



Summary Minutes

Rider Experience and Operations Committee Meeting April 6, 2023

Call to order

The meeting was called to order at 1:30 p.m. by Chair Walker and was available for viewing in person and online.

The meeting was recorded and can be found at <https://www.soundtransit.org/get-to-know-us/board-directors/livestream-video>.

Roll call of members

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

Board Members	
(P) David Baker, Kenmore Councilmember	(P) Kim Roscoe, Fife Mayor
(P) Christine Frizzell, Lynnwood Mayor	(P) Dave Upthegrove, King County Council Chair
(A) Debora Juarez, Seattle Council President	(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

Monthly Contract Report

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

CEO Report

CEO Julie Timm provided the CEO Report.

Pierce Transit ORCA LIFT Fares and new Pierce County region LIFT provider

On April 1, 2023, Pierce Transit joined the ORCA LIFT program, which meant all six ORCA transit agencies would provide a discounted fare for low-income riders. Since 2016, Sound Transit had provided financial support to King County and human service agencies to enroll low-income riders in the ORCA LIFT program, with a particular focus on riders in Pierce and Snohomish Counties.

Since mid-February 2023, Sound Transit had been supporting ORCA LIFT enrollment at Pierce Transit's Bus Shop by King County Public Health staff. This would continue two days a week through the end of April 2023. Sound Transit was also funding ORCA LIFT enrollment by Community Health Care at six locations in Pierce County, including Tacoma's Hilltop neighborhood. Enrollment locations included Kimi & George Tanbara, MD Healthcare Center, Lakewood Healthcare Center, Parkland Medical Center,

Spanaway Healthcare Center, Key Medical Center, and soon, the Puyallup Healthcare Center.

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:

Stephen Fesler

There were no comment submissions for in-person and virtual public comment.

Business Items

For Committee final action

March 2, 2023, Rider Experience and Operations Committee meeting minutes

It was moved by Boardmember Roscoe, seconded by Boardmember Frizzell and carried by unanimous consent that the minutes of the March 2, 2023 Rider Experience and Operations Committee meeting be approved as presented.

Motion No. M2023-28: Authorizing the chief executive officer to execute a contract with Harborland2c LLC to provide construction services for the Central Operations Maintenance Facility Light Rail Vehicle Pit Platform Gates in the amount of \$93,976 with a 25 percent contingency of \$23,494 for a total authorized contract amount not to exceed \$117,470, plus applicable taxes.

Gita Monghate, Operations Project Manager, provided the staff report.

Motion No. M2023-28 was moved by Boardmember Baker and seconded by Boardmember Roscoe.

Boardmember Frizzell commented on understanding the reasoning behind percentage difference in the independent cost estimate and the need to increase to the contract amount.

Chair Walker called for a roll call vote.

Ayes

David Baker
Christine Frizzell
Ed Prince
Kim Roscoe
Dave Upthegrove
Kristina Walker

Nays

It was carried by unanimous vote of six committee members present that Motion No. M2023-28 be approved as presented.

Motion No. M2023-29: Authorizing the chief executive officer to execute a two-year contract, with three one-year options to extend, with Applied Technical Systems, Inc. for program management consulting services for the Digital Passenger Information Management Systems program, for a total authorized contract amount not to exceed \$2,100,000.

David Ginsberg, Deputy Director of Program Management Office, provided the staff report.

Motion No. M2023-29 was moved by Committee Vice Chair Prince and seconded by Boardmember Roscoe.

Boardmember Roscoe shared she was looking forward to seeing this new technology.

Chair Walker called for a roll call vote.

Ayes

Nays

David Baker
Christine Frizzell
Ed Prince
Kim Roscoe
Dave Upthegrove
Kristina Walker

It was carried by unanimous vote of six committee members present that Motion No. M2023-29 be approved as presented.

Motion No. M2023-30: Authorizing the chief executive officer to execute a contract modification with Raul V. Bravo + Associates to provide additional bi-level car procurement consulting services for technical services in support of the purchase of bi-level cars for Sounder and other purchasing consortium partners in the amount of \$1,267,611 with a 10 percent contingency of \$126,761 totaling \$1,394,372, for a new total authorized contract amount not to exceed \$5,886,255.

