



Summary Minutes

Rider Experience and Operations Committee Meeting September 4, 2025

Call to order

The meeting was called to order at 1:01 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) Angela Birney, Redmond Mayor | (P) 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 introduced Ed Cobean, Service Delivery Deputy CEO, to the committee and asked him to share a few words. Mr. Cobean shared his excitement in joining the agency and looked forward to working with the committee in the months ahead.

CEO Report

CEO Dow Constantine provided the report.

Enterprise Initiative

CEO Constantine provided information on next steps regarding the enterprise initiative, noting that each Board committee will receive several updates in the future as work continues.

Activation Updates

CEO Constantine provided updates on the Federal Way Link Extension, thanking Board members Backus, Balducci, Roscoe, Quinn, and von Reichbauer for joining him at Kent Des Moines station to announce December 6, 2025 as the passenger service start date for that extension. CEO Constantine also shared further updates on the East Link Extension, specifically on the move to the next phase of testing live-wire trains on the I-90 floating bridge.

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 provided verbal public comment:

Alex Tsimerman

During verbal public comment, Board member Birney stated that Mr. Tsimerman's comments were not germane to the item which he signed up to speak about. Chair Walker noted her agreement with that assessment, asked for the microphone to be disabled, and requested that Mr. Tsimerman return to his seat.

The following person provided virtual public comment:

David Scott

There were no written comments received.

Business Items

For Committee final action

August 7, 2025, Rider Experience and Operations Committee meeting minutes

It was moved by Board member Birney, seconded by Board member Quinn, and carried by the unanimous vote of all committee members present that the minutes of the August 7, 2025, Rider Experience and Operations Committee meeting be approved as presented.

For Recommendation to the Board

Motion No. M2025-41: Approving Sound Transit's annual 2025 Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan submittal to the Washington State Department of Transportation's State Safety Oversight Office.

Moises Gutierrez, Agency Oversight Deputy CEO, provided opening remarks and introduced Melissa Durel, Security and Safety Management System Director, and Andrea Trepadean, acting Chief Safety and Quality Officer, presentation on the action.

Board member Frizzell asked that raw figures be provided for key safety metrics when this action comes before the full Board. Ms. Durel responded that the request will be incorporated into the full Board presentation.

Board member Quinn asked how the safety plan interfaces with the safety task force. Ms. Trepadean responded that the information within the plan is used in coordination with partners in the safety task force to identify and address differing safety concerns, particularly transit worker assaults and injuries.

Chair Walker asked how this plan interfaces with the work being done regarding at-grade crossing safety. Ms. Trepadean responded that key targets regarding total, pedestrian, and vehicle collisions are directly influenced by work being done as part of the at-grade crossing program. Chair Walker asked that that information be highlighted in the presentation to the full Board.

Board member Birney requested that additional information be included in the presentation to the full Board noting that while the agency safety plan is based on federal reporting requirements, the agency showcases other work being done to address and improve safety across the system.

It was moved by Board member Birney, seconded by Board member Quinn, and was carried by the unanimous vote of all committee members present that Motion No. M2025-41 be forwarded to the Board with a do-pass recommendation.

Motion No. M2025-42: Approving the Federal Way Link Extension Service and Fare Equity Report.

Adrian Mejia, Title VI Program Manager, provided a presentation on Motion Nos. M2025-42, M2025-43, and M2025-44.

Board member Quinn asked whether Sound Transit works with other agencies outside of the Puget Sound region regarding mitigation strategies for Title VI impacts. Mr. Mejia responded that the agency does engage with other, non-local partners, noting that the agency's 2022 disparate impacts and disproportionate burden policy was modeled on work conducted by Portland's Tri-Met.

Chair Walker asked where and how the public can find information on how the agency has improved regarding findings within the Title VI program. Mr. Mejia responded that once the Board adopts the Title VI program update, the entirety of the report will be posted publicly to the Sound Transit website, while also noting that he will confer with his colleagues about how to better increase visibility and accessibility to key metrics and improvements within the report.

It was moved by Board member Quinn, seconded by Board member Birney, and carried by the unanimous vote of all committee members present that Motion No. M2025-42 be forwarded to the Board with a do-pass recommendation.

Motion No. M2025-43: Approving the Title VI service monitoring results prior to the submittal of Sound Transit's 2025 Title VI Program to the Federal Transit Administration.

Chair Walker noted that information on this motion was included in Mr. Mejia's previous presentation, and that the committee would move directly to committee action.

It was moved by Board member Quinn, seconded by Board member Birney, and carried by the unanimous vote of all committee members present that Motion No. M2025-43 be forwarded to the Board with a do-pass recommendation.

