



## Summary Minutes

### Rider Experience and Operations Committee Meeting July 3, 2025

#### Call to order

The meeting was called to order at 1:07 p.m. by Committee 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/meeting-videos>.

#### Roll call of members

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

Board Members	
(P) Angela Birney, Redmond Mayor	(A) De'Sean Quinn, King County Councilmember
(P) Christine Frizzell, Lynnwood Mayor	(A) Peter von Reichbauer, King County Councilmember
(P) Hunter George, Fircrest Councilmember	(P) Girmay Zahilay, King County Council Chair

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

#### Report of the Chair

Chair Walker discussed her takeaways from joining the Community Oversight Panel at its June 11th meeting. She also thanked the Panel and its members for their service and diligence in overseeing the agency's work.

#### CEO Report

CEO Dow Constantine provided the report.

##### Activation Updates

CEO Constantine provided updates on the East Link and Federal Way Link Extensions. He noted that track inspections and adjustments are ongoing over the I-90 floating bridge, with the agency being near ready to proceed into the next step of system integration testing. He also highlighted that an operational exercise was successfully completed on the morning of June 13th, to test the ability of the system to support 4-minute headways. On the Federal Way Link Extension, CEO Constantine noted that live wire and signal testing is still underway.

##### Club World Cup Ridership

CEO Constantine provided a brief overview of preliminary ridership statistics from the Club World Cup games, noting that the 1 Line saw an average increase in ridership of about 12 percent during the games.

### Safety Task Force Update

CEO Constantine provided an overview of the newly formed Regional Transit Safety Task Force, highlighting the work done thus far and other commitments the agency is making into this effort. He noted that a Transit Safety Solutions Summit will be held on July 9<sup>th</sup>.

### Parking Fee and Permits Update

CEO Constantine gave information on steps being taken to address increased parking demand at Link stations. He outlined the tools that the Board authorized to mitigate the problem, and described both current and next steps that will be taken on parking throughout the rest of 2025.

## **Public comment**

Committee Chair Walker announced that public comment would be accepted via email to [emailtheboard@soundtransit.org](mailto:emailtheboard@soundtransit.org), in person, and would also be accepted virtually.

There were no written, in-person, or virtual comments received.

## **Business Items**

### **For Committee final action**

June 5, 2025, Rider Experience and Operations Committee meeting minutes

**It was moved by Board member Birney, seconded by Board member George, and carried by the unanimous vote of all committee members present that the minutes of the June 5, 2025, Rider Experience and Operations Committee meeting be approved as presented.**

### **For Recommendation to the Board**

Resolution No. R2025-15: (1) Authorizing the chief executive officer to negotiate an agreement with Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) to purchase the Mountlake Terrace Garage through a land transfer agreement, and (2) establishing a budget for the Mountlake Terrace Garage Rehabilitation Program by a) establishing an authorized program allocation of \$17,394,447 and b) establishing the program's 2025 annual budget of \$9,763,675.

Michelle Walker, Facilities and System Maintenance Deputy Executive Director, and Bernadette McDermott, Center of Excellence Executive Director, provided a presentation on the action.

Board member Frizzell asked for clarification on the current state of good repair of the Mountlake Terrace Garage. Ms. Walker responded that the engineered assessment of the garage does show some deferred maintenance, but that there is various other work that is included in the rehabilitation program scope that is related to standard usage of the property over the last 16 years.

Board member George asked for information on the landbank agreement referenced during the presentation. Ms. McDermott noted that she would follow up with Board member George with an answer after the meeting. Board member George asked that additional information on the landbank agreement be provided when the action goes to the full Board of Directors.

Chair Walker asked whether this action is included in the agency's broader goal of implementing a paid parking program. Alex Krieg, Enterprise Planning Director, responded that WSDOT does not allow partner operators of its facilities to implement paid parking systems, and that taking full ownership of the property would be required for the agency to implement its paid parking program to the garage.

**It was moved by Board member Birney, seconded by Board member George.**

Board member George asked for clarification on the budget process and allocation for the action. Ryan Fisher, Finance Executive Director, responded that agency policy requires a fully funded state of good repair program, and that this funding mechanism has built in assumptions for covering current, future, and otherwise acquired facilities which adequately cover the cost of the garage rehabilitation program.

Chair Walker noted that there have been multiple questions in the past about the agency's paid parking program and requested that the Committee receive a full briefing on the topic at some point in the future. CEO Constantine responded in the affirmative, noting that the purpose of the paid parking program is to both guarantee spots for transit riders at Sound Transit facilities, but also to raise revenues to assist in the maintenance and state of good repair of said facilities.

**It was carried by the unanimous vote of all committee members present that Resolution No. R2025-15 be forwarded to the Board with a do-pass recommendation.**

Motion No. M2025-35: Authorizing the chief executive officer to execute a Law Enforcement Services Agreement with the City of Lynnwood for a one-year term in an amount not to exceed \$355,409.

Brian de Place, acting Security and Fare Engagement Executive Director, provided a presentation on the action.

Board member Birney asked for clarification on the expected timeline for the system-wide effort to address law enforcement services across the Sound Transit district. Mr. de Place responded that staff is in an ongoing effort with external consultants to determine the best path forward for a tri-county law enforcement strategy and committed to sharing additional information with the committee once the consultant's findings have been finalized. He noted that a broad estimate for the full effort may be between one to three years.

Board member Frizzell thanked staff for their work in collaborating with the City of Lynnwood on this action.