Martin Young, Deputy Director of Commuter Rail Operations, provided the staff presentation.

Motion No. M2023-30 was moved by Committee Vice Chair Prince and seconded by Boardmember Roscoe.

Boardmember Roscoe was pleased to see Sound Transit pursuing monetary compensation for the delays related to theft.

Chair Walker called for a roll call vote.

Ayes

Nays

David Baker
Christine Frizzell
Kim Roscoe
Kristina Walker

It was carried by unanimous vote of four committee members present that Motion No. M2023-30 be approved as presented.

For Recommendation to the Board

Motion No. M2023-31: Authorizing the chief executive officer to execute a contract modification with Schindler Elevator Corporation for elevator and escalator maintenance and repairs for the entire portfolio of vertical conveyance assets in the amount of \$20,938,971 with a 10 percent contingency of \$2,093,897 totaling \$23,032,868, for a new total authorized contract amount not to exceed \$53,233,170 plus applicable taxes.

John Carini, Deputy Director of Vertical Conveyances, provided the staff report.

Motion No. M2023-31 was moved by Boardmember Baker and seconded by Boardmember Roscoe.

Boardmember Roscoe noted the high costs of maintenance for conveyances but that the Board understands the importance for passengers.

Boardmember Frizzell echoed Boardmember Roscoe and added the importance and responsibility of maintaining assets for riders despite the amount of funding it would take.

Chair Walker echoed Board members Roscoe and Frizzell. Chair Walker asked if the approval of this action would enable quicker response times to outages despite delays, including potential supply chain

issues with obtaining equipment. Mr. Carini replied this action would continue the current contract through its duration, through mid-2024. This would continue the current service levels but noted the agency had enhanced its service levels over the past year. Previously, the standard operating procedure for escalators and elevators was to leave them inoperable overnight and be addressed the next day. That has since enhanced to 24/7 service. Mr. Carini noted the current contracted service response times were one hour response time to an outage during business hours and two hours response time during afterhours and weekends.

Boardmember Baker shared his ongoing concerns for vertical conveyance and the importance of quick responses to outages.

Chair Walker called for a roll call vote.

Ayes

Nays

David Baker
Christine Frizzell
Ed Prince
Kim Roscoe
Dave Upthegrove
Kristina Walker

It was carried by unanimous vote of six committee members present that Motion No. M2023-31 be forwarded to the Board with a do-pass recommendation.

Motion No. M2023-32: Authorizing the chief executive officer to (1) execute an amendment to the Construction and Maintenance Agreement with the Washington State Department of Transportation for Stage 3 of its I-5 Steilacoom-DuPont Road to Thorne Lane Corridor Improvements Project; and (2) grant additional easements in exchange for compensation from the Washington State Department of Transportation in the amount \$150,100, for a total of \$1,145,200.

Mark Johnson, Project Director for Design, Engineering, and Construction Management, provided the staff presentation.

Motion No. M2023-32 was moved by Committee Vice Chair Prince and seconded by Boardmember Roscoe.

Chair Walker called for a roll call vote.

Ayes

Nays

David Baker
Christine Frizzell
Ed Prince
Kim Roscoe
Dave Upthegrove
Kristina Walker

It was carried by unanimous vote of six committee members present that Motion No. M2023-32 be forwarded to the Board with a do-pass recommendation.

Reports to the Committee

Vehicle storage shortage & Lynnwood service levels

Matt Shelden, Deputy Executive Director of Planning and Integration, and George McGinn, Executive Operations Director of Light Rail, provided the report on the assessment of the impacts of lengthening light rail run times and higher fleet spare ratios. The issue was the agency using more light rail vehicles than planned to maintain current service levels. Reasons included added running time, increased use of

gap trains, lower than expected Series 2 fleet reliability, and a higher spare ratio. Lynnwood Link Extension (LLE) was planned to open after East Link Extension (ELE), providing 4-minute combined peak service with the 1 Line and 2 Line each running every 8 minutes. Without ELE, and the Operations and Maintenance Facility East (OMFE), being open, the 1 Line LLE added 34 percent more track miles without adding any base capacity – and Operations and Maintenance Facility Central was already full. Opening LLE prior to ELE and OMFE would require temporarily reduced service levels to match fleet storage limitations.

