



Summary Minutes

Rider Experience and Operations Committee Meeting October 19, 2022

Call to order

The meeting was called to order at 12:48 p.m. by Chair Walker. The meeting was rescheduled from October 6, 2022 to October 19, 2022.

The meeting was available in person and streamed on:

<https://soundtransit.webex.com/soundtransit/j.php?MTID=m23b80694544527c4815a2dc9aa896986>

Roll call of members

Chair	Vice Chair
(P) Kristina Walker, Tacoma Councilmember	(A) Ed Prince, Renton Councilmember

Board Members	
(P) David Baker, Kenmore Councilmember	(P) Kim Roscoe, Fife Mayor
(P) Christine Frizzell, Lynnwood Mayor	(A) Dave Upthegrove, King County Councilmember
(P) Debora Juarez, Seattle City Councilmember	(A) Peter von Reichbauer, King County Councilmember

Josephine Gamboa, Board Relations Specialist, announced that a quorum of the committee was present at roll call.

Report of the Chair

Upcoming REO Presentations

Chair Walker updated the Committee on actions and presentations they could expect over the next two months.

Monthly Contract Report

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

CEO Report

Deputy CEO Kimberly Farley gave the CEO Report.

1 Line ridership last weekend

Deputy CEO Farley communicated that extra trains were executed along the 1 Line to respond to crowding for the busy weekend of Mariners, Seahawks, Huskies, and Kraken games. Special Sounder service on the south and north lines also operated on Saturday and Sunday. While ridership was high, trains ran smoothly. Ms. Farley thanked the operations teams, King County Metro, and BNSF for providing safe, reliable, and responsive service all weekend. To handle crowding on the 1 Line, 9 extra trainsets were added on top of the usual 12, for Saturday service which boosted service by up to 75 percent at the busiest times. It was estimated for 1 Line ridership that Saturday to have as many as 108,000 boardings.

T Line Incident

An incident took place on the T Line in Tacoma. Around 5:10 a.m., the back end of a T Line vehicle came off the track at 7th and Commerce. The Operator was ok and there were no injuries. The rail car had been moved to the Operations and Maintenance facility (OMF) and the switch that caused the issue remained under investigation.

The incident occurred when the train performed its turn back operations, with no passengers onboard, when a mechanical failure occurred at the switch machine. The switch machine was a temporary switch installed during the recent cutover work. The new permanent switch machine was scheduled for installation this weekend and would follow ST commissioning, testing and certification processes.

Operations staff were now checking all switches in the OMF yard and alignment to confirm all switch machines were installed per manufacturer's instructions and a root cause analysis would be performed to identify the cause of the switch malfunction. Unfortunately, this caused significant disruptions to service this morning. T Line service was able to resume between Tacoma Dome Station and Union Station about half an hour after the derailment and a bus bridge between Union Station and Commerce Street, operated by Sound Transit partners at Pierce Transit, was established within an hour. The switch had been fixed and normal service resumed at about 10 am.

Deputy CEO Farley noted the agency was taking this incident seriously and would be conducting a thorough investigation to determine what happened. Technicians were already on the scene, and staff would keep the Board apprised of findings.

Public Hearing on 2023 Service Plan

A public hearing would be held on October 20th at 9:30 a.m. to receive comments on the 2023 Service Plan. The hearing would be presided over by Chair Walker.

There was an item on today's agenda to review the Service Plan and forward with a do-pass recommendation. She asked Chair Walker to gather a summary of the comments heard at the hearing and share them at the October Board meeting.

Upcoming Tukwila OCS Repairs

As part of Future Ready, the ongoing planned maintenance work that requires service disruptions, a the overhead lines that power Link vehicles near the Tukwila area would be replaced.

This means 1 Line service would not be available between Tukwila International Boulevard Station and the Rainier Beach Station. This would take place starting October 22nd until October 26th, 2022.

