



Summary Minutes

Board Meeting
October 23, 2025

Call to order

The meeting was called to order at 1:33 p.m. by Chair Dave Somers 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 Chairs
(P) Dave Somers, Snohomish County Executive	(A) Claudia Balducci, King County Councilmember (P) Ryan Mello, Pierce County Executive

Board members	
(P) Nancy Backus, City of Auburn Mayor	(P) Ed Prince, City of Renton Councilmember
(P) Angela Birney, City of Redmond Mayor	(P) De'Sean Quinn, King County Councilmember
(P) Shannon Braddock, King County Executive	(P) Kim Roscoe, City of Fife Mayor
(A) Cassie Franklin, City of Everett Mayor	(P) Dan Strauss, City of Seattle Councilmember
(P) Christine Frizzell, City of Lynnwood Mayor	(P) Peter von Reichbauer, King County Councilmember
(A) Hunter George, City of Fircrest Councilmember	(P) Kristina Walker, City of Tacoma Councilmember
(P) Bruce Harrell, City of Seattle Mayor	(P) Girmay Zahilay, King County Council Chair
(P) Julie Meredith, Secretary of Transportation	

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

Report of the Chair

Items requiring a supermajority – Chair Somers noted that agenda item 7A requires an affirmative supermajority vote of the Board to adopt.

Upcoming Board Retreat – Chair Somers announced that the Board will have a retreat to continue its efforts related to the Enterprise Initiative. The Retreat is scheduled for November 13, 2025 from 2:00 to 5:00 pm at the King County Chinook Building, Rooms 121 and 123. The location will continue the rotation around the district for these retreats. He also thanked the System Expansion Committee for adjusting its meeting to accommodate.

Monthly Contract Report - The meeting packet included the monthly CEO contract report for September 2025.

TOD Policy Proposals – A number of Board members have met with partners in the labor community and engaged in discussions on potential updates to Sound Transit's Transit Oriented Development policy. Chair Somers has asked staff to review any drafted language and referred it to the Executive committee for further discussion. He hoped to have discussions no later than the Executive Committee meeting in December.

CEO Report

CEO Constantine provided the report.

Extended 2 Line outage – On October 18, 2025, the 2 Line experienced an extended outage between South Bellevue and Downtown Bellevue stations after a train's connection to the overhead power system was damaged near East Main station. Crews were quickly on-site troubleshooting while a bus bridge and single-tracking operations kept passengers moving. Regular operations resumed at the start of service the next morning.

Activation Update – Sound Transit is preparing to start simulated service, a major milestone in the lead-up to the December 6, 2025 opening of the Federal Way Link Extension. Nightly system integration testing continues along the East Link Extension.

ENR Infrastructure Forum – This past Monday, CEO Constantine delivered the closing keynote address at the Engineering New Record conference in downtown Seattle. This was the first time this gathering had been held outside of New York or Los Angeles. More than 400 attendees heard from Sound Transit, Washing State Ferries, Cascadia High Speed Rail, and other agencies. He thanked Board members Balducci and Meredith for also attending. He also thanked Terri Mestas and her team for helping to host the event.

Public Comment

Chair Somers announced that the Board was accepting public comment via email and verbally through the virtual meeting platform.

The following people provided written public comment to the Board:

James Pura
Matthew Muller
Scott Spear
Joe Kunzler
Brien Chow
Betty Lau
Paul Sweum

The following people provided in-person verbal public comment to the Board:

Betty Lau
Brien Chow
Ra-tah
Harper Nalley
Colleen Horn
Zella Urguhart

The following people provided virtual verbal public comment to the Board:

Wes Mills
Patrick W

Consent Agenda

Voucher Certification: September 2025

Minutes of the September 25, 2025, Board of Directors Meeting

Motion No. M2025-49: Authorizing the chief executive officer to execute an Amendment to extend the existing Commuter Rail Rolling Stock Maintenance Agreement with the National Railroad Passenger Corporation for the continued maintenance of Sounder locomotives and cars, including the cost of fuel, in an amount not to exceed \$29,253,120, including 5% contingency, for a new total authorized agreement amount not to exceed \$416,182,700.

