Summary Minutes

Rider Experience and Operations Committee Meeting
October 1, 2026

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

Hunter Rancipher, Board Relations Specialist, announced that a quorum of the Rider Experience and Operations Committee was present at roll call.

Report of the Chair

Chair Walker noted that the REO Metrics Report for July 2026 was included in Committee members' packets for their consideration.

CEO Report

Pinehurst Station Opening

CEO Constantine reported on the opening of Pinehurst Station, detailing events from the opening celebrations while conveying his thanks to the Board and staff for their work in delivering the project five years ahead of schedule.

Sound Transit in the Community

CEO Constantine reported on various community events that the agency has hosted since the passage of the updated System Plan in May. He detailed events at the Museum of Flight, as well as two future events: a block party event on October 3, 2026, in partnership with the City of Seattle regarding the Graham Street Infill Station project, as well as a community forum event in Ballard on October 19, 2026, at the National Nordic Museum to discuss the latest developments on the Ballard Link Extension project.

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:

An Unnamed Commenter

The following person provided in-person public comment:

Jack Whisner

The following people provided virtual public comment:

Nicky Prescott
Joe Kunzler

Business Items

For Committee final action

September 3, 2026, Rider Experience and Operations Committee meeting minutes

It was moved by Board member Fain, seconded by Board member Parshall, and carried by the unanimous vote of all committee members present that the minutes of the September 3, 2026, Rider Experience and Operations Committee meeting be approved as presented.

Motion No. M2026-37: Authorizing the chief executive officer to execute a 5-year contract with two optional one-year extensions with Northwest Landscape Services to provide guideway corridor landscape maintenance services in an amount not to exceed $24,680,791, plus applicable taxes.

Erin Brumbaugh, Facilities Agreements and Contract Deputy Director, provided a presentation on the action.

Board member Fain noted that the action covers both areas along the Downtown Redmond and Federal Way Link Extensions, that the Federal Way Link Extension budget is the only project budget that is covering a portion of the action, and asked for clarification as to why other project budgets are not included. Ms. Brumbaugh responded that the budget contributions are based on the current lease structures that exist between Sound Transit and the Washington State Department of Transportation and that the non-operational lease that the Federal Way Link Extension exists under causes the project budget to be the appropriate financing avenue for its portion.

Board member Fain asked whether the committee's approval of the action includes both the base term and options to extend. Ms. Brumbaugh stated that the options to extend would require separate approval in the future. Board member Fain noted that she would like to see that expressed in the motion.

Chair Walker asked Board member Fain if she would like to make a formal amendment to the motion. Board member Fain declined to make an amendment, but she would be open to language from staff on how to include that clarification in the action.

Board Administrator Katie Flores stated that the motion could be modified to either remove the two optional one-year extensions or add a statement noting that staff would return to the Committee for future authorization of the option years.

Chair Walker asked if Board member Fain was comfortable with either of those approaches. Board member Fain responded that she preferred the option to note that staff would return for future authorization of the option years. Chair Walker noted that the Committee would take up the action with that additional language included.

It was moved by Board member Balducci, seconded by Committee Vice Chair Prince, and carried by the unanimous vote of all committee members present that Motion No. M2026-37 be approved as amended.

For Recommendation to the Board

Motion No. M2026-38: 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 $22,827,448 for a new total authorized agreement amount not to exceed $439,010,149.

Martin Young, Commuter Rail Operations Director, and Benjamin Marx, Rail Executive Director, provided a presentation on the action.

Board member Balducci asked how staff came to the determination that the cost escalations in the new amendment were fair and reasonable. Mr. Young responded that previous versions of the agreement were tied to a price index that no longer keeps pace with inflation, and that the new figures were based on Amtrak's actual costs incurred for their work. Board member Balducci asked how staff will keep track of inflation going forward. Mr. Young responded that the finance team is currently exploring how to better track costs and that the agreement will more closely align with inflation due to it being cost-based rather than the previous flat rate model. Board member Balducci noted her concerns with the agency's ability to manage cost escalations under the new framework and encouraged staff to hold the agency's partners to account. Mr. Young responded that staff are committed to scrutinizing the product of the agreement and ensuring costs are minimized to the fullest extent possible.

Board member Fain noted that the amendment to the agreement lasts through the end of June 2027 and asked whether future amendments to the agreement would also be based on an actual cost framework, rather than the previously used flat fee model. Mr. Young responded in the affirmative. Board member Fain stated that she would be in support of the motion but shares similar concerns to those expressed by Board member Balducci.

Board member Fain noted that the action language did not explicitly note the end date of the amendment term and asked for the motion to be amended to include the end date of June 30, 2027.

Chair Walker noted that the motion would be considered with the amendment end date included in the motion language.

It was moved by Board member Mosqueda, seconded by Board member Balducci, and carried by the unanimous vote of all committee members present that Motion No. M2026-38 be forwarded to the Board with a do-pass recommendation as amended.

Resolution No. R2026-22: Adopting the 2027 Service Plan and approving major service changes to ST Express bus routes, and a minor service change to Link light rail 2 Line.

Emily Yasukochi, Service Planning Deputy Executive Director, provided a presentation on the action.

Board member Balducci noted that she received a full report on the engagement conducted for the proposed plan in advance of the meeting, that a plurality of riders expressed strong objections to the proposed modifications to ST Express Route 560 to remove the Burien Transit Center to West Seattle portion of the line, and asked how staff incorporates objections to proposed changes into its planning work. Ms. Yasukochi responded by noting that due to the nature of the survey, a higher proportion of negative feedback on changes is expected, and that staff take those perspectives into account when developing the final proposal for Board adoption.

