Summary Minutes

Rider Experience and Operations Committee Meeting
November 5, 2026

Call to order

The meeting was called to order at 1:02 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	(P) Ed Prince, Renton Council President

Board Members	
(P) Claudia Balducci, King County Councilmember	(P) Teresa Mosqueda, King County Councilmember
(P) 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 present at roll call.

Report of the Chair

Chair Walker noted that the wayfinding and signage presentation identified as a topic of special interest to the Committee would be delayed until Q1 2027 to allow staff additional time to work on a signage gap analysis that would inform the topic.

CEO Report

REO Portion of Proposed 2027 Budget

CEO Constantine gave remarks on the Proposed 2027 Budget and Transit Improvement Plan, thanking staff for their work in developing the Budget as well as highlighting how it comports with the priorities laid out in the ST3 System Plan update adopted by the Board in May 2026.

Ballard Link Extension Draft Environmental Impact Statement

CEO Constantine reported that the Ballard Link Extension DEIS had received FTA approval and will be published on December 11, 2026 with a 60-day public comment period. He thanked federal partners, particularly FTA Region 10 Administrator Susan Fletcher, for their leadership and support in achieving this milestone.

Sound Move 30th Anniversary

CEO Constantine gave remarks celebrating the 30th anniversary of the 1996 Sound Move ballot initiative.

Transit Operations Update

Transit Operations Deputy CEO Ed Cobean provided the report.

Wayfinding and Signage Update Delay

DCEO Cobean thanked the Committee for their latitude in allowing a delay in the wayfinding and signage presentation. He noted that work is ongoing and new signage is being installed at Westlake and SeaTac/Airport Station, and that staff are looking forward to providing a comprehensive update on this work in Q1 of 2027.

Pet Policy Pilot

DCEO Cobean reported that a pilot for new pet rules has begun on Link, allowing dogs who are leashed and well-behaved on board so long as they are under the control of their handler. Signage installation for the pilot is underway, and findings will be shared with the Committee in Q2 2027.

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 person provided written public comment:

Marks Brewbaker

The following person provided in-person public comment:

Kristina Mattul

The following people provided virtual public comment:

Patrick White

Business Items

For Committee final action

October 1, 2026, Rider Experience and Operations Committee meeting minutes

It was moved by Board member Fain, seconded by Committee Vice Chair Prince, and carried by the unanimous vote of all committee members present that the minutes of the October 1, 2026, Rider Experience and Operations Committee meeting be approved as presented.

Motion No. M2026-45: Recommending that the portions of the 2027 Proposed Budget and Transit Improvement Plan reviewed by the Rider Experience and Operations Committee be forwarded by the Finance and Audit Committee to the Board with a do-pass recommendation.

Ryan Fisher, Finance Executive Director, and Stephanie Ball and Jenny Stephens, Financial Planning and Analysis Directors, provided a presentation on the action.

Board member Mosqueda arrived at this time.

Board member George asked for additional information on safety-related expenditures in 2027. Ms. Stephens responded that safety-related expenditures include increased funds for staffing the Field Activity Specialist Team, as well as facilitating the onboarding of additional King County Sheriff Officers. CEO Constantine added that the agency would also be looking to create a new Station Manager position that would assist in coordinating various safety and passenger experience functions at the agency's busiest stations.

Board member Balducci highlighted the One Bus Away mobile app as an important piece of rider access technology and noted that funds are dedicated to ensure its continued operation in 2027. Randi Levin, Chief Information Officer, concurred with this view and noted that conversations with the vendor who developed the app are ongoing to ensure continued support and modernization of the technology.

Board member Fain asked for additional information on the rate of spending on third-party contracted staff and items compared to internal staff costs. Mr. Fisher noted that staff do track that information and would be able to provide that information in detail following the meeting.

It was moved by Board member Balducci, seconded by George, and carried by the unanimous vote of all committee members present that Motion No. M2026-45 be approved.

Motion No. M2026-46: Authorizing the chief executive officer to execute (1) an Implementation Services agreement with Deloitte Consulting LLP to provide an Enterprise Resource Planning system platform replacement, consulting services and Software-as-a-Service for Oracle America, Inc.'s Cloud Services and International Business Machine Corporation's Maximo in the amount of $30,117,686 (2) a ten-year software service agreement with SymPro Inc. in an amount not to exceed $1,207,510 and (3) a ten-year software service agreement with Automatic Data Processing, Inc., in an amount not to exceed $435,286; with a shared 15 percent contingency of $3,592,070, for a total aggregate amount not to exceed $35,352,552 plus applicable taxes, contingent upon adoption of Resolution No. R2026-27.