Mr. Shelden explained how these issues were affecting current service from Northgate to Angle Lake. During the early planning stages for the Northgate Extension, staff calculated 74 light rail vehicles to provide 8-minute rush hour service with four car trains on a typical day. About 60 cars would be needed to provide the actual service, and four for gap trains, to help maintain the schedule and 10 cars for spares. With Northgate Extension full operating, staff learned, an average of 92 vehicles was required to provide that same level of service. More time was required to complete each trip, mostly in parts of the system where the Link runs in mixed traffic, such as in Rainier Valley and SODO, but also in tunnels where there were speed restrictions. Because of the additional schedule variability, the slower speed causes the need for an additional gap train to remain on schedule. It was also required to keep more vehicles out of service through the maintenance issue. Older fleet was needing some retrofits and upgrades and it was taking more time to commission the newer Siemens fleet than was anticipated.

The original plan for 74 vehicles was based on end-to-end running time of 50 minutes between Northgate and Angle Lake that was based on the models that we had available at that point

Boardmember Roscoe asked if the agency could better coordinate with the City of Seattle or sports franchises to address the mass crowds. She shared curiosity on whether a closer partnership was available to satisfy ridership needs not only with sports game attendees but commuters as well. Mr. Shelden clarified Boardmember Roscoe's question on whether transit partners were available to provide supplemental service, specifically on large event days. Mr. Shelden explained several difficulties that would come with supplemental services, including, overall operator shortages across the region and the timing with special events if they were occurring during regular peak operating hours which would mean additional fleet wouldn't be available to provide supplemental services. Sound Transit does work closely with special event organizers and sports teams when there were foreseeable opportunities to put additional service out during special events. An example would be weekend Sounder service, which required partnership with Burlington Northern Santa Fe. Mr. McGinn added that, during special events, staff would look to use existing fleet that were due for some maintenance activities but were safe to operate and produce game trains. Game trains would provide service at heavily populated locations to facilitate the maximum areas of crowding and alleviate station platform loading.

Boardmember Roscoe vocalized interested in exploring communications from these sports franchises and what information they were communicating with their ticket holders. She asked if there was opportunity to proof or review that information that was being shared about what Sound Transit capacities and abilities were during these events and reveal any potential gaps in what riders would read through that information communicated and what the agency was able to offer. Russ Arnold, Acting Deputy CEO Service Delivery Officer, replied that the agency would partner with local sports teams and committed to providing more information at a later time to explain more about how the agency works with local events to understand potential ridership and how that would be communicated with the public, so riders had an understanding of the impacts and potentially plan around those events or sports games. Suraj Shetty, Executive Director of Operations, included that vertical conveyance coverage was also addressed during special events.

Chair Walker asked about the financial impacts of next steps and whether the committee should expect an action or decision during summer 2023. Mr. Shelden replied that these current and upcoming presentations would provide the committee a better understanding of the implications of these pressures

on the system. Staff would provide options for the committee and Board on next step decisions which could further lead to policy adjustment considerations.

Chair Walker asked if lessons learned would be applied to newer legs of the system such as the West Seattle Ballard and Tacoma Dome link extensions. Mr. Sheldon confirmed that was correct and staff was looking into what the potential impacts were on the expansion program and ensure adjustments were made to the new extensions.

Chair Walker asked if this report would be presented to the System Expansion Committee. CEO Timm answered this exact presentation would not be presented, but staff would edit as necessary to bring information relevant to that committee.

Stride BRT Briefing – Contract Operator

Bernard van de Kamp, Program Executive for Bus Rapid Transit (BRT), provided the report. Mr. van de Kamp reminded the committee that the Stride Bus Rapid Transit Program would comprise of three services lines covering approximately 45 miles with 26 stations. It would provide service between Lynnwood, Bellevue, and Burien on the I-405 corridor, and between Bothell and Shoreline on the SR 522 corridor. Service would be supported by a new bus base named Bus Base North that would be located in Canyon Park, in Snohomish County. The Board selected projects to be built in September 2021 and the team had been advancing final design and numerous project components since then.

