



Summary Minutes

System Expansion Committee Meeting February 11, 2021

Call to order

The meeting was called to order at 1:31 p.m. by Committee Chair, Claudia Balducci virtually on WebEx.

Roll call of members

Chair	Vice Chair
(P) Claudia Balducci, King County Councilmember	(P) Victoria Woodards, Tacoma Mayor

Board Members	
(P) Nancy Backus, Auburn Mayor	(P) Kent Keel, University Place Mayor
(P) David Baker, Kenmore Mayor	(A) Nicola Smith, Lynnwood Mayor
(P) Jenny Durkan, Seattle Mayor	(P) Dave Upthegrove, King County Councilmember

Katie Flores, Board Administrator, announced that a quorum of the System Expansion Committee was present at roll call.

Report of the Chair

Don Davidson – Chair Balducci sadly reported that former Boardmember Don Davidson has passed away. She reflected on conversations and experiences with Boardmember Davidson.

Monthly Contract Report – The monthly contract report is included in the materials. The report includes contracts within the CEO’s authority including competitive, proprietary or sole source contracts.

CEO Report

Chief Executive Officer Peter M. Rogoff provided the CEO Report.

Passing of Don Davidson – Acknowledged Dr. Davidson’s impact as a local leader and member of the inaugural Sound Transit Board. Dr. Don Davidson, former Bellevue Councilmember and Mayor, served on the Board from 1993 through the end of 1995. During his tenure on the board, he helped to create Sound Move, the first Sound Transit ballot measure which was approved by regional voters in 1996. More than a decade later in his capacity as Councilmember, he helped negotiate the agreements that would clear the way for the construction of East Link in the city of Bellevue. Dr. Davidson was a tenacious advocate for his city, and his contributions will benefit the residents of Bellevue and the region for generations to come.

Construction Highlights - There will be a series of partial weekend closures on Link in April and early May. During the closures, beginning on the weekend of April 2-4, our crews will start connecting the current line to the Overhead Catenary System that will power East Link trains when we open East Link in 2023. During this time, the temporary center platform at Pioneer Square will be removed, which we installed for Connect 2020. During this work, Link will not run between SODO and Capitol Hill Stations for five consecutive weekends beginning the weekend of April 2 - 4. The closure will last from 10 pm each Friday until the start of service on Monday morning. The last closure weekend will be April 30-May 2. On each weekend, trains will run between Angle Lake and SODO, and between Capitol Hill and UW

Stations. Shuttle buses will serve all stations from SODO to Capitol Hill. The experience for passengers will be similar to the Connect 2020 weekend closures.

Federal Update - CEO Rogoff thanked the Board for signing on to the letters to State legislators and Secretary Buttigieg. On the State front, the Legislature is in its fifth week of session and approaching the first cutoff deadline in the next several days. The letter to Olympia states, there are a variety of ways the state could help, including providing funding for Sound Transit through a transportation revenue package and policy changes that could decrease costs to the agency. Sound Transit will be reaching out to the Board for help in Olympia as we work to make sure we are leaning in looking for alternative revenues. Sound Transit has weighed in on two pieces of legislation. On Monday, February 8, 2021 the House Transportation Committee held a hearing on House Bill 1301, which provides additional flexibility to Sound Transit to administer a fare enforcement program outside the court system. Staff testified in support of the bill, which would give the Board the flexibility to establish an enforcement program. The agency will be bringing fare enforcement options forward for your consideration next January. On Tuesday, the House Local Government Committee held a hearing on House Bill 1304, which would update the City of Seattle's monorail taxing authority to allow the City to use that authority in support of any grade separated rail, including the development of light rail by Sound Transit. Staff testified in support of this legislation, consistent with the Board's direction to identify alternative revenue sources.

On the federal front, CEO Rogoff met with the Acting Administrator of the FTA Nuria Fernandez and her senior staff. The meeting focused on two key messages – Sound Transit is uniquely positioned to deliver on the new Administration's priorities, and the agency would like to see the Administration include a provision to increase the federal share for our existing Full Funding Grant Agreements as part of their Build Back Better proposal. No sooner had the letter landed in Secretary Buttigieg's office, his senior staff reached out that they would like to schedule a briefing.

