

Summary Minutes

Rider Experience and Operations Committee Meeting June 4, 2026

Call to order

The meeting was called to order at 1:01 p.m. by Committee Vice Chair Prince 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
(A) Kristina Walker, Tacoma Councilmember	(P) Ed Prince, Renton Council President

Board Members	
(A) Claudia Balducci, King County Councilmember	(A) Teresa Mosqueda, King County Councilmember
(A) Steffanie Fain, King County Councilmember	(P) David Parshall, Lynnwood Councilmember
(P) Hunter George, Fircrest Councilmember	(A) Peter von Reichbauer, King County Councilmember

Hunter Rancipher, Board Relations Specialist, announced that a quorum of the committee was not present at roll call.

Report of the Chair

Vice Chair Prince provided the report, noting that the Annual Safety Report was included in Committee members' packets for their consideration.

Board member Balducci joined the meeting at this time.

CEO Report

Updated System Plan Approval

Agency Chief of Staff Calli Knight provided the report on behalf of CEO Constantine. She expressed staff's appreciation to the Committee and Board regarding the adoption of a new ST3 System Plan, highlighting the Board and staff's commitment to delivering the voter-approved system.

New Sounder Cars

Ms. Knight noted that five new Sounder cars had entered service, with new amenities and improved rider experience improvements.

Mount Baker Station Car Incident

Ms. Knight reported that a vehicle had mistakenly turned into the Link right of way and traveled north in the southbound trackway to Mount Baker Station. She noted that no one was injured as a result of the

incident, and that crews were able to quickly remove the stuck vehicle from the trackway in time to accommodate ridership heading home from the Mariners game.

Transit Operations Deputy CEO Ed Cobean added that additional progress had been made in unplanned service disruptions, with the agency only experiencing an average of four hours per month of disruption. He also noted that staff had presented the results of a Fare Gates Study to the Executive Committee earlier in the day, and that a presentation on the topic was also planned for the June 25, 2026, Board of Directors meeting.

Public comment

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

The following person submitted written public comment:

Kit Burns

The following person provided in-person public comment:

Kit Burns

David Haines

No virtual public comments were received.

Board members Fain and Mosqueda joined the meeting at this time.

Business Items

For Committee final action

May 7, 2026, Rider Experience and Operations Committee meeting minutes

It was moved by Board member Balducci, seconded by Board member Mosqueda, and carried by the unanimous vote of all committee members present that the minutes of the May 7, 2026, Rider Experience and Operations Committee meeting be approved as presented.

Reports to the Committee

At Grade Crossing Program Update

John Martin, Capital Delivery Executive Director, and Zac Eskenazi, Commercial Director, provided the report.

Mr. Eskenazi summarized ongoing At Grade Crossing Program projects, highlighting four key bodies of work underway. He noted that the Royal Brougham Automatic Pedestrian Gates project is progressing through design, with an anticipated completion date of 2028. The MLK Automatic Pedestrian Gates Pilot is also progressing through design, with a target completion date of 2030. The 1-Line Enhancement Project is currently in planning, with an expected completion date of 2029. The SMART Grant Rainier Valley Safe Project Pilot is in closeout, which should be complete by the end of 2026.

Mr. Eskenazi highlighted some project-specific accomplishments, which include: the installation of new traffic safety equipment at eight intersections along MLK Way in the Rainier Valley; continued progress on the development of new traffic modeling, light rail operations, and timing for automatic pedestrian gates; and advancement towards procurement on the Royal Brougham Project by year-end 2026.

Mr. Eskenazi gave additional detail on Light Rail Vehicle enhancements. He reported that wig-wag headlights have been installed on vehicles to increase pedestrian and motorist visibility of approaching trains. Series 2 LRVs will see fleetwide implementation of the enhancement, with up to 40 vehicles being

retrofitted in 2026. Designs for Series 1 LRVs are still in development, with procurement expected to begin later this year.

Mr. Eskenazi provided details on other At Grade Crossing Initiatives. He reported that development of at grade crossing safety standards is underway for the T Line, that analysis continues for safety improvements along Sound Transit-owned Sounder crossings, with targeted completion in 2027 for both bodies of work, and equitable engagement efforts are ongoing.