Mr. van de Kamp provided progress updates since he last briefed the committee in July 2022. Environmental cleanup of the future South Renton Transit Center site was complete. Agency partnership with the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) had increased with significant construction underway on I-405 in Renton. He shared a photo of the NE 44th interchange where a Stride station was being built. The station would connect directly to the new express toll lanes that were under construction between Renton and Bellevue. I-405 BRT North (S2) was also moving into construction. The NE 85th interchange and BRT station project was awarded to a design builder earlier this year and the contract to build new stations at Brickyard, SR 522, and Canyon Park would be awarded in the coming months. Final design for other components of S1 and S2 were progressing past the 60 percent milestone. With the decision to have an all-electric Stride fleet, staff was making necessary accommodations to the downtown Bellevue layover and was working closely with the City.

The team was pleased with the completion of the first Stride construction project in summer 2022, the Business Access Transit (BAT) lanes between Bothell and Kenmore. These improvements were in use and benefiting Sound Transit Express and King County Metro services. Staff reached out to the community to share the final design and solicit feedback and had been adjusting plans as a result. S3 designs were approaching the 90 percent level and staff continued to gather geotechnical information. This would support permitting efforts and keep on track to advertise for construction in early 2024. Staff actively engaged with the community as they acquire needed right of way. Final design and permitting was progressing for Bus Base North. The more advanced design provided the detailed needed to work with the City of Bothell and the Canyon Park Business Park Association to resolve several regulatory issues and make permitting more predictable.

Mr. van de Kamp shared a map that summarized the current state of the capital program in terms of design, construction, and completion. Update to date information regarding the schedule was tentative pending the analyses staff would be conducting to inform the planned July 2023 baseline action.

Last July 2022, Mr. van de Kamp reported that the delivery schedule had improved slightly from his January 2022 report. Recently, staff saw the potential for later delivery of S1 and S2, the I-405 service lines. These potential delays reflected constraints in the construction industry and a slower procurement timeframe. These were preliminary projections that would be better informed in July when a formal baseline action is put forth to the Board.

The Stride program was preparing for revenue service by establishing key goals that would drive procurements and service. BRT would be a new mode of high-capacity transit for Sound Transit. Staff was working to ensure the ability to monitor performance in real time and making needed adjustments. Staff worked to ensure the most efficient operations and to control costs in the immediate term, and also the longer term to adapt to needs as they evolved. The Stride Operations and start up model comprised of several components: facilities, operating systems, vehicles, and the operators and mechanics that would run the system.

The Stride BRT system was currently advancing numerous capital projects through final design and construction. These facilities included stations, transit centers, and “running way” improvements such as Business Access and Transit lanes on SR 522. Bus Base North would serve as the central hub of Stride operations. It would house administrative functions, dispatch and active system management, fueling/charging and washing facilities, parking for staff, and maintenance and repairs facilities and staff.

Bus Base North would house the operations center that would rely on the agency’s Bus Operating Technologies System (BOTS). BOTS, which was currently being procured, would enable management of the Stride system, which included dispatch and communications, schedule management, security surveillance, integration with the Sound Transit Passenger Information System, and other important features. BOTS was critical to the operation and management of the Stride system. Stride would use an all-electric fleet. Charging would take place primarily at Bus Base North, but coaches would be “topped off” during layovers at the end of each route. Sound Transit would acquire a new fleet for Stride service, staff expected to place an order late this year.

The key to the Stride operations model was the contracted service provider that would be responsible for system operations, operators, mechanics, and maintenance personnel. Sound Transit would invite partner agencies and private contractors to compete to provide these services. The agency would release a request for interest and information in the coming month and would release a request for proposals later this year. The team would phase in the successful provider by first involving them in the set-up of the Stride program and Bus Base North. This would be followed by the contracted service provider ramping up its efforts by hiring key personnel to prepare for revenue service. Operators, mechanics, and maintenance personnel would be hired closer to revenue service to allow for training. The contracted service provider would be required to support Sound Transit’s responsible contractor policy.

