the tunnel.

Ms. Farley noted that the Rider Experience and Operations Committee will hear more about the tunnel changes later today when staff provides a briefing regarding service and signage changes.

Olympia Update

The legislature is currently in their 8th week of work and are exactly halfway through the 2019 legislative session. The important "cut off" -- the deadline for bills to be passed out of fiscal committees to remain in consideration this session, has passed. The next important cut off will occur on March 13, 2019, when bills must move out of their chamber of origin. Staff will be continuing to monitor this, and will be providing updates.

Chair Marchione commented that he traveled to Olympia to provide testimony to the legislature regarding issues of importance surround the Motor Vehicle Excise Tax (MVET).

Public comment

Alex Tsimmerman

Business items

Item for Committee final action

February 7, 2019, Rider Experience and Operations Committee minutes

It was moved by Boardmember McDermott, seconded by Boardmember Baker, and carried by unanimous vote that the minutes of February 7, 2019, Rider Experience and Operations Committee Meeting be approved as presented.

Item for recommendation to the Board

Resolution No. R2019-06: Amending the Adopted 2019 Budget to create the Portable Wheel Truing Machine Project by (1) establishing an authorized project allocation to date in the amount of \$960,000 and (2) establishing a 2019 annual project budget of \$960,000.

Paul Denison, Executive Operations Director for Light Rail, presented the staff report. The current fixed wheel truing machine at the Operations and Maintenance Facility (OMF) is over ten years old and is approaching the critical maintenance overhaul period. Sound Transit has no backup equipment should the existing equipment fail or to cover the time when it is being overhauled. Without backup equipment, Sound Transit faces a significant risk to fleet availability for revenue service. A wheel truing machine is an operational necessity for Link light rail service.

The light rail vehicle (LRV) fleet of 62 Kinkisharyo cars, as well as the ST2 planned fleet of an additional 152 Siemens LRVs, will require access to wheel truing capabilities at all times in order to maintain current and future service expectations. Wheel truing operation is key to maintaining the LRV fleet in a State of Good Repair and keeping the LRVs' noise and vibration levels within agreed upon requirements with the University of Washington. With a limited spare factor, cars cannot be held for any extended period of time without jeopardizing current and future service levels.

Chair Roberts asked about the risk posed by this machine being unavailable. Mr. Dennison replied that with the delivery of the new LRV's the agency will be at a risk of falling behind on repairs and maintenance without a new machine, and additionally that the machines take about six months to commission.

It was moved by Boardmember McDermott, seconded by Boardmember Johnson, and carried by unanimous vote that Resolution No. R2019-06 be approved as presented.

Reports to the committee

Rider Experience Metrics Discussion

Russ Arnold, Chief Customer Experience Officer, and Bonnie Todd, Executive Director of Operations, provided the presentation. Mr. Arnold began with the goals of the improvements to rider experience metrics. The goals for the improvements are to provide data-driven targets for rider metrics, updated data visualization tools including a new public metrics dashboard, and the collection of data that can help inform important service decisions.

Ms. Todd then provided examples of new and existing metrics with new visualization under each metric category. The categories include ridership and efficiency, rider experience, and operations.

Examples of metrics in the ridership and efficiency category include ridership numbers for daily and average over months and weeks, fare evasion, and fare box recovery. Examples of metrics in the rider operations category include on-time performance, preventable accidents, and maintenance schedules.

Boardmember Johnson commented the ridership numbers, as Sound Transit is experiencing rapid ridership growth while many agency peers around the country are seeing ridership falling rapidly. He commented that the region is performing incredibly well in terms of decreasing percentage of commuters who travel in a single occupancy vehicle to their jobs, and wanted to commend that this is in large part due to the service of Sound Transit.

Mr. Arnold then detailed the approach to developing new metrics for the rider experience element of this combined effort. The development approach includes these monthly presentations to this committee, reviewing new data being collected through expanded and different visualizations, iterations month to month based on feedback, and the final proposal of new metrics and targets for all three categories. The rider experience metrics are being split into five themes: available, safe, dependable, clean, and informed. Mr. Arnold explained that at Rider Experience and Operations Committee meetings over the next several months, staff will be going in depth on one of these themes, with March focusing on availability.

The presentation then continued with refinements to the vertical conveyances availability metric, which is now broken down by escalators versus elevators, and broken down by individual station. This is being further analyzed by overall availability and by rush hour availability, wherein service issues have the largest impacts. Other metrics being evaluated and improved in this way are utilization and availability of parking, and trip utilization capacity which is looking at the occupancy of link trips by time of day and opportunities to improve the rider experience by ensuring trips are comfortable.

Boardmember Johnson asked about the trip capacity measurement, which includes a 'crush capacity' category that has currently zero percent of occurrence. Mr. Arnold commented that this usually occurs during large special events, or when there are throughput issues in the DSTT, but the frequency is so low it does not currently show as a percentage of trips.