Public comment

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

The following people provided written public comment to the Committee:

Edward Miller
Protect Federal Way, on behalf of the GarageTown residents and Ellenos Yogurt Owners
Ken Broyles

The following people provided verbal public comment to the Committee:

Brian Nash
Joe Kunzler

Business items

For Committee Final Action

Minutes: January 14, 2021 System Expansion Committee meeting

It was moved by Boardmember Backus, seconded by Boardmember Woodards and carried by unanimous vote of the six Boardmembers present that the January 14, 2021 System Expansion Committee minutes be approved as presented.

For Recommendation to the Board

Motion No. M2021-12: Authorizing the chief executive officer to (1) execute Construction and Maintenance Agreement with BNSF Railway Company and the City of Puyallup; and (2) obtain real property rights at the 5th Street NW grade crossing in the City of Puyallup for the Puyallup Station Parking and Access Improvements project for an amount not to exceed \$774,380 with a 10 percent contingency of \$77,438 for a total authorized amount not to exceed \$851,818.

Jon Mihkels, Project Director and Ken Lee, Senior Project Manager, provided the staff report and presentation for Motion No. M2021-12 and Motion No. M2021-13.

(Boardmember Durkan joined at this time.)

Motion No. M2021-12 was moved by Boardmember Baker and seconded by Boardmember Backus. Chair Balducci called for a roll call vote.

Ayes

Nancy Backus
David Baker
Jenny Durkan
Kent Keel
Dave Upthegrove
Victoria Woodards
Claudia Balducci

Nays

It was carried by unanimous vote of the seven Boardmembers present that Motion No. M2021-12 be forwarded to the Board with a do-pass recommendation.

Motion No. M2021-13: Authorizing the chief executive to (1) execute Construction and Maintenance Agreement with the BNSF Railway Company and the City of Puyallup; and (2) to obtain real property rights at the 7th Street NW grade crossing in the City of Puyallup for the Puyallup Station Parking and Access Improvements project for an amount not to exceed \$743,691 with a 10 percent contingency of \$74,369 for a total authorized amount not to exceed \$818,060.

Chair Balducci advised that the Committee received a presentation on this action earlier in the meeting.

Motion No. M2021-13 was moved by Boardmember Woodards and seconded by Boardmember Backus. Chair Balducci called for a roll call vote.

Ayes

Nancy Backus
David Baker
Jenny Durkan
Kent Keel
Dave Upthegrove
Victoria Woodards
Claudia Balducci

Nays

It was carried by unanimous vote of the seven Boardmembers present that Motion No. M2021-13 be forwarded to the Board with a do-pass recommendation.

Reports to the committee

Capital Program Cost Estimates Update - OMF South and Bus Rapid Transit Projects - Kimberly Farley, Deputy Chief Executive Officer, provided the report.

Kimberly Farley, Deputy Chief Executive Officer, Chelsey Lewy, South Corridor Development Director, and Don Billen, Executive Director of Planning, Environment, and Project Development, provided the Report.

Ms. Lewy outlined the three potential sites for the Operations and Maintenance Facility South at the Midway Landfill, and S 366th street and S 344th Street in Federal Way. The cost of the facility increased between from 54-77 percent. The right-of-way costs range from a cost reduction of \$27 million to a cost increase of \$46 million. There is an increase of \$224 to \$607 million for construction/scope including larger buildings, more tracks and improved understanding of soil conditions at landfill, utilities and environmental work. There is also an increase of between \$155 to \$407 million in corresponding soft costs and contingencies.

The 2018 and 2019 cost estimates were based on low levels of design and engineering work, and used a track template. In 2020, project development advanced and a better understanding of many factors informed the updated estimates for the Operations and Maintenance Facility South. Ms. Lewy outlined the various cost drivers, including larger buildings, stormwater retention needs, additional track to accommodate more light rail vehicles, and environmental mitigation in the Federal way sites.

Paul Bennett, Project Director, reviewed the environmental challenges associated with the Midway Landfill station. He explained that there were three underground mitigation options under study to mitigate any potential structural settlement. Conditions were found to be worse than expected, which required increased mitigation.

Bernard VandeKamp, HCT Corridor Director, provided an overview of the Bus Rapid Transit program and reviewed the cost estimate updates for the I-405, SR 522, and Bus Base North projects. He noted that the two Bus Rapid Transit project estimates were lower than previously expected, while the Bus Base North increased.