The program would reach an important milestone this summer 2023 when staff bring forward a baselining action to the Board. This would establish the formal scope, schedule, and budget that the program would adhere to through delivery. He noted that there were a number of key operations and start-up procurements this year: the BOTS system, fleet order, and advertising for a contracted service provider. These actions were required to prepare for the beginning of service in 2027 to 2028. Meanwhile, staff continued to advance the capital program aggressively. By the end of 2023, staff expect to have final design largely complete, which would allow for construction contracts to be advertised in early 2024. This would necessitate continued acquisition of right of way, fine-tuning agency requirements, securing permits, and reaching agreement with third parties on betterments. Staff would continue to work closely with agency partners, such as WSDOT, to deliver the program.

Boardmember Baker asked when staff anticipate construction for NE 85th and Kirkland would start. Mr. van de Kamp replied that the design build construction contract was awarded a few months ago and construction would begin in the coming months. Boardmember Baker asked if work was progressing in Renton. Mr. van de Kamp confirmed. Boardmember Baker asked if the permitting process was on schedule. Mr. van de Kamp answered that the agency was attempting to progress with the City of Bothell. To stay on schedule with construction, there would be a requirement of a conditional use permit.

Committee Vice Chair Prince shared positive acknowledgement of the NE 44th project completion for 2025.

Link State of Good Repair & Maintenance

Suraj Shetty, Executive Director of Operations, provided the presentation. Mr. Shetty reviewed a list of work the agency was planning for the months ahead. Some work may begin as early as late Q2 2023, while others would likely begin in 2024. Operating plans and service mitigations were still in development as staff continued to evaluate ways to consolidate service impacts and develop impact mitigations for riders. Bond box replacement at the International District Station (IDS) to Westlake was expansion work that would impact service.

Electromagnetic cable hanger improvements were planned for Q2 2023. This project would improve design of hangers on the Floating Slabs in the tunnels to complete the permanent repairs in place of the safe and temporary current solution. This would impact service with single tracking through the area for two separate weekends.

Damaged rail repairs work was planned for Q2 2023. This would repair a small section of damaged rail in the Downtown Seattle Transit Tunnel (DSTT) southbound track north of IDS. There was currently a 10 mph speed restriction and this would remove and replace the concrete and damaged rail section to restore service reliability. Operational plans were in development to review expected service impacts.

Royal Brougham grade crossing repairs was planned for Q3 2023. This would repair compromised track grade and prevent standing water over the tracks during rainy periods. There was a current 10 mph speed restriction. During rainfall, water pools on the tracks requiring trains to slow to 5 mps and heavy rain could disrupt service. Restored tracks to allow designated speeds and provide faster and more reliable service in wet weather conditions were a few passenger benefits. The design was being finalized to install subsurface drains at the crossing to collect and remove rainwater. The track and road crossing surface would be restored. Duration to complete repairs and full extend of passenger impact was still being examined but work would require a temporary full shutdown of both tracks.

Othello and Rainier Beach platform repairs were planned for Q3 2023. This was similar work to what was completed at Columbia City station in 2022. New tiles would last longer and be easier to maintain. This work was necessary because failing tiles and underlying concrete were a trip/fall hazard and were not ADA-compliant. The work would remove 12" of existing porcelain tiles and install new larger concrete polymer tiles. Contractors were currently being procured. Both stations would be completed at the same time. Construction of each side was expected to require about 2 weeks and would require about 4 weeks of single tracking in total through this section of the 1 Line.

Multiple State of Good Repair and Service Expansion related work was targeted for Q1 2024. Full details were in development, but the expected significant service and passenger impacts included potential for multi-week single tracking events and potential for multi-day shutdowns of portions of the 1 Line.

Next steps included continuing to refine project level plans and minimize impacts of service disruptions for passengers, continuing to look for efficiencies and opportunities to consolidate the work impacts across the system, beginning communications to prepare passengers for the Q2/Q3 projects, and staff would return in May with an update on further refined project details and if there were any further developments.

Chair Walker asked if outreach had begun. Mr. Shetty replied that outreach was occurring based on each individual project.

Executive session – None.

Other business – None.

Next meeting

Thursday, May 4, 2023
1:30 to 3:30 p.m.
Ruth Fisher Boardroom and Virtually via WebEx

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 3:07 p.m.

ATTEST:

Kristina Walker
Rider Experience and Operations Committee Chair

Kathryn Flores
Board Administrator

APPROVED on _____, JG.