Hughey Newsome, Chief Financial Officer, Randi Levin, Chief Information Officer, and Tracy Reed, Business Transformation Deputy Executive Director, provided a presentation on the action.

Chair Walker asked if the budget amendment figures in this action are assumed in the Proposed 2027 Budget. Mr. Newsome responded that this action would add six million dollars to the Transit Improvement Plan, which would be adopted at the same time as the budget, and would be amended by this action. Chair Walker asked if these costs were projected in the Long-Range Financial Plan. Mr. Newsome responded in the affirmative.

Board member Fain asked if, based on previous actions on this topic, the costs of these contracts were higher than anticipated, which necessitates the six-million-dollar budget amendment. Mr. Newsome responded that the hope was to realize some savings from the Enterprise Resource Planning contract, which did not occur, but is forecasted in the most recent Long-Range Financial Plan update, while noting that this action is critical to enabling other agency work going forward. Ms. Levin added that this effort is extremely important in not only tracking assets but allowing the agency to move forward with a proactive planning and scheduling system to eventually move toward predictive maintenance, while also enabling a variety of other HR, accounting, and finance systems that will all integrated for optimized office functions.

Board member Fain asked for clarification on why the action was for final action at the Committee. Mr. Newsome noted that the contract action was within the financial authority delegated to the Committee, but the budget action would require full Board authorization.

Board member Balducci noted concerns with similar efforts undertaken in other jurisdictions and asked how the agency has thought about sustainability of the technology through this contract. Ms. Levin responded that internal staff will be trained throughout implementation in addition to support from the vendor, to ensure long-term sustainability of the software.

Board member George asked if the system would be customized by the agency. Ms. Levin responded that the agency will not customize the software and will adapt any incompatible business function to fit within the software's capabilities to ensure its long-term sustainability. Board member George asked whether the selected contractor has familiarity with this type of work. Ms. Levin responded that the contractor is a seasoned supplier of this software suite.

It was moved by Board member Balducci, seconded by Board member Fain, and carried by the unanimous vote of all committee members present that Motion No. M2026-46 be approved.

For Recommendation to the Board

Resolution No. R2026-27: Amending the adopted 2026 Budget for the ERP/EAM Transformation program by a) transferring $11,329,000 from the Agency Administration phase to the Admin Capital phase, and b) increasing the authorized program allocation by $6,000,000, for a new total authorized program allocation of $74,923,000.

Chair Walker noted that information on this amendment was provided as part of the presentation on the previous item.

It was moved by Board member Balducci, seconded by Board member Fain, and carried by the unanimous vote of all committee members present that Resolution No. R2026-27 be forwarded to the Board with a do-pass recommendation.

Reports to the Committee

Lifecycle Maintenance and Capital Replacement Plan

Shankar Rajaram, Infrastructure and Asset Management Executive Director, Alex Krieg, Senior Advisor to the Deputy CEO, and Hughey Newsome, Chief Financial Officer, provided the report.

Mr. Rajaram detailed the purpose of the agency's State of Good Repair (SOGR) program, which exists to ensure reliability, resiliency, and proactive stewardship of Sound Transit's assets across the system. He noted that Link light rail makes up the largest portion of the agency's SOGR portfolio, and that its rapid expansion and extensive use call for reforms in how the agency tracks maintenance needs.

Mr. Rajaram discussed how timely renewal of assets would allow for better tracking of SOGR needs, by utilizing sensors and real-time monitoring to maintain a live tracker of asset conditions. This leads to work being scheduled proactively and in groupings to minimize service disruptions, while simultaneously reducing the likelihood of emergency repairs and unplanned disruptions.

Mr. Rajaram summarized the agency's asset base, accounting for $23.3 billion in assets across infrastructure, facilities, rolling stock, and other categories. He noted that infrastructure and facilities make up over 90 percent of Sound Transit's total assets, at $12.51 and $8.11 billion respectively.

Mr. Rajaram introduced Total Cost of Ownership as a new planning tool that the agency will be using to optimize maintenance. This metric will be developed over the next three years, with the goal of detailing the lifetime costs of various assets inclusive of acquisition, operations and maintenance, overhauls, and replacement.