The I-405 project decreased by seven percent, in large part due to design refinements and the partnership with the Washington State Department of Transportation. In I-405 South, design refinements to better meet the needs of the project, particularly in Burien, reduced the size of the station footprint, and lowered costs by approximately \$98 million. A partnership with the Washington State Department of Transportation at the NE 44th Street station area also reduced the project by \$30 million. Finally, better definition of systems and vehicle costs as well as redistribution of system costs across the Bus Rapid Transit projects reduced costs by \$77 million. On the North I-405 BRT route, moving stations to the Express Toll Lanes in partnership with WSDOT to better serve passengers added \$136 million in costs.

Mr. VandeKamp outlined the SR522/NE 145th corridor Bus Rapid Transit project. In 2019, some development discoveries increased the project estimates above the ST3 estimate, but later design refinements reduced costs by \$130 million. Mr. van de Kamp outlined some of the design refinements, noting that systems costs which were redistributed from the I-405 project added \$14 million to the project.

The Bus Base North would have a capacity of 120 buses, and would be forward looking to prepare for the eventual transition to all electric busses. The cost of the project increased by 14 percent, driven by reallocation of systems costs from the I-405 project and increased land acquisition costs. The SR522 project was expected to complete the environmental review process. Two projects were under way, in Renton at NE 44th Street in conjunction with WSDOT, and BAT lanes in Bothell.

Ms. Farley explained that the challenges varied greatly between projects. The largest increases occurred in dense urban areas where new corridors were being developed, as seen in the West Seattle and Ballard Link Extension. The Bus Rapid Transit program did not see these increases, as it worked within the WSDOT right-of-way. Some scope requirements emerged as design advanced between 2019 and 2020. She noted that assumptions in early planning estimates needed careful review, and scope needed to be closely monitored as design advanced. Value engineering would be needed as well.

Finally, she noted that the independent review was underway and would help inform future decisions and staff assumptions.

Boardmember Durkan asked if a tally sheet could be developed to track the project cost increases.

Chair Balducci asked that staff provide an update on the NE 44th Street Station bike and pedestrian access efforts. She also advised that she had the opportunity to speak with the independent analysts reviewing the estimates to share her thoughts and encouraged other Boardmembers to do so as well.

Light Rail Vehicle Fleet Expansion

Tracy Reed, Deputy Executive Director of Project Management for New and Existing Facilities, and George McGinn, and Acting Executive Operations Director of Light Rail, provided the staff report. Ms. Reed outlined the expansion project, noting that 152 new light rail vehicles would support expansion of Link service through 2024.

Mr. McGinn advised that testing and commissioning began in July of 2019. Qualification tests, led by Siemens, was 95 percent complete and would end after a reliability test. Systems Integration Tests were completed earlier in the week and were being reviewed. He explained that "burn-in" testing simulated the regular operation of light rail vehicles, and was taking place between in-service trains, on evenings and weekends. The first train would operate for 1000 miles as part of the burn-in testing. Future trains would operate for 300 miles.

Ms. Reed advised that technical issues that were briefed to the Committee in November 2020 had been resolved. Testing and adjustments such as interior heating and passenger information and signage were continuing to take place. Safety and Security certification was 86 percent complete. Mainline training of operators was 25 percent complete. Infrastructure modifications were complete and all but one procedure was updated.

There were 37 cars delivered in Seattle, 20 were ready for mainline testing, and six cars were conditionally accepted and ready to be put in service. Risks to the project included delays in qualification, any resurgence in COVID-19, and competing demands for resources. She advised that there were 42 days of "float" between acceptance of the new vehicles and the opening of the Northgate Link Extension. Boardmember Balducci asked where the project was in relation to its schedule. Ms. Reed explained that the project was behind schedule, but that a conservative estimate, in addition to the 42 day float, allowed for full delivery by the expected Northgate Link Opening.

Executive session

None.

Other business

None.

Next meeting

Thursday, March 11, 2021

1:30 to 4:00 p.m.

WebEx Virtual Meeting

Committee Chair Balducci noted that if the committee is not able to have an in-person meeting, a virtual meeting will be held. Information will be provided on the Sound Transit website.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 3:15 p.m.

Claudia Balducci
System Expansion Committee Chair

APPROVED on _____, TW

ATTEST:

Kathryn Flores
Board Administrator