Normal 1 Line service between Northgate and Rainier Beach, a bus bridge between Rainier Beach and Tukwila International Boulevard, and slightly reduced 1 Line service between Tukwila and Angle Lake, with trains every 12 minutes were provided. The bus bridge will operate every 10 minutes, leaving in two-bus platoons.

Public comment

Chair Walker announced that public comment would be accepted via email to emailtheboard@soundtransit.org, in person, and would also be accepted virtually.

The following people provided written comments:

Bob Peterson

Christopher Nelson

Amanda Solonika on behalf of the University Building Services Department

There were no in-person, or virtual public comments submitted.

Business Items

For Committee final action

August 4, 2022, Rider Experience and Operations Committee meeting minutes

It was moved by Boardmember Roscoe, seconded by Boardmember Juarez and carried by unanimous consent that the minutes of the August 4, 2022 Rider Experience and Operations Committee meeting be approved as presented.

Motion No. M2022-81: Authorizing the chief executive officer to execute a contract modification with Custom Truck One Source to 1) exercise contract options for 13 Specialty Hi-Rail Non Revenue vehicles; 2) execute a sole source contract modification to add five vehicles; and 3) provide price adjustment based on market impacts for a combined contract modification in the amount of \$4,072,870, for a new total authorized contract amount not to exceed \$8,578,336 plus applicable taxes.

Karl Shoemaker, Director of Link Light Rail Maintenance, provided the staff presentation.

Boardmember Frizzell joined at this time.

Boardmember Roscoe asked if the committee's involvement was due to the amount being requested and asked were extra vehicles identified or was it anticipated that there would be additional vehicles after staff evaluated track mileage and other metrics. Mr. Shoemaker responded the original option included 15 vehicles and staff reevaluated staffing levels for Lynnwood and Federal Way Extension projects and concluded 18 vehicles were necessary. During reevaluation, it was decided the types of vehicles would be altered to standard Hi-Rail vehicles.

Boardmember Roscoe asked what the price increase was due to the market changes and supply change issues. Linda Thomas, Manager of Materials Technology & Services Contracts, replied the changes totaled in \$733,424.

Motion No. M2022-81 was moved by Boardmember Roscoe and seconded by Boardmember Frizzell.

Chair Walker called for a voice vote.

It was carried by voice vote of all committee members present that Motion No. M2022-81 be approved as presented.

Motion No. M2022-82: Authorizing the chief executive officer to amend three lease agreements with Auburn Business Park located at 3538, 3534 and 3510A "C" Street NE in Auburn, WA to add one-year extensions and five, one-year options to renew in the total amount of \$875,261 for a total authorized amount not to exceed \$1,643,052.

Faith Roland, Director of Real Property, provided the staff report.

Boardmember Frizzell asked for clarification on the total amount for one-year options to renew and how that equated to the total authorized amount of over \$1 million. Ms. Roland responded the prior amount of collective rent of all three leases since 2011 was \$768,000. If all extensions were exercised through 2029, the total would be an additional \$875,261 and equate to the total authorized amount of \$1,643,052.

Chair Walker asked about the potential of not exercising options through 2029. Ms. Roland confirmed that it may not be necessary and this action would add one-year to its current term which would expire in 2024. Each of the five one-year options would be subject to facilities needs. Chair Walker asked if those extensions would return to the Committee. Ms. Roland replied that facilities authority was included in the overall approval and the options to exercise the renewals were under staff discretion.

Motion No. M2022-82 was moved by Boardmember Juarez and seconded by Boardmember Roscoe.

Chair Walker called for a voice vote.

It was carried by voice vote of all committee members present that Motion No. M2022-82 be approved as presented.

For Recommendation to the Board

Resolution No. R2022-28: Adopting the 2023 Service Plan, formalizing emergency service reductions due to operator availability.

Brian de Place, Director of System Planning, Michael Couvrette, Deputy Director of Service Planning, and Suraj Shetty, Executive Director of Operations, provided the staff presentation.

