



Summary Minutes

System Expansion Committee Meeting December 11, 2025

Call to order

The meeting was called to order at 1:35 p.m. by Committee Chair Balducci 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) Claudia Balducci, King County Councilmember	(P) Kim Roscoe, Fife Mayor

Board Members	
(A) Nancy Backus, Auburn Mayor	(A) Bruce Harrell, Seattle Mayor
(P) Angela Birney, Redmond Mayor	(P) Ryan Mello, Pierce County Executive
(P) Cassie Franklin, Everett Mayor	(A) Dave Somers, Snohomish County Executive
	(A) Dan Strauss, Seattle Councilmember

Alejandro Monzon, Board Relations Specialist, announced that a quorum of the System Expansion Committee was not present at roll call, but a quorum is expected.

Report of the Chair

Federal Way Link Extension Opening

Chair Balducci congratulated the agency and its partners for the work done to complete and open the Federal Way Link Extension.

MATOC Task Order Report

Chair Balducci noted that the inaugural MATOC Task Order Report was included in today's materials. She added that while there is only one task order in the report, staff expect greater utilization of the MATOCs as internal processes become more routine.

CEO Report

Chief Executive Officer Dow Constantine provided the report.

Federal Way Opening – CEO Constantine thanked all who attended the opening and ribbon-cutting for the Federal Way Link Extension last Saturday. Thousands of people joined the celebrations across the three new stations, and 94 community groups participated in the festivities. He thanked local jurisdictions, the Washington State Department of Transportation, congressional representatives, and FTA partners for their decade of efforts to deliver the promised project.

Activation Update – CEO Constantine reported that the agency is finishing systems integration testing along the I-90 floating bridge segment of the East Link Extension project, which will allow for shifting to

prepare for operations. Over the past few weeks, out-of-service 2 Line trains have been running between International District/Chinatown and Lynnwood City Center stations to conduct four-minute headway exercises to prepare for interlined train operations.

World Cup update – FIFA recently assigned matches and teams for the World Cup next summer. Seattle will host the US Men's national team against Australia on Juneteenth and will also welcome Egypt, Belgium, Iran, Qatar, and another European team. As preparations continue, the agency will keep the Board informed of plans, including coordination with regional partners, to ensure successful transit and mobility for this global gathering.

Public comment

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

Written public comments:

Jackie Oliver
Marvin Cao
Mark Olsoe
Betty Lau

In-person Verbal Public Comments:

Betty Lau
Brien Chow
MaryKate Ryan
Joshua Cheatham

Virtual Verbal Public Comments:

Lusha

Chair Balducci asked if the agency has a response to public comments requesting an extended public comment period for the Ballard Link Extension Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). CEO Constantine responded that the agency has heard the comments and communicated these requests to the Federal Transit Administration, who has informed Sound Transit that the comment period will most likely be set at 60 days once the DEIS is published Q1 2026. This is an extension beyond the standard 45-day period typically required. Prior to and during the comment period, Sound Transit will work to make the DEIS widely accessible, including hosting in-person and virtual engagement opportunities.

System Expansion Monthly Status Report update

Capital Delivery Deputy CEO Terri Mestas began the report by noting that the information covered is from October 2025. The presentation will cover Program-level updates, as well as updates on Projects in Planning & Design and Projects in Construction.

Ms. Mestas reported that the capital delivery department has continued its effort to issue prompt payment, with an average of 31 days to pay applicable invoices. As this exceed the 30-day target, the key performance indicator (KPI) has been shifted to meeting the target with an unfavorable trend. There was one OSHA recordable injury incident in October on the Kent Sounder Station Parking and Access Improvement project.

Moving to Projects in Planning and Design, Ms. Mestas noted that the Draft Environmental Impact Statements for the Ballard Link Extension and Everett Link Extension are expected to be published early next year. The Operations and Maintenance Facility South project is advancing through procurement

and staff will bring an action early next year to consider the first progressive design-build delivery contract for the agency. She also highlighted progress on the Sound Transit-managed elements of the BRT program, which sets up the program to begin procurement on the remaining design and construction contracts.

Shifting to Projects in Construction, Ms. Mestas noted that beginning next month the Federal Way Link Extension will cycle out of the Revenue Service date timeline, with focus being on East Link Crosslake Connection and the Pinehurst Infill station. She asked Michael Morgan, a Capital Delivery Executive Director, to speak about the changes for the East Link Extension.

Mr. Morgan explained the live wire testing is the last remaining test that needs attention and that signal testing has been completed. The project is completing paperwork for the Asset Transition Office to officially begin the hand-off to operations. Due diligence is being conducted alongside WSDOT to ensure all the documentation of the systems that support the I-90 bridge is in place.

Confirming that a quorum of the Committee is not yet present, Chair Balducci asked that the first Report to the Committee be given before moving into the Business Items.

