



Summary Minutes

Rider Experience and Operations Committee Meeting July 1, 2021

Call to order

The meeting was called to order at 1:04 p.m. by Chair Roberts virtually on WebEx.

The meeting was streamed on:

<https://soundtransit.webex.com/soundtransit/onstage/g.php?MTID=e0f6a68226bd550585142a2276f961cf9>

Roll call of members

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

Board Members	
(P) David Baker, Kenmore Mayor	(P) Nicola Smith, Lynnwood Mayor
(P) Debora Juarez, Seattle City Councilmember	(A) Peter von Reichbauer, King County Councilmember
(A) Ed Prince, Renton City Councilmember	(A) Victoria Woodards, Tacoma Mayor

Adam Montee, Board Administration Program Manager, announced that a quorum of the Committee was present at roll call.

Report of the Chair

Vice Chair Acknowledgement

Chair Roberts thanked Vice Chair McDermott for Chairing the June 2021 Rider Experience and Operations Committee meeting during his absence.

Revised Agenda

Chair Roberts noted that the agenda was revised to change the Performance Metrics Review topic.

Tacoma Link Fares Public Hearing

A public hearing to receive comment on the proposed Tacoma Link Fares would take place at 9:30 a.m. on July 15, 2021. The action would be presented to the Committee at a future meeting.

Monthly Contract Report

The monthly contract report was included in members meeting packets for review.

CEO Report

Chief Executive Officer Peter Rogoff gave the CEO Report.

Federal Update – CEO Rogoff announced he and Boardmember Woodards participated in a video conference with news media, hosted by Senator Murray. There was discussion on recent funding

provided by Congress in the American Rescue Plan that included substantial funding over more than \$1 billion for transit agencies in the region.

In addition to recent relief funding, the conference also highlighted the Senator's bill, the Public Transit Capital Investment Relief Act of 2021, which Senator Murray introduced in early 2021. The bill would increase funding allocated to projects that have existing Capital Investment Grants. If adopted, the bill would provide \$1.9 billion in additional funding for the Lynnwood and Federal Way light rail extension and would allow the reduction of the agency's affordability gap.

Service During Heat Wave – Due to the recent heat wave, rail services, both Sound and Link, had speed restrictions applied. On Link, temporary speed reductions were called for because of the overhead contact wire. Lower speeds also helped reduce the stress on the traction power substations. During the three-day heat spell there were, several sporadic power outages, medical assistance calls, high-temperature faults and alarms on the infrastructure equipment, and several car temperature faults and shut downs. Frontline employees worked through the oppressive heat to continue service.

On Sounder, BNSF followed their protocol and applied speed restrictions based on ambient temperatures and observations from the field. Sounder experienced a 20 to 25 minute delay on all trains and necessitated the elimination of two scheduled trains. Tacoma Link did not operate during this time. ST Express operated almost normally, but experienced several hot roadways in the area. Construction projects continued to progress during this period. Sound Transit Safety and Construction Management teams worked with the agency's contractors to ensure the labor force stayed hydrated and took necessary breaks to avoid heat related health issues and to preserve worker health and safety.

Construction Update – The Lynnwood Link Extension closed the southbound lanes of I-5 South from 220th Street SW to SR 104 in Mountlake Terrace overnight on Saturday, June 26, 2021. The closure was necessary for a large concrete pour for the future elevated guideway crossing over I-5. The work was completed successfully and the southbound lanes were returned as planned for full traffic operations on Sunday.

Link Light Rail operated a bus bridge Sunday, June 27, 2021 in support of the bi-annual Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) Bridge inspection of the I-90 Bridge over Link light rail tracks. The WSDOT Bridge inspection was scheduled from the start of service until 11 a.m. To ensure safety, overhead wires were de-energized, requiring bus service between SODO and Capitol Hill stations. King County Metro operated shuttle buses served all stations effected by the power down.

Due to an error, the initial bus bridge was scheduled to run between SODO and Westlake Stations. Metro assigned work to operators based on this initial request. After staff identified the error, Metro added an additional leg of the bus bridge between Westlake and Capitol Hill, requiring a bus to bus passenger transfer at Westlake. Metro field personnel and Landmark event staff were deployed to SODO, Westlake and Capitol Hill Station to ensure smooth passenger transfers. The WSDOT Bridge inspection concluded as scheduled and normal rail service resumed on time.

Boardmember Baker asked how vertical conveyances operated during the heat wave. CEO Rogoff commented that Russ Arnold, Chief Passenger Experience Officer, would include the available data in his presentation later in the meeting. Chair Roberts noted additional inquiries he'd received on the same matter and appreciated Boardmember Baker raising the question. CEO Rogoff clarified that staff does not have a presentation specifically outlining the vertical conveyance performance during the heat spell, but instead, staff would display the public facing metrics dashboard for that category. Chair Roberts commented on the benefit of noting the challenges that came with tunnel conveyances. Deputy CEO Kimberly Farley mentioned John Carini, Deputy Director of Vertical Conveyances, would be available

during the meeting to provide additional data in the later presentation.