Boardmember Roscoe noted a written public comment from Christopher Nelson that the Committee received for this meeting and asked if staff would include her in the response to the comment to get a better understanding of the request. Mr. de Place committed to including Boardmember Roscoe in the staff response.

Chair Walker noted her appreciation for staff's focus on reliability of service and asked for staff to explain the relationship between drivers and Pierce Transit and why the impacts were to southern routes. Mr. Shetty explained Pierce County relies on Pierce Transit to provide service and operators – when Pierce Transit suffers from shortages, it impacts Sound Transit services in Pierce County. Chair Walker thanked staff on recruitment efforts for operators.

Boardmember Frizzell thanked staff for their efforts in providing the best service to riders given the hardships of shortages.

Chair Walker asked about the process of a potential amendment being brought to the Board after hearing comments received at the public hearing. Katie Flores, Director of Board Administration, explained that once this action was forwarded by the Committee, if there was a request from a Boardmember to change a portion of the plan, they could offer an amendment to the service plan at the full Board meeting.

Chair Walker asked at what point could changes be made if transit agencies saw an influx of drivers. Mr. Shetty replied that service changes typically occur twice a year. Once staff was confident a service could be provided, the change would occur during that period and it would not be required to wait until the two year mark. Chair Walker asked if that action would come before the Board. Mr. Shetty confirmed that was correct.

Resolution No. R2022-28 was moved by Boardmember Roscoe and seconded by Boardmember Frizzell.

Chair Walker called for a roll call vote.

Ayes

David Baker
Christine Frizzell
Debora Juarez
Kim Roscoe
Kristina Walker

Nays

It was carried by unanimous vote of five committee members present that Resolution No. R2022-28 be forwarded to the Board with a do-pass recommendation.

Resolution No. R2022-29: (1) Adopting new fare rates and fare structure for Tacoma Link Fares effective with the opening of the Tacoma Link light rail extension in 2023, and (2) superseding the fare rates established in Resolution No. R2016-10, and Resolution No. R2020-28 as amended by Resolution No. R2022-20, with the rates established by this action as shown in Attachment A.

Chad Davis, Deputy Director of Fares, provided the presentation. Option 1 would establish Tacoma Link flat-rate fares as \$2.00 Adult, \$1.50 ORCA LIFT, \$0 Youth and \$1.00 Senior/Disabled, which aligns the Adult fare with the current Pierce Transit bus fare and is the staff recommendation. Option 2 would establish Tacoma Link flat rate fares as \$2.25 Adult, \$1.50 ORCA LIFT, \$0 Youth and \$1.00 Senior/Disabled, which aligns the Adult fare with the base fare on ST's Link service.

Resolution No. R2022-29 with Option 1 filled in was moved by Boardmember Juarez and seconded by Boardmember Roscoe.

Chair Walker called for a roll call vote.

Ayes

Nays

David Baker
Christine Frizzell
Debora Juarez
Kim Roscoe
Kristina Walker

It was carried by unanimous vote of five committee members present that Resolution No. R2022-29 with Option 1 filled in be forwarded to the Board with a do-pass recommendation.

Motion No. M2022-83: Approving the Hilltop Tacoma Link Extension Service and Fare Equity report.

Adrian Mejia, Program Manager for Title VI & Equity, provided the presentation.

Chair Walker noted the importance of approving this equity report and as the Rider Experience and Operations Committee, take actions on what was noted in the report. Chair Walker wanted to highlight the action plan stated in the motion report, reading "Sound Transit will mitigate adverse effects by identifying affected riders and with the help of human service agencies, enroll qualifying passengers into the reduced fare ORCA LIFT program. Sound Transit will also make free ORCA cards available at outreach events during the first weeks of implementing the new fare structure."

Motion No. M2022-83 was moved by Boardmember Roscoe and seconded by Boardmember Baker.

Chair Walker called for a roll call vote.