Reports to the Committee

Enterprise Initiative Process Overview

Alex Krieg, Enterprise Planning Deputy Executive Director, began the presentation noting that this is an informational briefing requested by the Chair to review the anticipated timelines and processes for the Enterprise Initiative and the Committee's touchpoints. He noted that the presentation will largely draw on information from the Board retreat last month.

Mr. Krieg began by grounding the Enterprise Initiative in the direction given by the Board in Motion No. M2025-36, approved in August. He recapped both the expected outcomes and the guiding principles as laid out by the Board, and listed some of the criteria that staff intend to use to form the basis for discussions on trade-offs and performance. He also highlighted board-established process elements that include efforts to engage the communities through inclusive collaboration, build trust through transparent governance, and drive decisions with data and insight. Mr. Krieg reviewed the general workstreams that will come together to form the Enterprise Initiative.

The Board as a whole will oversee the entire Enterprise Initiative that will achieve a balanced and affordable ST3 System Plan, new long-range plan, and updated finance plan. Key trade-offs and considerations will include ensuring the ability to deliver high-quality service after a period of rapid expansion while advancing ST3 projects, incorporating post-pandemic travel behaviors, and considering the implications of changed technology and mobility patterns since ST3's adoption.

The Executive Committee will oversee the Planning and Policy workstream that will revisit existing planning assumptions and policy directions, and advance opportunities to update or modify them in support of implementing the ST3 system plan. Key trade-offs and considerations will include existing agency policy constraints, recognition that some policy changes are outside of the Board's control, and the revisiting of existing assumptions to ensure the agency is maximizing flexibility in service and project delivery.

The System Expansion Committee will oversee the Capital Delivery workstream that will continue development of cost-savings opportunities and strategies to deliver ST3 as quickly and efficiently as possible. Key trade-offs and considerations will include potential reconsideration of some project scope, sequencing of projects and the overall program given the current cost estimates, and how to best approach advancing projects through the baselining milestone.

The Rider Experience and Operations Committee will oversee the Service Delivery workstream that will work to ensure delivery of reliable service and identify opportunities to provide existing and future

service as efficiently as possible. Key trade-offs and considerations will include potential for new and planned investments, balancing upfront capital costs and service disruptions against long-term savings, and weighing resiliency and reliability needs related to the second Downtown Seattle Transit Tunnel.

The Finance and Audit Committee will oversee the Finance workstream that will work to ensure overall program affordability and pursue opportunities that maximize agency financial capacity. Key trade-offs and considerations will include balancing revenue enhancement opportunities with fiscal integrity and acknowledging that some opportunities may require actions by other levels of government.

Mr. Krieg explained how the workstreams will be pulled together and integrate into the larger Enterprise Initiative. Iterative processes will analyze findings on questions related to the planned second downtown tunnel, develop a revised capital program incorporating cost savings, and update service assumption based on the revised capital program and other needs and forecasts. Concurrently, staff will work with the committees responsible to recommend which opportunities and investments to pursue. This will culminate in long-range planning that builds from the updated ST3 system. Mr. Krieg displayed a graphic that summarized the current timeline that maps key tasks and deliverables related to the Enterprise Initiative and its workstreams.

Mr. Krieg summarized the next steps related to the Enterprise Initiative, including following Board direction from the November Retreat to develop plausible, affordable scenarios for the Board and Committees to consider, engaging with the Committees on specific workstream components, and onboarding new Board members and bringing them up to speed on the Enterprise Initiative. There is also a Board Retreat anticipated to be held in late winter 2026.

Chair Balducci noted that this is information most Board members saw at the retreat, but it was informative to her and hopefully the public as well. She asked for confirmation that the Capital Delivery Opportunity Register is the cumulative cost saving opportunities that the Capital Delivery team have been compiling and presenting on throughout the year. Mr. Krieg confirmed that is the case and that staff are working to effectively implement what opportunities they can under levers 1 and 2, while levels 3 and 4 would require additional discussion with the Committee and Board. He noted that presentations throughout the year have been given focusing on the individual projects, but the Enterprise Initiative will help to pull all of that together.

Chair Balducci asked for information about the interplay between the plausible, big-picture scenarios that and the incorporation of the cost-savings measures for the capital program. Mr. Krieg responded that the complex nature of the capital program has interactions with the other workstreams. Input and feedback from the Committees will help to tee up scenarios that highlight the interactions and their trade-offs. She asked staff to proactively think about how to best surface the most board-appropriate elements of the Capital Delivery Opportunity Register.

Seeing no other questions, Chair Balducci noted the arrival of Board member Birney and asked for confirmation of a quorum. The Clerk confirmed a quorum of the Committee is now present.