The consent agenda was moved by Vice Chair Mello and seconded by Board member Briney.

It was carried by the unanimous vote of the 15 Board members present that the Consent Agenda be approved as presented.

Business items

Resolution No. R2025-29: Establishing the amount of property taxes to be levied for the year 2026 based on the assessed value of property within the Sound Transit district.

Ryan Fisher, Finance Executive Director, and Stephanie Ball, Director of Financial Planning, Analysis, and Budget, provided the staff presentation.

Resolution No. R2025-28 was moved by Board member Backus and seconded by Board member Briney.

Board member Backus reported that she presided over a public hearing pertaining to the 2026 Budget and Property Tax Levy on October 9 and no public comments were received.

Chair Somers reminded the Board that this item will need a two-thirds supermajority vote for final adoption.

Chair Somers called for a roll call vote on Resolution No. R2025-28.

<u>Ayes</u>	<u>Nays</u>
Nancy Backus	Ed Prince
Angela Birney	De'Sean Quinn
Shannon Braddock	Kim Roscoe
Christine Frizzell	Dan Strauss
Bruce Harrell	Peter von Reichbauer
Ryan Mello	Kristina Walker
Julie Meredith	Girmay Zahiray
	Dave Somers

It was carried by the unanimous vote of the 15 Board members present that Resolution No. R2025-28 be approved as presented.

Motion No. M2025-50: Authorizing the chief executive officer to execute a contract with Shimmick Construction Company, Inc. for construction services for the Stride Renton Transit Center, a component of the I-405 Stride Bus Rapid Transit project, in the amount of \$48,194,800 with a 15 percent contingency of \$7,229,220 for a total authorized contract amount not to exceed \$55,424,020, plus applicable taxes.

Manan Garg, Executive Director in the Capital Delivery Department, Rick Capka, Stride BRT Executive Project Director, and Paul Cornish, BRT Strategic Projects Director, provided the staff presentation.

Board member Roscoe asked for an update on the program's progress in Lake Forest Park. Mr. Capka responded that the construction contract for work in Lake Forest Park is in the pre-procurement phase and will be the third of three construction contracts along the SR522/NE145th St. corridor. He elaborated that the procurement is planned to take place over the next few months and will be structured as a GC/CM contract.

Board member Meredith thanked staff for the collaboration with Washington State Department of Transportation on the agreements.

It was moved by Board member Briney, seconded by Vice Chair Mello, and carried by the unanimous vote of the 14 Board members present that Motion No. M2025-50 be approved as presented.

Motion No. M2025-51: Authorizing the chief executive officer to execute a construction agreement with the Washington State Department of Transportation for the design build delivery of the Tukwila International Boulevard Bus Rapid Transit project as part of the I-405 Bus Rapid Transit project in the amount of \$168,740,000 with a six percent contingency of \$10,124,400 for a total authorized agreement amount not to exceed \$178,864,400.

Chair Somers noted information on this action was included in the previous presentation.

It was moved by Board member Birney, seconded by Vice Chair Mello, and carried by the unanimous vote of the 14 Board members present that Motion No. M2025-51 be approved as presented.

Motion No. M2025-52: Authorizing the chief executive officer to execute a master agreement with the Washington State Department of Transportation for the construction of Stride Bus Rapid Transit Improvements by Sound Transit on State Highway Right of Way and authorizes issuance of task orders under the master agreement for specific projects.

Chair Somers noted information on this action was included in the previous presentation.

It was moved by Board member Birney, seconded by Vice Chair Mello, and carried by the unanimous vote of the 14 Board members present that Motion No. M2025-52 be approved as presented.

CEO Constantine thanked both Secretary Meredith and Assistant Secretary Ron Pate for their partnership.