Ayes

Nays

David Baker
Christine Frizzell
Debora Juarez
Kim Roscoe
Kristina Walker

It was carried by unanimous vote of five committee members present that Motion No. M2022-83 be forwarded to the Board with a do-pass recommendation.

Motion No. M2022-84: Authorizing the chief executive officer to (1) execute a transfer agreement with King County to transfer ownership of the Downtown Seattle Transit Tunnel to Sound Transit; and (2) execute three follow-on agreements as required in the transfer agreement.

Kimberly Farley, Deputy CEO, provided the presentation.

Boardmember Roscoe asked about the outlines of transitions for King County as Sound Transit assumed ownership of the tunnel. Ms. Farley responded that King County built the tunnel and they've had facilities working in the tunnel for years. The agreement was amended for King County to provide additional support to Sound Transit for a five-year overlap of support. Boardmember Roscoe asked if the five years equated to work that was already occurring. Ms. Farley clarified that it was asking them to help address issues and gather more information about the tunnel.

Motion No. M2022-84 was moved by Boardmember Roscoe and seconded by Boardmember Juarez.

Chair Walker called for a roll call vote.

Ayes

Nays

David Baker
Christine Frizzell
Debora Juarez
Kim Roscoe
Kristina Walker

It was carried by unanimous vote of five committee members present that Motion No. M2022-84 be forwarded to the Board with a do-pass recommendation.

Motion No. M2022-85: Authorizing the chief executive officer to execute an amendment to the Link Operations and Maintenance Agreement with King County for services related to the transfer of the Downtown Seattle Transit Tunnel.

No further questions were received from the Committee.

Motion No. M2022-85 was moved by Boardmember Roscoe and seconded by Boardmember Juarez.

Chair Walker called for a roll call vote.

Ayes

Nays

David Baker
Christine Frizzell
Debora Juarez
Kim Roscoe
Kristina Walker

It was carried by unanimous vote of five committee members present that Motion No. M2022-85 be forwarded to the Board with a do-pass recommendation.

Reports to the Committee

Due to a delayed start time, Chair Walker announced the Digital Assistant Tool presentation would be moved to the 2022 November Rider Experience and Operations Committee meeting.

Update on Vertical Conveyances

John Carini, Deputy Director of Vertical Conveyances, provided the presentation. Mr. Carini informed the Committee of three Vertical Conveyance program pillars: communications, replacement program, and operations and maintenance. Communications included signage, passenger alerts, asset outage updates, and scheduled maintenance. Mr. Carini noted his interest in returning to the Committee to provide more on the replacement program and communicated he would be reviewing the operations and maintenance pillar at this meeting to inform how staff conduct day to day operations.

The current portfolio included 92 escalators and 101 elevators over the span of over 70 miles that encompassed Link, Sounder, ST Express, and garages and Operations and Maintenance facilities. He highlighted that unlike busses and trains that had a centralized facility for maintenance, these were static assets.

In early 2018, Sound Transit dealt with extensive asset outages throughout its alignment. On March 16, 2018, the agency experienced a substantial failure of multiple escalators at the University of Washington (UW) Station during the peak commute which made headlines in multiple local media outlets. Sound Transit admitted to its regrettable decision to install mid-grade escalator equipment at that location and modified them to get closer to heavy duty standards instead of initially specifying more robust equipment. The agency quickly moved to modify the UW station to have additional egress and ingress options and generated a new contract specific to this location that added onsite technicians to respond to issues more rapidly, enhanced the maintenance program and a large spare parts inventory to mitigate future events such as what passengers experienced in March of 2018. The agency's initial response to these concerns was focused on the immediate replacement of these very new assets. However, staff found that with the mitigations that were introduced the agency was able to maintain its target Passenger availability targets for these escalators which allowed focus on efforts to the legacy assets within the downtown tunnel stations. This event in March of 2018 was the major prompt for a re-assessment of the agency's conveyance specifications station design, maintenance vendor as well as the service contract structure and terms. The agency also created a dedicated expert Vertical Conveyance team within the Facilities and Systems Maintenance Division to focus on this critical aspect of the Passenger journey.