Mr. Rajaram detailed the SOGR Finance Plan forecast, detailing that SOGR costs total approximately $6-9 million per route-mile, leading to an increased Finance Plan estimate of $20.4 billion through 2052, a six percent increase over the previous flat six-million-dollar estimate. He also reiterated that staff would have high-confidence condition ratings for all critical assets within three years. Mr. Rajaram reported that agency staff conducted a thorough evaluation to arrive at the previous figure, which was found to be in alignment with peer agencies and was developed in tandem with external partners at Deutsche Bahn. He then compared the original six-million baseline figures to the new estimate, highlighting that the new cost framework shows an increased need for SOGR investment during the late 2030s compared to the previous baseline.

Mr. Rajaram introduced Condition-Base Maintenance (CBM) as the new means through which the agency will achieve these new renewal objectives, by creating a standardized list of assets based on their condition, with continued monitoring and adjustment based on real-world tracking. He noted that

moving to this system over the next three years will ensure the agency has a high-confidence forecast for all assets.

Mr. Rajaram discussed how the new system will be evaluated going forward. He noted that a current peer review is in progress with partners in Germany, Austria, Denmark, and the UK to ensure the agency's assumptions and planning methodology are sound, with further independent validation to occur each year prior to the budget process. In Q3 2027, staff will return to the Board with an update on the progress of this effort, in advance of the Proposed 2028 Budget.

Chair Walker noted that this effort came out of the Enterprise Initiative and asked how Condition-Based Maintenance interacts with the new Enterprise Asset Management and Enterprise Resource Planning Systems that the Committee recently acted on. Mr. Rajaram responded that the EAM/ERP Program provides key tools that are needed to allow the work on CBM to progress and manage information generated through that system in the future.

Board member Balducci asked how funding for SOGR in the Proposed 2027 Budget and prior years was delegated compared to the new CBM model and whether this change would result in an overall increase or decrease in SOGR spending over the life of the Long-Range Financial Plan. Mr. Newsome responded that the Long-Range Financial Plan does include an SOGR forecast that is in alignment with the Board adopted Budget and Transit Improvement Plan. Mr. Rajaram added that Proposed 2027 Budget included $221 million in SOGR projects, with budgets over the last five years ranging from $150-$250 million. He further noted that those figures are often ambitious and underspent as other priorities may prevent SOGR work from being completed, which the CBM effort hopes to address and make more reliable. Mr. Kreig addressed the second question, noting that there is an increase in overall Operations and Maintenance spending as the system continues to expand.

Board member Balducci asked if that O&M cost is trending to be higher than the SOGR investments. Mr. Krieg responded that since the CBM effort is still ongoing, new high-confidence measurements will not be ready for the next few years, though the hope is that this effort will decrease the overall maintenance costs for the system.

Board member Balducci asked for details on the implementation of some of this new SOGR work. Mr. Rajaram responded that this work is ongoing but noted that specific steps are being taken in the Series 3 light rail vehicle procurement process to ensure future compatibility with anticipated future technologies such as Communication Based Train Control.

Board member Fain noted that the presentation was heavily focused on Link light rail and asked whether the effort will include all modes and assets. Mr. Rajaram responded in the affirmative, noting that $19.3 billion of the $23.3 billion long-range forecast is for Link, with the remaining $4 billion being spread across the agency's other modes. Board member Fain asked for confirmation that third-party maintenance agreements for other modes do not include SOGR work as part of their scope. Mr. Rajaram responded in the affirmative.

Station Activation Update

Marie Olson, Rider Experience and Operations Executive Director, and Marshall Foster, Chief Planning and Development Officer, provided the report covering the agency's current and future station activation pilots and initiatives, as well as the development of the agency's retail strategy framework.

Ms. Olson noted that the Station Activation strategic vision is to, "Transform waiting and transitional spaces into engaging, welcoming and community-centered environments that improve passenger experience while supporting operational goals." This vision materializes through four pillars: Activation, such as coffee carts, beverage vendors, etc.; Engagement, through creating memorable experiences; Partnering, with local businesses and community organizations; and Managing, through the integration of station activities amid crowd control for major events.

Ms. Olson detailed recent examples of successful pilot initiatives from the FIFA Men's '26 World Cup, which included engaging with dozens of vendors across downtown and specifically highlighting the astronaut crowd engagement activity at International District/Chinatown Station. She also highlighted recent community-based activations at stations, including hosting 22 farmers markets at Angle Lake Station and a local art market at Mount Baker Station, while looking at potential future opportunities at Federal Way Downtown and Spring District Stations.