Reports to the Board

Presentation on the 2026 Annual Budget and 2026 Transit Improvement Plan

Ryan Fisher, Finance Executive Director, noted that the Finance and Audit Committee was briefed on the Budget and TIP earlier this month and presented the remaining steps on the Budget Adoption timeline. Mr. Fisher explained that while the Budget is a single year's appropriations, the TIP is the consolidation of the authorized allocations for all active projects, based on the Board's approved actions and direction. The budget and TIP are adopted by the Board and then incorporated into the Long-Range Financial Plan (LRFP). The LRFP is then updated and presented to the Board as a forecast of spending through 2046. Mr. Fisher confirmed that the proposed Budget and TIP is affordable within the LRFP.

Mr. Fisher highlighted that in the Proposed 2026 Budget overall revenues are slightly up (about three percent) over the 2025 forecast, revenue service hours are projected to substantially increase due to new openings, the majority of construction spending will shift to the Stride program while Link spending will shift to ST3 projects in planning, and additional dollars have been included in response to improving service and reliability ahead of the World Cup.

Mr. Fisher provided a summary overview of the \$3.3 billion 2026 Budget revenues and noted that there is an overall decline compared to 2025, due to completing expected TIFIA drawdowns in 2025. Without considering the TIFIA loans, revenues increase over the 2025 forecast by four percent. He also highlighted examples of the main revenue sources: Tax revenues, fares, grants, and TIFIA/RRIF. Mr. Fisher showed a graphic showing the trends for the different sources from 2023 to 2026.

Mr. Fisher provided a summary overview of the budgeted \$3.5 billion in expenditures and noted that there is a 33 percent increase over the 2025 forecast. The difference between the revenues and expenditures is expected to be bridged by \$161 million of the agency's 7.2 billion cash balance projected at the year-end 2025. He highlighted examples of the main expenditure categories: Expansion, Modal Operations and Maintenance, Service Delivery, Debt Service, Other, and contingency.

Before handing-off the presentation, Mr. Fisher highlighted \$194 million in additional System and Service Investments. Covered more in-depth later in the presentation, about \$65 million is included the operating budgets and \$129 million is included in the capital budgets for long-term system improvement.

Jenny Stephens, Director of Financial Planning, Analysis, and Budget, noted that the vast majority of the \$891 million operating budget will fund baseline operations, which includes continuing service and planned expansion openings. She provided examples of expected spending in other categories that includes plans for 4-minute headways, increased security, and planning/improvements for the World Cup. Since 2023, there has been an increase of 146 percent in Link revenue hours, largely driven by openings. ST Express saw a three percent increase over the same period, while Sounder and T Line saw a 15% and 97% increase, respectively.

Ms. Stephens summarized how each Mode's Expenses are broken into the four major cost categories used in the National Transit Database (Vehicle Operations, General & Administration, Facility Maintenance, and Vehicle Maintenance).

Stephanie Ball noted that she would speak to project budget and started the changes in the Budget policy that restructured Service Delivery projects into asset-based portfolio and programs. The proposed 2026 budget includes seven Service Delivery project portfolios: IT, Facilities, Infrastructure, Rolling Stock, Tacoma Link, Transit Systems, System-wide Asset Support. Service Delivery projects account for \$282 million, or eight percent of 2026 uses. Ms. Ball highlighted the Enterprise Resource Planning & Enterprise Asset Management System Redesign project, the Downtown Seattle Transit Tunnel modernization project, the traction power program, and light rail vehicles system upgrades project as examples of Service Delivery projects.

System Expansion projects are budgeted to spend \$1.9 billion in 2026 and make up 55% of total agency uses. Link-related expenditures represent 47% of the system expansion project spending and the bulk of spending is for projects currently in planning and design. Ms. Ball highlighted that for Link projects in planning, the funds have already been approved by the Board and this presentation only highlights what is expected to be spent in 2026. The Stride program will see construction continue across all three projects, and Sounder will continue Parking and Access Improvement projects in Sumner, Kent, and Auburn. The 2026 TIP is a \$318 million increase over the 2025 TIP.

Mr. Fisher concluded the presentation with a few summarizing thoughts and the expected budget adoption timeline through November.

Vice Chair Mello wanted to confirm that the improvements to facilitate 4-minute headways were not just a World Cup measure. Ms. Stephens confirmed that the 4-minutes headways are planned with the tie-in of the 1 and 2 Lines and is not related to the World Cup improvements.