Board member Balducci noted that feedback from the engagement period also expressed that most riders who use late night service do so on weekends and asked if there was flexibility in extending

maintenance windows during weeknights and have less impact on weekends. Ms. Yasukochi responded that it is something staff could evaluate. Transit Operations Deputy CEO Ed Coben added that any time when service can be ended earlier assists in ensuring fleet maintenance and reliability, and that removing weekends from consideration may have a compounding effect over time. Ms. Yasukochi also noted that the development of night bus service was envisioned to mitigate the impact of ending service earlier on weekends.

Board member Balducci expressed concern about the proposal to end service earlier on weekends, and that while she would support the currently proposed changes, she requested that staff evaluate the effectiveness of the change and see if late evening weekend service could be reimplemented in the next service plan.

Resolution No. R2026-22 was moved by Board member Parshall and seconded by Committee Chair Walker.

Chair Walker reported that she presided over a public hearing on the 2027 Service Plan earlier in the morning, and that public comment was received advocating for additional changes to ST Express bus service to improve frequency and connectivity with the 2 Line.

It was carried by the unanimous vote of all committee members present that Resolution No. R2026-22 be forwarded to the Board with a do-pass recommendation.

Motion No. M2026-39: Authorizing the chief executive officer to execute an agreement with the Washington State Department of Transportation for the preservation of certain bridge structures within the SR-520 corridor as part of the administrative closeout process of the Downtown Redmond Link Extension.

Joshua Hamilton, Commercial Director, and Tony Raben, Downtown Redmond Link Executive Project Director, provided a presentation on the action.

It was moved by Board member Parshall, seconded by Board member Balducci, and carried by the unanimous vote of all committee members present that Motion No. M2026-39 be forwarded to the Board with a do-pass recommendation.

Reports to the Committee

REO Metrics – Link Headway Adherence

Wesley King, Strategic Performance and Partnerships Director, and Antonio Sieunarine, Link Control Center Manager, provided the report, detailing headway adherence monitoring and recovery.

Mr. King detailed year over year systemwide headway adherence from January to September 2026. He reiterated that headway adherence is defined as a vehicle arriving at a station within two minutes of the scheduled four-minute headway expectation in the interlined section of the alignment between International District/Chinatown and Lynnwood City Center Stations. He showed that 1 and 2 Line performance is below the target of 90 percent adherence, with actual performance ranging from 77 percent on the 1 Line in March 2026 to a high of 95 percent in January 2026 on the 2 Line. He noted that staff are planning to provide data with information on planned disruptions and special events to provide a holistic view of the agency's performance. Mr. King then detailed daily adherence totals in the interlined segment, showing that average adherence is above target, at 91 percent during the month of September.

Mr. King noted that staff are working to develop data assessments down to an hour-by-hour basis, with real-time information that can better inform how the agency is impacted and recovers from unplanned disruptions across the system.

Mr. Sieunarine then explained a stringline performance chart, which shows how vehicles move along the system from station to station. He noted a specific incident of a light rail vehicle mechanical failure,

which cascaded into multiple other trains' schedules, resulting in multiple headway impacts over the next hour. By visualizing and tracking this data, link control center staff can better understand how particular failures and recovery methods convert into real-world impacts on the alignment. Mr. Sieunarine then showed the greater impact of that singular event, showcasing how headways were affected systemwide for the next two hours across the system as trains were held to allow the system to return to a normal operating cadence.

Mr. King concluded by noting that staff are working on a new version of the monthly metrics performance report that will provide greater detail and performance data by each mode, as well as enhanced correlative data between on-time performance and ridership data for various types of events.

Passenger Impact Plan

Kevin Mizuta, Asset Readiness and Investment Alignment Director, provided the report.

Mr. Mizuta reported on completed planned disruption work since March 2026, including the repair of a rail break at Pioneer Square Station, the replacement of the overhead catenary system along the Tukwila Curve, testing for Pinehurst Station, testing for the Crosslake Connection, interlining through the Downtown Seattle Transit Tunnel, and repairs to crossing panels on the 2 Line.

Mr. Mizuta detailed upcoming work for Q4 2026, which includes seasonal rail milling along the 2 Line between South Bellevue to Downtown Redmond Stations between September 9 and October 16, 2026. There will also be similar work conducted along the 1 Line north of U District Station between October 19 and November 14, 2026. Both sets of work will require single tracking in the evenings after 11 p.m. while work is underway. Mr. Mizuta further highlighted additional work to rework the overhead catenary system along the 2 Line, which will occur on October 17 and 18, 2026. During this period, a bus bridge will replace regular 2 Line service while work is underway. A holiday moratorium on planned disruptions will also be enacted between Thanksgiving and New Years Day.

Mr. Mizuta highlighted that monthly extended maintenance windows have been successful, with the last window for the year being planned between Westlake and Northgate from October 6 to October 8, 2026, with service ending earlier than usual at 11 p.m.

Executive session – None

Other business – None

Next meeting

Thursday, November 5, 2026
1:00 to 3:00 p.m.
Ruth Fisher Boardroom and Virtually via Zoom.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 2:33 p.m.

Kristina Walker
Rider Experience and Operations Committee Chair

ATTEST:

Kathryn Flores
Board Administrator

APPROVED on November 5, 2026, HRR.