Business items

For Committee Final Action

Minutes: November 13, 2025 System Expansion Committee meeting

It was moved by Vice Chair Roscoe, seconded by Board member Mello, and carried by unanimous voice vote that the minutes of the November 13, 2025 System Expansion Committee meeting be approved as presented.

For Recommendation to the Board

Resolution No. R2025-32: Authorizing the chief executive officer to acquire certain real property interests, subject to and contingent upon obtaining any and all necessary federal approvals, including

acquisition by condemnation to the extent authorized by law, and to reimburse eligible relocation and reestablishment expenses incurred by affected owners and tenants as necessary for construction, operation and maintenance of the Operations and Maintenance Facility South project.

Joshua Hamilton, Operations and Maintenance Facility South Commercial Director, gave the staff presentation. He was joined by Clint Dameron, Acting Real Property Director, and Becky Kniveton, Environmental Permitting Manager.

Vice Chair Roscoe requested a link to or a copy of Federal Way's requirements related to the necessary mitigation. She also wanted to confirm that communications have taken place with the property owners, citing past experience with disgruntled owners of to-be acquired properties. Mr. Hamilton noted that all property owners have been reached via certified mail, but one has not been responsive to requests to meet in-person or virtually. The owner is for one of the properties that would require residential relocation.

It was moved by Board member Franklin, seconded by Vice Chair Roscoe, and carried by unanimous voice vote that Resolution No. R2025-32 be forwarded with a do-pass recommendation.

Motion No. M2025-67: Authorizing the chief executive officer to increase the cumulative contingency amount authorized to increase certain Federal Way Link Extension contract and/or agreement amounts as necessary, by an amount of \$50,000,000 for a new total authorized cumulative contingency expenditure not to exceed \$110,000,000, all within the Federal Way Link Extension approved baseline budget.

Linneth Riley-Hall, Federal Way Link Extension Executive Project Director, gave the staff presentation. She was joined by Anna Bonjukian, Principal Construction Manager.

Chair Balducci re-iterated her praise and thanks to the team, especially pertaining to overcoming geotechnical issues at Structure C in the middle of the alignment.

Vice Chair Roscoe shared the story of a personal friend who is already taking advantage of the new service to commute to work at SeaTac from Pierce County via Federal Way.

Chair Balducci asked how long project closeout is taking after the achievement of revenue service. Ms. Riley-Hall noted that she doesn't have an exact timeline but is hopeful of being able to jump ahead of other projects in the closeout process, as they have already begun such work. Chair Balducci noted that when projects are officially closed-out, funds remaining can be freed up and potentially used to help offset the gap being addressed in the Enterprise Initiative.

It was moved by Vice Chair Roscoe, seconded by Board member Mello, and carried by unanimous voice vote that Motion No. M2025-67 be forwarded with a do-pass recommendation.

Motion No. M2025-62: Authorizing the chief executive officer to execute 22 individual Multiple Award Task Order Contracts for five years, each with two one-year options to extend, with Cooper Zietz Engineers, Inc. DBA Akana, Axiom Consulting and Project Management LLC, Bechtel Infrastructure Corporation, Cumming Management Group, Inc., EPC Consultants, Inc., Ergosync, LLC, Furtado & Associates, Inc., H.W. Lochner, Inc., HDR Engineering, Inc., Hill International, Inc., HNTB Corporation, Jacobs Project Management Co., KBA, Inc., Morgner Technology Management DBA Morgner Construction Management, Mott MacDonald, LLC, PGH Wong Engineering, Inc., Ramos Consulting Services, Inc., Simpson & Simpson Management Consulting Inc., Stantec Consulting Services Inc., United ECM, US Rail Systems Inc, and VSCE, Inc. to provide Sound Transit with project management/construction management services such that the aggregate total amount of the 22 contracts does not exceed \$1,000,000,000 over the potential seven-year period, and that task orders exceeding \$10,000,000 or are restricted by Resolution No. R2021-05 are subject to Committee or Board approval.

Terri Mestas, Capital Delivery Deputy CEO, began the staff presentation. She was joined by Amanda Lanier, Design and Construction Procurement Director, and Hughey Newsome, Chief Financial Officer.

Chair Balducci was excited to see the immediate impact of this contracting method on smaller local firms. She inquired into how the agency is supporting those businesses as they interact with Sound Transit's complex project needs. Ms. Mestas responded that the Office of Civil Rights, Equity, and Inclusion offers educational opportunities that range from "how to submit an invoice" to overviews of the agency's structure. A mentor-protégé program has also been established under all three of the MATOCs which pairs larger firms who have done previous work with Sound Transit with these smaller firms.

Chair Balducci inquired into contract performance reviews. Ms. Mestas responded that all firms doing business with the agency undergo an annual review. She also added that the Committee will keep up oversight of the MATOC contracting method as it is new to the agency.