Ms. Olson discussed recent community partnerships, including an event at Mount Baker Station in April conducted in partnership with the Seattle Department of Transportation and the Somali Health Board. The event not only included games and activities, but also information booths on ORCA and fares from King County Metro, as well as local project information from SDOT. She also highlighted new vinyl wraps on the bike lockers at Rainier Beach Station, which was delivered in partnership with SDOT and the Rainier Beach Action Coalition.

Ms. Olson described retail activations at Lynnwood City Center and Federal Way Downtown Stations, with a Ciao Caffe, a local coffee stand, being set up on the Lynnwood plaza, and Whatzz Up Dogzz, a local hotdog stand, being set up at Federal Way.

Ms. Olson reported on future planning to create comprehensive plans for each station area, with internal agreements on appropriate activities for each station paired with increased promotion and outreach. She also noted that anyone can reach out to the agency on this topic at stationactivation@soundtransit.org.

Mr. Foster stated that the agency recently established a Retail Strategy Task Force, charged with the goal of strengthening the agency's approach to integrating retail into stations and ensuring a welcoming rider experience. He noted that this team is working to deliver recommendations on a retail strategy framework and implementation approach. He then detailed several examples of existing retail uses across the system, ranging from Lynnwood City Center to Redmond Technology to Angle Lake Stations.

Mr. Foster detailed the Task Force's findings. He noted that existing retail was primarily built in response to local zoning with mixed results, that Link light rail expansion is creating strong rider interest in retail, and that ST3 is an ideal time to update the agency's policies on retail to establish a consistent retail framework.

Mr. Foster enumerated the recommendations from the task force, which include: (1) implement a defined retail typology for the system, (2) plan for success using a retailer's perspective, (3) design integration early, and (4) use third-party agreements to leverage industry expertise.

Mr. Foster discussed the varying retail typologies, which range from vending machines to brick-and-mortar stores. They also include other uses, such as farmers markets, food trucks, staffed concessions, and other spaces like EV charging. He noted that to achieve these new typologies across the system, the agency needs to update its retail policy, which was established in 1998.

Chair Walker asked what the process looks like for prospective community organizations who would like to be involved in putting on an event. Ms. Olson responded that work on this topic is early in its development, and invited Station Activation Program Manager Bruce Gray to provide additional details on recent events. Mr. Gray noted that staff work closely with the agency's property management team to help identify the scope and scale of potential events and work with interested parties. Chair Walker asked if interested groups could currently reach out, or if the process of work is a necessary step prior to hosting future events. Mr. Gray responded that interested parties could reach out to him, and they would work together to host any potential events.

Chair Walker asked if the agency charges a fee for groups to host events on property. Mr. Gray responded that the property management team has a current fee structure in place, and that events with non-profit groups have had some of those fees waived in previous instances.

Chair Walker asked if the stationactivation@soundtransit.org email is for those interested in providing input on the planning process or if that is a current event sign-up location. Mr. Gray responded that that inbox is live-monitored and can be used for interested parties who would like to put on an event.

Chair Walker noted the Committee's interest in updating the agency's restroom policy and asked how restrooms are considered for events at stations, particularly those without facilities. Mr. Gray responded that the matter is handled on a case-by-case basis, discussing the example of a night market at BelRed Station, which required the hosting party to bring in portable restrooms to support the event. Mr. Foster added that the same matter is critical to the agency's retail strategy, as restroom placement drives what types of retail can be permitted at stations, noting that many food-based uses require staff restrooms on-site.

Chair Walker asked for additional details on next steps and when the Committee can expect future updates on this work. Mr. Foster responded that the retail strategy team is looking at potential policy updates at some point in 2027.

Board member Balducci asked that staff follow up in the future on long-term plans for retail activation at Link stations in East King County. Mr. Foster responded that staff would be happy to follow up on that.

Board member George asked whether health code safety items are being factored into the Retail Strategy Task Force's work, or if that would be a future step as retail is being created at stations. Mr. Foster responded the agency is working in close coordination with local partners to ensure that health code requirements from various entities are being implemented as this work moves forward.

Executive session – None

Other business – None

Next meeting

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

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 3:02 p.m.

ATTEST:

_____
Kristina Walker
Rider Experience and Operations Committee Chair

_____
Kathryn Flores
Board Administrator

APPROVED on _____, HRR.