Mr. Eskenazi noted achievements in safety engagement, including the youth safety poster contest, continued work with the Rainier Valley community, and the hosting of a Safety Poster Gallery Walk to showcase poster contest submissions.

Board member George asked why upgrades in the MLK corridor will take longer than other projects. Mr. Eskenazi responded that the work is complex and requires additional coordination with the City of Seattle to fully implement the work.

Board member Balducci asked staff to speak about the regionwide efforts surrounding at-grade crossings outside the Rainier Valley. Mr. Eskenazi responded that work will begin this year along the T Line to develop a comprehensive plan for street crossings, while at grade crossings along the 2 Line are currently being actively monitored for potential future improvements. Board member Balducci asked that future updates on the program include information on safety metrics, such as near misses and collisions.

Board member Balducci asked what would be the best reference point document for information on incidents and other issues surrounding at grade crossings. Mr. Eskenazi responded that staff would follow up on that inquiry.

Board member Fain asked whether the agency is utilizing staff ambassadors or security personnel to act as an interim solution for crossing safety management as automated pedestrian gates are in development. Mr. Eskenazi responded that interim efforts to promote safety are focused on other physical infrastructure, such as safety signs and pavement painting, along with community engagement and education. Mr. Martin added that he would follow-up with Transit Operations staff to see whether there are plans to utilize staff for at grade crossing safety purposes.

Resiliency Effort Update

Shankar Rajaram, Infrastructure and Asset Management Executive Director, provided the report.

Mr. Rajaram summarized improvements in average monthly unplanned disruption hours, which have decreased from 38 in 2024 to 15 in 2025 to 8 in 2026. He noted that the goal set by the CEO is 10 hours per month and highlighted the agency's continued performance in meeting and exceeding that expectation.

Mr. Rajaram detailed specific projects completed during planned disruptions in May, reporting that various traction power items were replaced and repaired. He also noted that various condition assessments were completed to help inform future maintenance schedules. Portions of rail were replaced, and new vandalism prevention fencing was installed to deter copper wire thefts. Deep cleaning and tile replacements were also completed at various stations in preparation for additional crowds and wear during the World Cup.

Mr. Rajaram noted the overall progress on implementing the 80 recommendations from the 2025 Resiliency Report, highlighting that 50 percent of all recommendations were now implemented.

Mr. Rajaram previewed an upcoming focus area for Resiliency Work: Implementation of Condition Based Maintenance. He reported that this will be an ongoing process over the next three to five years, focused on transitioning the current time-based replacement and repair schedule to individualized condition-based maintenance, driven by the agency's Enterprise Asset Management System. He noted that this change would strengthen financial stewardship by prioritizing state-of-good-repair projects

based on value and risk, and that the overall system condition will improve by addressing risks before disruptions occur.

Board member Balducci asked what the agency's target is for unplanned disruptions. Mr. Rajaram responded that the agency is currently operating at a target of no more than 10 hours of unplanned disruptions per month. Board member Balducci asked whether the agency's disruption performance is benchmarked against other peer agencies. Mr. Rajaram responded that there is ongoing engagement with peer agencies to determine Sound Transit's relative performance. Board member Balducci asked whether a reliability metric on vehicle arrival times could be given. Mr. Rajaram responded that a later presentation at today's meeting would cover that topic in detail.

2026 World Cup Update

Marie Olson, Strategic Performance and Operations Executive Director, and Magdalyn Horvath, Acting Special Projects Director, provided the report, summarizing the agency's efforts in wayfinding, signage, multi-language communications, and World Cup Readiness.

Ms. Horvath detailed examples of preferred station signage being deployed to assist riders in navigating to appropriate stations to mitigate overcrowding. She noted that signs provide specific information on what station riders should travel and return to based on their origin station. Riders north of Chinatown International District should travel through Pioneer Square Station, riders from south of Chinatown International District should travel through Stadium Station, and riders from east of Chinatown International District or those with disabilities should travel directly to International District/Chinatown Station.