Boardmember Roscoe asked about the pedestrian and bike access proposed metric, and what it would entail. Mr. Arnold replied that there are currently not solid numbers for those accessing the system by bike, foot, or other non-motorized modes. There is currently work being done to analyze the best way to collect this information on a standing basis. Ms. Roscoe asked about the methods of data collection for other metrics. Ms. Todd responded that data is being collected through the operational systems on various modes, through data collection taken by staff at facilities on a regular basis, and through other reporting that is collected for various mandated reports of service and operations.

Chair Roberts asked about the presentation of these metrics over time, as they are typically reported on an as needed basis, and are not displayed on a year over year basis for improvement or decline. He continued that this is especially important for parking utilization, as any added capacity is usually 100 percent utilized as soon as it is opened, and although the conversation cannot take place today, the demand management of parking will become a much larger issue as the system grows and parking is in incredibly high demand at the far ends of the system.

Overview of Sound Transit's Social Media Program

Bruce Gray, Social Media Supervisor, and Tim Healy, Marketing and Creative Services Director, provided the staff report. Mr. Gray began the presentation by outlining the guiding principles of the social media program. The principles include:

- Sound Transit uses social media as another channel to tell the Sound Transit story using clear language, strong visuals and a customer-focused tone.

- The agency also uses social media to increase Sound Transit’s brand awareness and connect with customers where they live in the digital realm – mostly on their cell phones.
- Sound Transit seeks to continually extend the reach and engagement with social media audiences with the right content for the right channel.

Mr. Gray continued by detailing each method of social media engagement by platform. Overall, Sound Transit has 132,000 combined subscribers on various social media platforms. By platform:

- Twitter: Used to answer questions, engage with riders during service interruptions and delays, and highlight agency milestones. This platform has 84,000 followers.
- Facebook: Used to amplify project progress and milestones, promote in-person outreach events, and provide service information. This platform has 31,000 followers. This platform is also used for paid service outreach by mode on a geographic basis.
- Instagram: Used to promote awareness of service options and milestones, highlights construction projects and visually impactful news, and connects with a younger audience base. This platform has 6,500 followers.
- The Platform: Sound Transit’s blog, hosted on Soundtransit.org, is used to answer common questions in depth as a shareable newsletter, showcase construction milestones, educate on service changes. The blog currently has 1,800 subscribers.

Boardmember Roscoe asked about the decision not to use snapchat on behalf of the agency. Mr. Gray responded that snapchat is incredibly time intensive to engage on regularly, and in terms of cost and benefit outcomes, it has not proven to be worth the input for the engagement levels.

Boardmember McDermott asked about the high percentage of visits to the website from mobile devices, and asked about the wifi access throughout the system, and if access to wifi can be included as a metric, perhaps tied in through the earlier discussion of rider experience metrics.

Service and Signage Changes in the DSTT

Julie Montgomery, Director of Art and Architecture, Brian de Place, Director of Operations Support Services, and Candace Toth, Capital Signage Program Manager, provided the presentation. As was mentioned in the CEO Report, buses are all coming out of the DSTT on March 23, 2019. The DSTT includes four stations: the International District/Chinatown Station, Pioneer Square Station, University Street Station and Westlake Station.

Expansion of Link service, specifically the future tie in of the East Link and the opening of North Link, necessitates moving buses out of the DSTT and onto surface streets. Sound Transit has been working with King County Metro, Seattle Department of Transportation, and Community Transit, to coordinate the move of the six bus routes that currently run through the DSTT onto various different surface streets. The plan aims to minimize customer impacts and balance bus volumes along all downtown pathways.

For riders of the Route 550 bus, the changes will cause slightly longer travel times. Stops and number of buses running the route have been adjusted to minimize impacts to riders.

Ms. Toth then spoke to signage updates to ensure a smooth transition to surface streets for riders of buses currently in the tunnel. There will be temporary signage before and after the service change to indicate where the new bus stops are located. For the permanent signage there are many changes being made to remove all references to bus bays in the tunnel and to reflect Sound Transit regulatory signage for Link-only services. These changes will occur at all levels of the downtown tunnel stations.

At street level, the trilons which indicate main entrances to the tunnel stations will be updated to delete references to buses in the tunnel stations. All regulatory signage will be updated to reflect Link-only

service. At Westlake Station there are some existing transparent graphics which will be adjusted to remove the bus icon. Bus bay references from various stations must be updated to remove reference to any bus routes or bus availability.

Rider Information panels which are currently shared with King County Metro will be updated to allow more space for Link information, but will still maintain service maps of King County Metro routes for connecting passengers. All signage updates are in final review and fabrication, and a vendor who is currently under contract will be installing all new signage ahead of the service change.

Executive session

None.

Other business

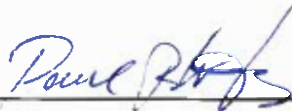
None.

Next meeting

Thursday, April 4, 2019
1:00 to 3:00 p.m.
Ruth Fisher Boardroom

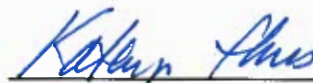
Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 2:36 p.m.



Paul Roberts
Rider Experience and Operations Committee Chair

ATTEST:



Kathryn Flores
Board Administrator

APPROVED on 4/4/2019. PIA.