



**Office of the Mayor**  
**City of Seattle**  
Bruce Harrell, Mayor

## **Executive Order 2025-02: Supporting and Expediting Sound Transit 3 Investments in the City of Seattle**

**WHEREAS**, Sound Transit’s ST3 Program (ST3) is one of the largest infrastructure programs in Seattle’s history; and

**WHEREAS**, the high-capacity transit investments in ST3 – including mega-projects of West Seattle Link Extension (WSLE) and Ballard Link Extension (BLE) -- offer tremendous opportunity to transform regional mobility and expand access to housing, jobs, and other destinations for Seattle and our entire region; and

**WHEREAS**, the City of Seattle supports these projects and believes it is critical to do everything it can to deliver ST3 and provide a great, expanded, and safe transit experience to the public as quickly and effectively as possible; and

**WHEREAS**, in 2016, when ST3 passed regionally with 54% approval, Seattle voters overwhelmingly supported the project – with over 70% saying yes, and more recent polling reflects the continued support of Seattle’s registered voters to keep construction for light rail to West Seattle and Ballard on track to open in 2032 and 2039, respectively, even if it costs more; and

**WHEREAS**, in 2018 the City of Seattle signed a Partnering Agreement with Sound Transit with a focus on intensive staff coordination and streamlined permitting; and

**WHEREAS**, the current interdepartmental ST3 City Team, managed by the SDOT Sound Transit Program, includes approximately 20 dedicated full-time staff, as well as limited part-time capacity from staff across many City Departments; and

**WHEREAS**, the City is leading the design and construction of street improvements to make it safer and easier to travel to and from the light rail stations in Seattle; and

**WHEREAS**, the City is also responsible for managing street use during and after construction, as well as ensuring compliance with city codes and permit requirements, and environmental regulations; and

**WHEREAS**, the City’s interdepartmental team is essential to the streamlined permitting and eventual delivery of the ST3 projects in Seattle; and

**WHEREAS**, as part of its partnership with Sound Transit and to support the WSLE and BLE projects, the City has planned and is undertaking numerous actions to streamline the future permit process in efforts to support more efficient ST3 project schedules, minimizing project risk and associated ST3 project costs; and

**WHEREAS**, the City has critical roles to support Sound Transit's projects that, if fully resourced and realized, will facilitate project delivery, maximize public benefit, and minimize harm to existing communities; and

**WHEREAS**, in the next several years, as planning moves to final design, permitting, and construction, the City will oversee an enormous volume of work to support on-time and on-budget project delivery. By dedicating additional staffing resources to the City's ST3 Program, we are working to prevent ST3 project schedules and overall delivery timelines from negative impacts;

**NOW, THEREFORE, I, Bruce A. Harrell, Mayor of Seattle, order the following actions to address these concerns,**

- **A New Expanded Office:** The City will expand the Office of Waterfront and Civic Projects to provide key oversight over the Sound Transit Program under the leadership of Director Angela Brady. Director Brady will continue to report directly to the Mayor's Office in this capacity.

Sound Transit's ST3 projects within the City (including West Seattle and Ballard Link Extension projects) are transitioning from the planning and environmental review phases into massive scale design and construction efforts. The City needs to be poised to provide highly effective multi-departmental technical leadership to support these efforts. The Office of Waterfront and Civic Projects has a demonstrated track record of successful partnership with other agencies and community stakeholders to deliver transformative major projects for the City of Seattle. The expanded Office of Waterfront, Civic Projects & Sound Transit is positioned to bring similar success and a One Seattle approach to other highly visible and complex projects like ST3.

- **Streamlined Permitting/Processes:** The Executive will develop and transmit to the City Council necessary legislation to streamline the permit process and help deliver light rail as soon as possible.

RCW 36.70A.200 defines light rail as an essential public facility. As part of its partnership with Sound Transit and to support the ST3 projects, the City is undertaking numerous actions to streamline the future permit process and remove regulatory barriers to shorten project timelines and minimize risk to the ST3 projects. In 2025 and 2026, my administration will develop several bodies of legislation, including land use code

amendments, formal adoption of the ST3 projects, and necessary real property transactions to allow the projects to proceed as quickly as possible.

- **Key Resources/Staffing:** The Executive will develop a resource plan that will detail how the new 2025 – 2026 budget authority will support these bodies of work.

Sound Transit 3 is one of the largest infrastructure programs in Seattle’s history. City staffing is critical to ensuring on-time project delivery while ensuring compliance with relevant statutes and codes and upholding the 2018 Partnering Agreement. The budget includes \$5.2 million in 2025 and \$6.8 million in 2026, held in fiscal reserves, pending the development of a detailed resource plan. The detailed plan will identify up to 50 additional staff in various City departments who will collaborate with Sound Transit on project design and engineering, environmental review and project permitting, and construction management and project impact mitigation, as well as lead on station area planning and access projects to support the new light rail station communities.

- **A Strategy for Delivering an Excellent Transit Experience:** In collaboration with other City departments and Sound Transit, the newly expanded Office of the Waterfront, Civic Projects & Sound Transit will produce a four-year workplan identifying key opportunities for the City to deliver an excellent and safe transit experience for riders and the overall community.

This workplan will focus on station design including integration into community, public realm and safety improvements, and access to and from other modes of transportation. It will build on the Directors Rule 2-2024 for City of Seattle Light Rail Design Guidelines adopted in 2024 and how they will help shape project review and permitting of the Sound Transit system. In addition, it will outline key City-led initiatives for station area planning, station access improvements, and equitable transit-oriented development that together will strive to create complete and connected communities near Sound Transit investments.

Questions about the implementation of this Executive Order should be directed to Sara Maxana, Director, Sound Transit Program.

Dated this 20th day of February 2025.



Bruce A. Harrell  
Mayor