Ms. Horvath also noted that stickers with the station codes for preferred travel stations will be distributed by Staff Ambassadors to riders to assist with navigation. Staff Ambassadors will also be equipped with backpack flags to help emphasize their customer support role. The agency will also deploy anti-human trafficking signage across stations and vehicles to help spread awareness.

Ms. Horvath reported that the Westlake Station Kiosk was being reopened in time for the World Cup and will be manned by Staff Ambassadors during that time. Following the event, the Kiosk will remain open as a permanent customer information booth for riders. She also noted that new signage had been installed at SeaTac/Airport Station to include Seattle and a graphic of the Space Needle on directional signs to help orient riders towards the city. In addition to the directional signs, new line maps will be installed that better explain what landmarks are near each of the downtown stations.

Ms. Olson provided updates on multilingual communication efforts to support riders during the World Cup. She noted that customer-facing tools and the Sound Transit website are now available in more than 25 languages, with multilingual signage also being deployed on match days to assist non-English speaking riders navigate to the games. She also highlighted new on-board audio announcements featuring former Olympic gold medalist and professional soccer player Megan Rapinoe and former Seahawks wide receiver Doug Baldwin.

Board member Balducci thanked staff for implementing new signage at SeaTac/Airport Station and asked that such work be widened in scope to cover additional stations across the system. Committee Vice Chair Prince seconded the request.

REO Metrics – Headway Adherence

Benjamin Marx, Rail Executive Director, and Raj Cheriell, Enterprise Data and Analytics Director, provided the report.

Mr. Cheriell explained why the agency uses on-time performance, noting its value as a reliability metric from the passenger perspective. He reported that the agency is transitioning from scheduled arrival time to headway adherence, as it better aligns with passenger expectations and how service disruptions are managed.

Mr. Cheriell then showcased a graphic outlining headway adherence throughout 2025, highlighting that headways on Link light rail were close to or exceeding the target of 90 percent of all trips being within two minutes of the published headways throughout the day. In 2026, Mr. Cheriell noted that headway adherence has continued to be close to or exceeding standards. He then detailed specific headway adherence for each day in March 2026, showcasing how five days with service disruptions dragged down the average for the month, resulting in the agency missing the 90 percent target in that period.

Mr. Marx described how the agency recovers operationally from service disruptions. He reiterated that reliable headways are achieved through consistent operations and rapid recovery from service disruptions, which are impacted by a variety of factors including network complexity, passenger demand, severity of disruption, and the general operating environment.

Mr. Marx discussed a variety of adherence maintenance strategies, which fall into the categories of proactive approaches and active service management. Proactive strategies include service planning and infrastructure to prevent unplanned disruptions, preventative maintenance, event planning, and operational readiness training. In terms of active service management, the agency employs real time service monitoring, train regulation, gap train deployment, and coordinated disruptions responses to recover once a disruption has occurred.

Mr. Marx also congratulated three King County Metro Rail employees of the year, Strategy and Administration employee Jaime Compeggio, Maintenance employee Habtam Mengistu, and Operations employee Michael Woldemichael.

Board member Balducci asked for clarification on how the agency defines headway adherence. Mr. Cheriell responded that it measures the time between each train along the line, which varies throughout the day. He specifically noted that during peak times, the East and South segments have a scheduled headway of eight minutes, with a headway of four minutes for the North segment where the 1 and 2 Lines interline through the Downtown Seattle Transit Tunnel to Lynnwood. Board member Balducci noted that she has noticed that there is a discrepancy between the real time arrival signage at stations and when vehicles arrive at the station. Mr. Marx responded that he appreciated the report and will take that information back to the team for follow-up. Board member Balducci asked whether this metric will be included in future monthly REO Metrics reports in Committee member packets. Mr. Cheriell responded in the affirmative.

Executive session – None

Other business – None

Next meeting

Thursday, July 2, 2026
1:00 to 3:00 p.m.
Ruth Fisher Boardroom and Virtually via Zoom.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 2:14 p.m.

ATTEST:

Kristina Walker
Rider Experience and Operations Committee Chair

Kathryn Flores
Board Administrator

APPROVED on _____, HRR.