It was moved by Board member Franklin, seconded by Board member Mello, and carried by unanimous voice vote that Motion No. M2025-62 be forwarded with a do-pass recommendation.

Tacoma Dome Link Extension and Operations and Maintenance Facility Program cost savings workplan update

Manan Garg, Capital Delivery Executive Director, provided opening remarks on the workplan update. He reviewed the different opportunities identified in the workplan: Programmatic opportunities that apply to all projects in the ST3 portfolio, and Project opportunities that apply to a specific capital project. He also provided a review of the different cost-savings levers available to the agency, as well as the level of cost estimate accuracy at different stages of project design.

Mr. Garg provided information on Tacoma Dome Link Extension (TDLE) cost savings. In 2025 dollars, the 2025 Financial Plan budgets 4.6 billion for the project, while the current cost estimate is \$5.4 to \$6.1 billion. Chair Balducci asked about the comparison in year-of-expenditure dollars. Mr. Garg noted that he doesn't have the number off-hand but will provide them. He provided a brief recap of project details and the recent cost growth on TDLE, largely tied to the aerial guideway required to support aerial stations due to limited opportunities to build an at-grade or lower profile alignment. The complexity of the bridge needed to cross the Puyallup River is also a cost driver. Based on the various levers available to staff and the Board, cost reductions range from two to three percent at the lowest level, to a 51-53 percent cost reduction if the project was reduced in scope to a phased, minimum operating segment to Fife. Staff have identified 67 cost-saving measures for TDLE, with 21 under implementation and six under consideration and/or in feasibility review. The following slides will go into detail on two specific ideas: eliminate mezzanines at stations (lever 1) and eliminate tail tracks (lever 2).

Eliminating the mezzanines at planned stations would reduce the construction cost by lowering the guideway, reducing the number of vertical conveyances, and removing an additional floor, while also reducing the lifetime maintenance cost. It can also help to simplify station designs to assist with the construction schedule and could lead to improved accessibility and passenger experience from the plaza to the platform. Some considerations include the elimination of potential points for direct pedestrian bridge connection into the station and longer escalators and stairwells would be needed to connect the plaza to the platform. Potential cost savings from this measure range from \$30 million to \$40 million.

Eliminating the tail tracks at Tacoma Dome station would avoid demolition of the Sounder Breezeway, Amtrak Station, and Freight House Square building which will help to reduce the cost and schedule of work in the segment, while necessitating considerations for alternative track maintenance infrastructure storage and for potential operations implications. Potential cost savings from this measure range from \$40 million to \$50 million.

TDLE staff will continue advancing the project through Preliminary Engineering with a design-to-budget strategy, applying lever 1 and 2 cost-savings measures as appropriate. The Final Environmental Impact Statement is expected in Q1 2027.

Michael Morgan, Capital Delivery Executive Director, provided information on the Maintenance Facilities Program, which will encompass the Operations and Maintenance facilities and Maintenance of Way facilities. He provided a brief recap of program details and focused on the Operations and Maintenance Facility South (OMFS) project for this presentation. In 2025 dollars, the 2025 Financial Plan budgets \$2.03 billion for the project, while the current cost estimate is \$2 to \$2.1 billion. Preliminary cost savings were applied in 2023 which resulted in \$20 to \$25 million of potential savings, and the progressive design-build contractor will identify additional cost-savings as design validation progresses. Staff have identified 46 cost-saving measures for OMFS, with 34 assigned to their respective levers and 12 closed out. The following slides will go into detail on updating the Concept of Maintenance (lever 2).

As part of the Maintenance Facilities Program, staff are evaluating changes to the Concept of Maintenance across facilities. This includes ideas to centralize light rail vehicle maintenance, retrofit existing facilities, ensure stable train availability, and optimize the maintenance program. Noting that such an approach would require work at existing facilities in addition to constructing planned ones, updating the maintenance program could result in allocating different maintenance services to different maintenance facilities, reducing redundancies and enhancing labor specialization. This could also directly reduce the planned size of future facilities, reducing construction costs. Potential cost savings from this measure range from \$25 million to \$75 million.

OMFS staff are aiming to return to the Board in Q1 2026 to request the approval of the Progressive Design-Build contract to advance the project through design and construction, identifying further cost-savings.

Chair Balducci thanked staff for the information provided and noted that it helped her to better understand the Committee's role in the Enterprise Initiative.

Executive session

None.

Other business

Chair Balducci offered her thanks to Board members Backus and Harrell for their service to Sound Transit and the System Expansion Committee. She also thanked Sound Transit staff who support the Committee's and Board's work and meetings.

Next meeting

Thursday, January 8, 2026

1:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Ruth Fisher Board Room & Virtually via Zoom

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 3:18 p.m.

ATTEST:

Claudia Balducci
System Expansion Committee Chair

Kathryn Flores
Board Administrator

APPROVED on _____, AJM.