Motion No. M2025-44: Approving the submittal of Sound Transit's 2025 Title VI Program to the Federal Transit Administration.

Chair Walker noted that information on this motion was included in Mr. Mejia's previous presentation, and that the committee would move directly to committee action.

It was moved by Board member Quinn, seconded by Board member Birney, and carried by the unanimous vote of all committee members present that Motion No. M2025-44 be forwarded to the Board with a do-pass recommendation.

Reports to the Committee

2025 Budget Amendment to Align with Agency Reorganization

Hughey Newsome, Chief Financial Officer, and Ryan Fisher, Finance Executive Director, provided the report. The presentation covered a net neutral amendment to the 2025 adopted budget that would reorganize certain budget categories to better align with the recently enacted agency reorganization, called Project Mobilizing One Sound Transit (MOST), which will be considered at the September Finance and Audit Committee. The amendment would shift \$67 million from the 'Agency Support Indirect Costs' line item into two categories: 'System Expansion Projects' and 'Transit Modes Operations and Maintenance'. The changes would also be made to the 2025 Transit Improvement Plan (TIP), resulting in a new 'System Expansion Indirect Costs' line item, recategorizing \$1.3 billion from the previous 'Agency Administrative Support' section of the TIP.

Chair Walker asked staff to clarify the purpose of making the budget amendment when it is a net neutral result. Mr. Fisher responded that the pre-amendment 'Agency Administrative Support' line item contains a variety of different funds that are used across different departments, which would be better served for the purposes of tracking and transparency if it were redefined into a more straightforward categorization of the funds.

Resiliency Effort Update

Shankar Rajaram, acting Core Infrastructure and Asset Management Executive Director, provided the report covering resiliency effort work completed since June 2025, trends regarding unplanned disruptions, and future plans to complete remaining resiliency work.

Mr. Rajaram reported that new work had been completed in three core areas: Traction power, Rail, and Light Rail Vehicles. A new asset inventory has been established for traction power resources to improve maintenance, rail-to-ground settings have been revised to eliminate false alarms, and a Training Gap Analysis Report has been completed to improve maintenance. Rail maintenance projects based on wear report findings have been prioritized, and a new database to manage progress on rail maintenance has been established. Additionally, 90% of LRVs have received new brake software and settings upgrades.

Unplanned disruptions have been trending downwards throughout the year, with the average 38 hours per month in 2024 being reduced to 14 hours per month in July of 2025. This has also been accompanied by an improvement in disruptions following recent Link extension openings, down to three times the average disruption hours compared to over five times the average disruption hours prior to openings.

Monitoring of disruption root causes has also revealed improvements across all three core areas. Additional efforts from continued improvement include hiring new specialists to triage asset issues, training field technicians to enhance response times, improving maintenance instructions, and developing new analytics for predictive maintenance.

Mr. Rajaram noted that of the 80 recommendations in the resiliency report, nine have been completed. Of the remaining recommendations, 32 are classified as near-term, with a goal of completing all by Q2 2026, and 39 are long-term, which will be resolved over the next four-to-five years.

Key recommendations for improvement include the development of a communication networks modernization program, standardization of controls and improving alarm management, improvements to maintenance training, implementations of remote monitoring to reduce disruption response times, and replacing obsolete infrastructure. All of these areas of focus have been prioritized, and work is underway to address them.

Board member Birney asked for clarification on whether bus bridges and replacement services were taken into account when calculating system downtime. Mr. Rajaram responded that downtime is calculated based on when rail service is disrupted, regardless of whether a replacement service is in use. Board member Birney also noted that it may be useful to include information on how many passengers are estimated to have been impacted by different disruptions, noting that time of day or area of the alignment affected would showcase varying impacts. She also raised concerns regarding the presentation of information about disruptions near revenue start dates.

Moises Gutierrez, Agency Oversight Deputy CEO, thanked Board member Birney for her feedback, and clarified that the purpose of that information was to note that staff attempts to stress-test the system prior to openings to ensure system reliability, and that work is being done to enhance pre-revenue start testing to ensure that system reliability is maintained whenever a new extension is opened.

Board member Quinn asked for clarification on whether AI is being utilized as part of the development of analytics for predictive maintenance. Mr. Rajaram responded that AI is a tool that is being considered as part of that work, but that a more robust dataset is required to properly train the AI model to give accurate predictive information.

Board member Frizzell asked for clarification on how disruption time is calculated, as she noted her personal experience with disruption notifications doesn't appear to correlate with the information provided in the presentation. Mr. Rajaram responded that disruption time is a raw figure of how many hours per month trains are not running on the alignment. He noted that while there may be multiple disruptions occurring over a given period, that each event may only disrupt service for a very short time.