Due to the previously mentioned events, staff developed and published a more enhanced maintenance contract in 2019 and procured a new vendor to adhere to these more robust standards. The standards were a combination of State requirements, manufacturer recommended maintenance tasks as well as detailed periodic requirements which included monthly, quarterly, bi-annual, and annual tasks for every vertical conveyance asset. In addition, outage response time requirements, repair standards and a detailed spare parts inventory was added.

Some challenges within day-to-day operations were growth of portfolio. The agency currently had 193 assets and would grow to have 325 in the next couple of years, and nearly 600 long term. Mr. Carini noted staff may look to managing multiple vendors to maintain current standards.

Another challenge was quality of technicians. The region has a small labor pool of qualified technicians that local vendors currently battle for. This challenge was compounded when discussions of the downtown tunnel assets and the agency tries to find and keep technicians that were both capable of working on those legacy assets but also willing to work in that more challenging environment in those 4 tunnel stations.

Another challenge was supply chain. As with many other industries, the global supply chain had hindered access to many electronic components necessary for elevator and escalator operation which had only been compounded by the numerous obsolete components identified in the downtown tunnel assets.

Mr. Carini provided a brief overview of the role of the Vertical Conveyance team. In addition to the essential focus of communications to passengers that staff would be returning to speak about in detail, the Vertical Conveyance team worked in sync with the agency vendor to pursue passenger availability goals of 95 percent for escalators and 97 percent for elevators. This is done by conducting monthly inspections of every asset to ensure safety, operability, and cleanliness. These inspections also served as a method of vendor oversight where staff confirmed that all required maintenance requirements were performed and formally documented. The team also documented and categorized every reported asset outage and conducted in depth analysis that highlighted asset trends, repetitive outages, and areas of concern, which was used to direct the vendor and other key stakeholders in an effort to lessen these

negative trends. Finally, the team was deeply rooted in vertical conveyance long term planning and managing the overall replacement and modernization of these assets.

Mr. Carini highlighted the future state of Operations and Maintenance. It was believed that a data driven maintenance program would be the future of the vertical conveyance asset management plan. Staff was currently building the foundation and tools to decrease asset outages, increase response times to inoperable assets and tailor maintenance strategy to critical and service impacting units as well as enhancing cleanliness standards all with the goal of improving the passenger experience on the way to their destinations.

Boardmember Roscoe acknowledged the complexities of the vertical conveyance systems, noted the topic was frequently spoken about at the beginning of her term with the Board, and looked forward to seeing progress and growth.

Chair Walker asked about communications for passengers that don't have access to social media or digital alerts. Mr. Carini answered that there were struggles with communications of outages and security staff, passengers, and Sound Transit staff were relied on to report outages. Staff was working towards a real-time data pilot program which would allow notifications when equipment was out of service within minutes of the outage rather than hours. He noted the importance of signage on the affected equipment and the inclusion of additional routes for passengers to take. There was an ADA concern revolving around elevators outages; to address this Sound Transit provides notifications in the train to alert passengers of limited or no ADA access so they could proceed with exiting at the appropriate station.

Chair Walker commented on importance of paying attention to short-term solutions in conjunction with long-term solutions. Mr. Shetty thanked Chair Walker for making that note and voiced staff must continue to be aware of the impact to riders whenever outages occur.

Executive session – None.

Other business – None.

Next meeting

Thursday, November 3, 2022
1:00 to 3:00 p.m.
Ruth Fisher Boardroom and Virtually via WebEx

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 2:27 p.m.

Kristina Walker
Rider Experience and Operations Committee Chair

APPROVED on _____, JG.

ATTEST:

Kathryn Flores
Board Administrator