**It was moved by Board member Frizzell, seconded by Board member Birney, and carried by the unanimous vote of all committee members present that Motion No. M2025-35 be forwarded to the Board with a do-pass recommendation.**

## **Reports to the Committee**

### Q1 2025 Fare Engagement Update

Brian de Place, acting Security and Fare Engagement Executive Director, provided the report.

Mr. de Place described the current staffing of the program and gave an overview of daily Fare Ambassador activities. He noted that there are currently 35 Fare Ambassadors, led by a management team. Roughly 44 percent of work activities are actively inspecting fares, with a further 33 percent being passenger service. Mr. de Place noted the rest of work activities include training, safety monitoring, and other duties.

Mr. de Place provided an update on fare compliance from the Fare Engagement team, noting that over the past six months, Fare Ambassadors have reported a fare compliance rate of approximately 90 percent among the 2.8 percent of riders inspected. He noted that of those without fare, about one third provided valid identification during the violation documentation process. He then provided additional fare compliance data by mode, noting that Link has a lower fare compliance rate when compared to Sounder.

Mr. de Place highlighted that Fare Ambassadors have responded to approximately 40 planned and unplanned service disruptions from January to June 2025, which accounts for nearly 33 percent of time assisting riders.

Board member Zahilay noted that some have raised the idea of installing turnstiles as part of the agency's fare compliance strategy and asked for context in how Sound Transit's reported fare compliance compares with other agencies that use a closed access model. Mr. de Place responded that closed access models typically see compliance rates in the mid-90 percent rate. Board member Zahilay asked how fare compliance rates have trended over the years. Mr. de Place responded that he would follow up with the committee on that question. Board member Zahilay asked what the agency's current fare compliance target is. Mr. de Place responded that when the Fare Ambassador program was established, its goals were tied to an inspection rate, rather than fare compliance.

Chair Walker asked for information on Fare Ambassador turnover and retention. Mr. de Place responded that there are six vacancies, with a plan to post new positions publicly in the near future. Service Delivery DCEO Marie Olson added that the Fare Ambassador team had a hiring freeze due to agency reorganization and a desire to address previous increases in worker assaults before onboarding new staff.

### 2024 Passenger Experience Survey Results

Service Delivery DCEO Marie Olson introduced Marcus Clark, Passenger Services Director, and Rebeca de Buen Kalman, Data and Research Project Manager, to provide the report.

Ms. de Buen Kalman provided an overview of the Passenger Experience Survey and highlighted key results. She noted that the agency has seen a stable overall grade, with an increase to riders' likelihood to recommend Sound Transit services to a friend or family member from 7.8 in Fall 2023 to 8.2 in Fall 2024.

Ms. de Buen Kalman shared that responses rated Sound Transit above average in the areas of dependability, availability, and day-to-day passenger information, while rating perceptions of personal safety, maintenance and cleanliness of facilities, and unplanned disruption information as below average.

Mr. Clark shared information on how staff is addressing personal safety and security concerns, highlighting additional staffing from the King County Sheriff's Department new internal security staff efforts and the launch of a mental health outreach program to better address concerns seen along the alignment.

Mr. Clark also discussed improvements to facilities maintenance, including Elevator and escalator upgrades, a new cleaning program for stations and stops, preventative maintenance, and improvements to the state of good repair program. He also highlighted a fleet overhaul program to replace all cloth seats on Link light rail vehicles with vinyl to improve ease of cleaning.

Mr. Clark provided insights into new information sharing practices, such as an increase in collaboration between Passenger Information Coordinators and operations staff, cross-functional work with frontline staff, enhancements to the Passenger Information Management System, and additional training for communication specialists.

Chair Walker noted that many of the safety and security improvements were centered on King County and asked if that is due to a higher rate of incidents within that area. Ms. de Buen Kalman responded that she would follow up with the committee after further analysis. Chair Walker asked whether survey responses can be correlated with where respondents were experiencing problems. Ms. de Buen Kalman noted that some information can be gleaned from survey responses, but that additional work would need to be done to create that level of clarity.

### Passenger Impact Program

Kevin Mizuta, Link Right-of-Way Access Deputy Director, provided the report.

Mr. Mizuta gave an overview of work completed in June, which included Federal Way Link Extension testing, East Link tie-in work, WSDOT annual bridge inspections, and an emergency rail repair at Westlake station.

Mr. Mizuta noted that annual rail replacement work is ongoing. He noted that on select weekdays in July, trains will be single tracking between 11 p.m. and the end of service, resulting in 20-minute headways systemwide.

### REO Metrics

Benjamin Marx, acting Service Operations Executive Director, provided the report, giving a breakdown of how Sound Transit's different service modes compare with other national peer agencies across a variety of metrics.

Mr. Marx noted that Sound Transit ST Express Bus service has the longest trip length of all compared agencies, with an average service efficiency, cost effectiveness, and farebox recovery. For Sounder Commuter Rail, Mr. Marx noted that Sounder has the highest service efficiency over peer agencies, while maintaining an average level of cost effectiveness. He noted that T Line now has the highest trip length compared to other streetcar systems due to the opening of the Hilltop Tacoma Link Extension.

Chair Walker asked that future reports on peer comparisons include a clear objective to help better contextualize the data trends to see if the agency is moving in the right direction on different statistics.

### **Executive session – None**

### **Other business – None**

### **Next meeting**

Thursday, August 7, 2025

1:00 to 3:00 p.m.

Ruth Fisher Boardroom and Virtually via Zoom.

### **Adjourn**

The meeting adjourned at 2:28 p.m.

ATTEST:

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Kristina Walker  
Rider Experience and Operations Committee Chair

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Kathryn Flores  
Board Administrator

APPROVED on \_\_\_\_\_, HRR.