Chair Walker asked if specific targets around numbers of disruptions or disruption hours were made as part of the resiliency effort. Mr. Rajaram responded that the creation of specific targets and goals is an element of the resiliency effort.

Chair Walker asked for clarification on the relationship between Sound Transit and various local power providers as part of the root causes of some disruptions. Mr. Rajaram responded that staff is actively engaging to determine what specific parts of the traction power system are the source of service disruption, noting that there are a variety of different components that may be responsible.

Light Rail Efficiency Workplan and Series 3 LRV Information

Shankar Rajaram, acting Core Infrastructure and Asset Management Executive Director, provided the report which included details on the Series 3 LRV initial design requirements, early procurement information, and cost pressures. Mr. Rajaram noted that the Series 3 LRV will be twice the length of the current Series 1 and 2 LRVs, with the intention of having new trainsets only be two vehicles to increase internal volume and passenger capacity. Series 3 LRVs will share the same floor architecture, with similar door placement. Improvements to the design include new integrated signage systems, reduced capital cost due to fewer cab units, and decreased maintenance costs.

Mr. Rajaram noted that the procurement strategy is focused on creating an environment of innovation and partnership through distinguishing essential and desirable requirements, while also ensuring the best value selection for the coach builder. Additional prototyping and design work will be conducted to optimize LRV reliability, maintainability, and cost of ownership. Series 3 LRVs will also be futureproofed for new train control technologies.

Mr. Rajaram reported that in coordination with the enterprise initiative, Series 3 LRV procurement plans to include a base order of 70 vehicles, with options for up to 80 additional vehicles, providing maximum flexibility and competitiveness for vehicle cost escalations and other pressures.

Board member Birney raised concerns about longer vehicles' ability to operate in the narrow tunnel environments along the alignment, asking whether those constraints were taken into account with the new design. Mr. Rajaram responded that all new Series 3 LRVs will be capable of navigating current and planned alignment geometry.

Chair Walker asked when the Board would be asked to make a decision on Series 3 LRV procurement. Mr. Rajaram responded that such a decision would come to the Board in late 2026 or early 2027.

Passenger Impact Program

Kevin Mizuta, Link Right-of-Way Access Deputy Director, provided the report. He noted that there were three disruptions from August 7 to September 4, 2025: A guard shack relocation testing on August 23, 2025, which closed the Downtown Seattle Transit Tunnel from the start of service to 1 p.m.; an emergency frog replacement on August 23, 2025, which resulted in single tracking from 11 p.m. to the end of service; and the work on September 2, 2025 as part of the annual rail replacement program, resulting in single tracking from 11 p.m. to the end of service.

Mr. Mizuta reported that work scheduled for Q4 2025 included continued construction on the Pinehurst Station stairwell, with single tracking on weekdays from 7 p.m. to the end of service until November 14, 2025; SCADA switch upgrades at Beacon Hill Station on October 26, 2025, which will result in a full day closure of the station with a bus-bridge between SODO and Mt. Baker Stations for impacted riders; and automatic train protection training as part of Eastlink tie in work, which is currently being targeted for a full Downtown Seattle Transit Tunnel closure during a weekend in November.

Marie Olson, Passenger Experience Executive Director, also provided information regarding rider communication and transparency in response to Board member questions. She reported that the primary way for riders to stay informed is by subscribing to Sound Transit Rider Alerts, but that information is also provided in real time via the Sound Transit website and at stations through the Passenger Information Management Systems (PIMS). Ms. Olson further noted that the agency has increased in-person passenger support through security, Fare Ambassadors, and ST Staff Ambassadors in responses to unplanned disruptions. She further noted that staff listens to feedback from riders during disruptions, which is then used in continual improvement processes.

REO Metrics

Benjamin Marx, acting Service Operations Executive Director, and Johnny Humphrey, Tacoma Light Rail Deputy Director, provided the report on T Line performance metrics. The presentation contained a variety of information on metrics including total boardings per vehicle, average weekday boardings, boardings by station, vehicle real time availability, trip delivery, customer comments, fleet availability, safety and security events, and preventative maintenance.

Executive session – None

Other business – None

Next meeting

Thursday, October 2, 2025

1:00 to 3:00 p.m.

Ruth Fisher Boardroom and Virtually via Zoom.

Adjourn

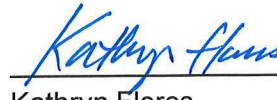
The meeting adjourned at 3:07 p.m.



Kristina Walker

Rider Experience and Operations Committee Chair

ATTEST:



Kathryn Flores

Board Administrator

APPROVED on October 2, 2025, HRR.