

Business Item

Metropolitan Council



Committee Meeting Date: not applicable

For the Metropolitan Council: June 22, 2022

Business Item: 2022-145

Endorse the Metro Transit Safety and Security Action Plan Areas of Work and Establish Quarterly Reporting Requirement

District(s), Member(s): All
Policy/Legal Reference: n/a
Staff Prepared/Presented: Wes Kooistra, General Manager, 612-349-7510
Richard Grates, Interim Chief of Police, 612-349-7200
Lesley Kandaras, Chief of Staff, 612-349-7513
Division/Department: Metro Transit

Proposed Action

That the Metropolitan Council endorse the Metro Transit Safety and Security Action Plan Areas of Work to advance the Metro Transit Police Work Group’s recommendations and establish a quarterly reporting requirement.

Background

The Metro Transit Safety and Security Action Plan is comprised of action items to improve public safety on transit. The Safety and Security Action Plan advances recommendations from the Metropolitan Council’s Metro Transit Police Work Group and is based on feedback from riders, community members, and employees.

In June 2020, Chair Zelle announced that the Metropolitan Council “in fulfilling our oversight role will be conducting a comprehensive review of the Metro Transit department’s policing policies, practices, and relationships,” and that this review would “inform our ongoing efforts to improve transit security and customer experiences on our region’s transit system.”

Following the June 2020 police review announcement, the Metropolitan Council began working with the Citizens League to develop and implement a robust community engagement strategy to guide this work. Approximately 1,000 people shared their perspectives on transit safety through this engagement process.

In August 2021, the Metropolitan Council formed the Metro Transit Police Work Group to continue the police review (Metropolitan Council Business Item 2021-213). The work group met from August 2021 through February 2022 to build upon the community engagement conducted by the Citizens League and their partner, the Twin Cities Innovation Alliance.

In February 2022, the Metro Transit Police Work Group delivered recommendations to the full Metropolitan Council. The recommendations envision a people-centered approach to public safety, security, and policing on transit.

The work group recommended a vision for transit safety that:

- Provides a quality transit experience for all, using an anti-racist lens, equity lens, and an inclusive approach to transit safety, security, and policing
- Addresses systemic issues by fostering community relationships and partnerships
- Demonstrates responsive leadership and accountability for results

The Metro Transit Police Work Group further recommended that Metro Transit develop a plan outlining specific, measurable goals and action items to address the work group's vision and recommendations.

Following the Metro Transit Police Work Group's recommendations, Metro Transit developed the Transit Safety and Security Action Plan to advance the work group's vision for public safety on transit.

Metro Transit Safety and Security Action Plan Areas of Work

Metro Transit developed the Safety and Security Action Plan to advance the Metro Transit Police Work Group's recommendations submitted on February 28, 2022. The draft plan was reviewed at the June 1, 2022 Metropolitan Council Committee of the Whole meeting.

The initial action plan includes nearly 40 action items organized around three main Areas of Work:

1. Improving conditions on the system
2. Training and supporting employees
3. Engaging customers and partners

Quarterly Reporting Requirement

The Safety and Security Action Plan will be regularly reviewed and adjusted as Metro Transit implements action items and evaluates the impact of those actions.

Since the Safety and Security Action Plan is designed to be a dynamic document, Metro Transit will provide quarterly reports to the Metropolitan Council that include:

- Changes to the action plan since the prior report
- Implementation status of action items
- Quantitative and qualitative data to illustrate performance on measurable goals identified in the plan and information on data under development to enhance the measurement and communication of results
- Other information as requested by the Metropolitan Council

The first quarterly report will be provided to the Metropolitan Council in September 2022.

Quarterly reports are public reports and will be available on the Metro Transit website.

Rationale

The Metropolitan Council's endorsement of the Safety and Security Action Plan Areas of Work is important to the success of this plan because it demonstrates to employees, customers, and the community that the Metropolitan Council supports Metro Transit's approach to improve public safety and the perception of safety on transit.

The Metropolitan Council also recognizes that an effective action plan is an agile one, and this plan is intentionally designed to change and evolve as implementation moves forward. Thus, the Metropolitan Council requires a quarterly update on plan progress, including changes made to the plan based on lessons learned through the course of implementing the plan.

Thrive Lens Analysis

The Metro Transit Safety and Security Action Plan contributes to the regional outcomes and principles in *Thrive MSP 2040* by establishing a framework and commitment to improve public safety on transit.

Public safety on transit strongly correlates with customer satisfaction with transit; thus, improving public safety on transit has the potential to help attract and retain transit riders. A strong transit system contributes to the prosperity and the quality of life in our region by connecting people to important destinations, such as work, school, health care, and recreation, and by providing a viable alternative to single-occupant vehicle travel.

In accordance with Metropolitan Council's Equity Policy (OEE0 1-1), Metro Transit will continue to apply an equity lens when making decisions about public safety on transit. This includes following Human Resources guidance on diverse hiring practices, developing data that allow us to assess whether the impacts of pilots and programs have disproportionate effects based on race, ethnicity, gender, income, or ability, ensuring Metro Transit staff participation in enterprise-wide racial equity training, and continuing public engagement to understand the impacts of this work on customers and employees.

Funding

There is no direct cost associated with this business item because existing resources (e.g., staff time) will be used to coordinate the implementation of the plan and reporting requirements.

Small Business Inclusion

Not applicable to the endorsement of Safety and Security Action Plan Areas of Work or the establishment of the quarterly reporting requirement.