Public comment

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

There were no written submissions to the Committee.

The following people provided verbal public comment:

Joe Kunzler

Business Items

Items for Committee final action

June 3, 2021, Rider Experience and Operations Committee meeting minutes

It was moved by Boardmember McDermott, seconded by Boardmember Baker that the minutes of the June 3, 2021 Rider Experience and Operations Committee meeting be approved as presented.

Ayes

David Baker
Ed Prince
Nicola Smith
Joe McDermott

Nays

The minutes of the June 3, 2021 Rider Experience and Operations Committee meeting were approved as presented, with Chair Roberts abstaining.

Chair Roberts noted he would abstain from voting since he did not attend the June 3, 2021 Rider Experience and Operations Committee meeting.

Motion No. M2021-39: Authorizing the chief executive officer to execute a contract modification with Dell Marketing L.P. to provide technology software, hardware, and related maintenance services in the amount of \$1,405,109 for a total authorized contract amount not to exceed \$9,500,000, plus applicable taxes.

Jason Weiss, Chief Information Officer, provided the staff presentation.

Motion No. M2021-39 was moved by Boardmember McDermott and seconded by Boardmember Smith.

Chair Roberts called for a roll call vote.

Ayes

David Baker
Debora Juarez
Joe McDermott
Nicola Smith
Paul Roberts

Nays

It was carried by unanimous vote of five committee members present that Motion No. M2021-39 be approved as presented.

Motion No. M2021-40: Authorizing the chief executive officer to execute a contract with Juniper Networks, Inc. and/or its Authorized Fulfillment Partners to provide Juniper network equipment, design,

software and hardware maintenance and professional services for a total authorized contract amount not to exceed \$11,000,000, plus applicable taxes.

Jason Weiss, Chief Information Officer, provided the staff presentation.

Motion No. M2021-40 was moved by Boardmember Baker and seconded by Boardmember Smith.

Chair Roberts called for a roll call vote.

Ayes

David Baker
Debora Juarez
Joe McDermott
Nicola Smith
Paul Roberts

Nays

It was carried by unanimous vote of five committee members present that Motion No. M2021-40 be approved as presented.

Reports to the Committee

2022 Service Concepts

Brian de Place, Director of System Planning and Alexander Lew, Senior Transportation Planner, provided the presentation. The 2022 Service Plan assumes that ridership will increase as the region re-opens and recovers and focuses on all-day, all-week service. Sound Transit is planning to lift on-board social distancing requirements in July 2021. The plan also assumes the start of Tacoma Link Hilltop Extension service beginning in 2022. However, ridership numbers and the impact of hybrid work on peak-hour commute patterns is not yet known.

Mr. de Place reviewed the timeline for review and approval of the 2022 Service Plan. Listening sessions were held with stakeholders in Spring 2021, which was new for this year's plan. The draft plan was released in July, and additional public input will be incorporated into the final 2022 Service Plan released in September 2021. The Board is scheduled to adopt the final plan in October 2021. Sound Transit will then monitor service throughout 2022 to see if additional service is needed.

Ridership during the pandemic was down, with declines mainly during rush hour. ST Express routes serving South King and Pierce County had larger percentages of passengers who continued to ride. To respond to these patterns, the service plan rethinks how to reflect new all-day travel patterns while prioritizing equity and considering rider & community input.

Mr. de Place reviewed service designs for each of the modes, Link will maintain Northgate service levels with 8 minute rush-hour service, 10 minute midday, evenings and weekends, and 15 minute service in early morning/late evening. Sounder Service will increase to full service by mid September for South Sounder, and will maintain two roundtrips for North Sounder. Tacoma Link service will increase in frequency to every 10 minutes on weekdays and Saturdays, and every 20 minutes on Sundays when Hilltop Tacoma Link Extension opens. ST Express service will have 15 minute, all-day service to Tacoma & Federal Way to match service levels on routes serving other corridors in response to recent ridership trends and to achieve service parity across the region. Mr. de Place noted that Title VI analysis has been included in the outreach materials.

Outreach for the 2022 Service Plan will include multiple phases and targeted community briefings and interviews. Online open houses and surveys will also be available in multiple languages. Outreach will begin in July and input from the outreach efforts will be incorporated into the service plan in August/September. The Board will consider final approval of the service plan in October, and monitoring will continue through 2022.

Communities of Focus

Russ Arnold, Chief Passenger Experience and Innovation Officer, and David Wright, Chief Safety Officer, provided the presentation. The presentation was given in response to Boardmember McDermott's previous request to have a better understanding of the term, non-destination riders. Mr. Arnold acknowledged that the term, Communities of Focus, was a term used to better align intentions on supporting all passenger success and how it was discussed to gain clarity posed a challenge as staff worked to avoid categorizing, enabling, or make assumptions of riders. Alongside ramping up the Fare Ambassador Program, fundamental work was taking place to revisit historical processes.