Board member Roscoe asked for a description of what is included in Tacoma Link's anticipated expenditures. Ms. Ball responded that there is funding for claim resolution, legal support, and spare overhead catenary system poles.

Presentation on the Long-Range Financial Plan

Hughey Newsome, Chief Financial Officer, began by re-iterating the interplay between the Budget, TIP, and LRFP. This report will cover the update on the LRFP. He asked Alex Krieg, Director of Enterprise

Planning, to speak to the affordability challenges that the Enterprise Initiative will address. Mr. Krieg noted that much of the information related to the affordability challenges remains the same from August. He highlighted that the Board will not see ranges in this discussion as the LRFP deals with specific numbers, and that the updated LRFP already includes updated macro-economic forecasts, financial enhancements, and the proposed 2026 Budget and TIP.

Mr. Newsome explained that \$34.5 billion in cost-savings and new funding is required to fully fund the ST3 program. Through the end of the program, \$149 billion in total year of expenditure spending is projected to be affordable, which includes \$51 billion in ST3 pre-baselined expansion investments. The state of good repair program would remain fully funded. He added that revenue and financing improvements have reduced the gap by \$4 billion since August.

Consistent with the August report to the Board, there is a \$28 billion cost increase in the Capital program. \$500 million is attributed to projected inflations due to a higher Construction Cost Index, while the remainder is due to the updated projected costs to fully build-out the ST3 plan.

Consistent with the August report to the Board, there is a \$5 billion cost increase in Service Delivery. \$1 billion is attributed to general operating expenses, while \$2 billion each is attributed to costs necessary to bolster system resiliency and projected increases in Series 3 Light Rail Vehicles.

Mr. Newsome reminded the Board of the Debt Capacity and Coverage constraints. Debt capacity each year is constrained by 1.5% of the assessed value of real property in the Sound Transit taxing district, and the next debt service coverage ratio requires that annual net revenues cover not less than 1.5x annual debt service costs. He also listed potential strategies to increase financial capacity, such as the already incorporated Financing Enhancements.

When looking at the timeline of expenditures, Mr. Newsome shared that the agency will be able to affordable annual spending through 2033. From 2034-2043, there is an expected funding shortfall of \$34.5 billion.

Mr. Kireg noted that the affordability gap is the main problem to tackle through the Enterprise Initiative, and the Board's Committee will continue to hear information and eventually consider ideas to address those pressures in their purview.

Board member Roscoe asked if State of Good Repair remains affordable under the current assumptions. Mr. Newsome responded that the State of Good Repair program must remain funded and the assumptions include the planned build-out of ST3, even if the funding to do so is included in the affordability gap.

Executive Session to discuss litigation to which the Agency is, or is likely to become, a party as authorized under RCW 42.30.110(1)(i)

Chair Somers advised that the Board was going into executive session. He introduced Desmond Brown, Sound Transit General Counsel, who explained that the Board was allowed to enter executive session under RCW 42.30.110(1)(i) to discuss litigation to which the Agency is, or is likely to become, a party.

Chair Somers explained that the Board would be in executive session for 30 minutes. The executive session began at 3:04 p.m. and was scheduled to end at 3:34 p.m.

The executive session was further extended by 11 minutes, with the Board scheduled to return at 3:45 p.m.

The executive session was further extended by 10 minutes, with the Board scheduled to return at 3:55 p.m.

The executive session ended at 3:55 p.m. At 3:56 p.m., Chair Somers called the meeting back to order.

Other business – None

Next meeting

The Board will hold a retreat on November 13, 2025, from 2:00 to 5:00 p.m. in the King County Chinook Building at 401 5th Avenue in Seattle, Washington.

The next Board meeting would be held on November 20, 2025, from 1:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. in the Ruth Fisher Board Room and as a virtual meeting via Zoom.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 3:57 p.m.

ATTEST:

Dave Somers
Board Chair

Kathryn Flores
Board Administrator

APPROVED on _____, AJM.