Mr. Wright voiced the difficulties of discussing non-destination riders and noted that some people use the system in unintended ways. He noted that transit is for all and stated the agency's mission, to move more people to more places. He explained the need to appropriately allocate resources to support the use of the transit systems. Resources would include funding physical support at the systems to provide assistance to riders. The term non-destination rider had been used to collect data based on the number of occurrences a security officer asked someone to exit the train at the end station, when the train was no longer in service and other passengers had deboarded. That interaction would then be classified as a non-destination rider.

Mr. Wright briefed that the term was used more broadly in the transit industry and referred to riders that generally do not depart a transit vehicle after riding one complete cycle. Data was not assumed to a specific group of people. It had been acknowledged by the team that there would be numerous background circumstances for non-destination riders and they would seek to understand passenger needs to better align with intended outcomes. The agency had recognized the lack of in-depth information about needs of people without housing, homes, or shelter and people in crisis that intersect with the transit system. In 2020, Sound Transit began collaboration with other agencies in the region to discuss how efforts could align to provide support to communities at a regional level.

Mr. Arnold informed the Committee of three intended outcomes. First would be to learn about needs of people who are without housing, homes, or shelter and people in crisis in the transit system. Second, would be to update or establish procedures for guiding interactions with these communities. And lastly, would ensure individuals are treated with intentional compassion while ensuring psychological and physical safety for transit passengers, transit employees, and transit-managed environments. Consultant support was sought out to complete these outcomes. Next steps included continued scope of work development with potential regional transit partners, beginning the process to formally partner with regional partner agencies to implement work by summer 2021, and finalizing and issuing a request for proposals to bring in consultants with a target date of fall 2021.

Boardmember McDermott thanked staff for providing a presentation to help answer his previous questions. He then asked what the need was to use the term, non-destination riders. Mr. Wright responded that though a difficult term to use, the agency wanted to ensure no passengers were left on the train and current data was not able to distinguish all particulars of situations that could occur when staff was required to attend to a passenger at the end of the ride. Kimberly Farley, Chief System Officer, noted that work would take place to look into the data that is collected to be better connected to what was being described, relating to the term, non-destination rider. Mr. Rogoff included that King County Metro and Sound Transit Operations are intermixed and the use of this term would be beneficial as to not create confusion.

Chair Roberts shared his appreciation to staff and other Board members for asking difficult questions in order to investigate the needs and routes to best service the passengers.

Performance Metrics Review – Informed

Emily Nutsch, Operations Performance Manager, provided the presentation. She briefly noted there was a 10% increase in Ridership. John Carini, Deputy Director of Vertical Conveyances, provided updates

on conveyance data. June targets were met for Sounder, Link elevators and escalators. He responded to Boardmember Baker's earlier request regarding outages during the recent heat wave. There were two outages, a Mukilteo elevator that was out of service on Sunday evening and returned to service on Monday morning, and a SeaTac escalator. As of June 2021, 50 percent of Downtown Tunnel escalators have returned to service and elevators were anticipated to be at full service by July 2021.

Ms. Nutsch reviewed the safety metric and displayed a collision map. On-Time Performance would include target lines at the next meeting. She noted the Informed metric and noted it would become available to the public in August 2021. Boardmember Baker asked about pedestrian incidents that occur in station and asked of what nature are those incidents. They could vary and be as minor as a slip and fall.

Michael Berman, Manager of Research and Insights, introduced the Informed metric which was derived from the annual Passenger Experience Survey. Mr. Berman noted he would return to the Committee in the upcoming months to provide an in-depth presentation on the Passenger Experience Survey results.

The Informed metric data presentation included six data points from averaged scores from the survey. He noted that each metric could vary on level of importance, but not to be classified as unimportant, due to the vast majority of individual preferences. He reviewed the results for Sounder and compared timeliness of information to accuracy of information. These results suggested that when riders thought about level of importance, they thought it would be less important to provide information on delays at the exact minute versus providing information on what type of delay or incident occurred. Looking into these results would suggest that accuracy of information is more important to riders and have the agency focus more attention to that data.

The ST Express data showed that riders were less interested in delays or disruptions and that could possibly be due to the awareness of the mode of system being on the highway or city streets. These data points have shown that more questions could be asked in future surveys to dive deeper into the reasoning behind these answers.

Chair Roberts asked what this data would be used to determine how to proceed differently moving forward. Mr. Berman answered that several groups within the agency would collaborate to look deeper into the data points. Mr. Arnold briefly noted that the Informed metric included data points that were based on actionable items.

Executive session – None.

Other business – None.

Next meeting

Thursday, August 5, 2021, 1:00 to 3:00 p.m.
Virtual meeting held via WebEx

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 2:48 p.m.

ATTEST:

Paul Roberts
Rider Experience and Operations Committee Chair

Kathryn Flores
Board Administrator

APPROVED on _____, JG.