

Committee Report

Transportation Committee



Committee Meeting Date: January 13, 2025

For the Metropolitan Council: January 22, 2025

Business Item: 2025-28

Adoption of 2025 Highway Safety Performance Targets

Proposed Action

That the Metropolitan Council adopt the Option A 2025 safety performance targets based on the 2020-2024 Minnesota Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP) goal, which advance a long-term goal of zero deaths:

- Number of all fatalities: no more than 74
- Fatal injuries per 100 million VMT: no more than 0.26
- Number of all serious injuries: no more than 464
- Serious injuries per 100 million VMT: no more than 1.64
- Pedestrian and bicyclist fatalities and serious injuries: no more than 115

Summary of Transportation Committee Discussion/Questions

Heidi Schallberg, Planning Analyst, Metropolitan Transportation Services, presented this item.

Chamblis asked about changes in seat belt use and chemical use. Schallberg said that information was not at hand but could be provided and would follow up. Chair Barber said MnDOT has shared at TAB that speed has often been a factor since COVID-19 began.

Motion by Carter, Toni, seconded by Chamblis. Motion carried.



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District(s), Member(s):	All Districts and Members
Policy/Legal Reference:	23 CFR Part 490
Staff Prepared/Presented:	Jed Hanson, Planner, Multimodal Planning, 651-602-1716 Heidi Schallberg, Planning Analyst, Multimodal Planning, 651-602-1721 Amy Vennewitz, Deputy Director, Finance & Planning, 651-602-1508
Division/Department:	Metropolitan Transportation Services (MTS)

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Background

All State Departments of Transportation (DOTs) and Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) must have performance measurement programs and set targets to monitor progress. Targets for the safety performance measures are required annually. The safety targets serve a dual purpose:

- Inform planning and programming to reduce fatal and serious injuries
- Track performance of the Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP)

After the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) receives statewide safety targets from MnDOT annually in August, MPOs must either support the statewide target or choose an alternative target by February 27 the following year. Federal requirements specify five safety performance measures for both state DOTs and MPOs that must have annual targets:

- Number of all fatalities
- Fatalities per 100 million vehicle miles travelled (VMT)
- Number of all serious injuries
- Serious injuries per 100 million VMT
- Number of combined pedestrian and bicycle fatalities and serious injuries

State DOTs are required to make significant progress on achieving their statewide safety

targets; they are subject to additional HSIP requirements if they fail to make significant progress. MPOs are not subject to additional federal requirements if they fail to make significant progress.

Option A. Continue method based on 2020-2024 SHSP

The Met Council’s current method sets safety targets on a straight-line decline from 2020/2021 targets to the region’s share of statewide goals in the 2020-2024 Minnesota Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP). The SHSP acknowledges the long-term goal of zero deaths and serious injuries on roads in the state, and the plan sets a five-year goal to reduce traffic deaths to 225 or fewer statewide and serious injuries to 980 or fewer statewide by 2025, on the way to the long-term goal of zero.

The SHSP is currently undergoing a regular update, so the current target setting method will need to be reconsidered in 2026. Based on the current SHSP, the Met Council’s current method sets targets on pace to reach zero in 2035 for fatal injuries, and 2032 for serious injuries and non-motorized fatal and serious injuries. Meeting these targets would be exceptionally challenging considering asset lifetimes and the lag time between programming and capital improvements.

Safety targets using the Option A method would be:

- Number of all fatalities: no more than 74
- Fatal injuries per 100 million VMT: no more than 0.26
- Number of all serious injuries: no more than 464
- Serious injuries per 100 million VMT: no more than 1.64
- Pedestrian and bicyclist fatalities and serious injuries: no more than 115

This option was recommended by the TAB, TAC, and TAC Planning committees and subject of the requested action today.

Option B. Change to method based on TPP objective

Worsening safety performance since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic has caused a wide gap between adopted targets and achievable short-term performance improvements. A slower rate of decline may be more consistent with the purpose of tracking achievable improvements.

The method’s basis could be changed to align with the draft Imagine 2050 Transportation Policy Plan, setting targets on a straight-line decline from current 2024 targets to zero in all measures by 2050. The objective states that “people do not die or face life-changing injuries when using any form of transportation.” For the purposes of setting short-term targets, Met Council staff interpret this objective as seeking to reach zero in these measures no later than the 2050 planning horizon.

The public comment process for the Imagine 2050 TPP has concluded. Feedback related to this objective was generally supportive. No changes to the objective are planned prior to anticipated adoption in February.

Safety targets using the Option B method would be:

- Number of all fatalities: no more than 79
- Fatal injuries per 100 million VMT: no more than 0.28
- Number of all serious injuries: no more than 512
- Serious injuries per 100 million VMT: no more than 1.81
- Pedestrian and bicyclist fatalities and serious injuries: no more than 126

This option was reviewed by the TAB, TAC, and TAC Planning committees and is provided for information only. The technical committees preferred to defer adjusting the targets to align with the Imagine 2050 Transportation Policy Plan until after finalization of the anticipated FHWA rulemaking detailed in the next section.

Pending Rulemaking

In 2024, the Federal Highway Administration issued a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking related to

the National Performance Management Measures, including safety targets. The draft rule may require MPOs to [set constantly declining targets](#), may [define the baseline](#) used in future target setting, and may [change the frequency](#) of target setting and reporting. The region's target setting methodology will need to be revised as soon as 2026 if this becomes a final rule.

Performance Assessment

2023 Performance

1. Both fatal and serious injuries slightly fell compared to 2022, but these outcomes remain elevated compared to the three-year average prior to the COVID-19 pandemic.
 - Serious injuries remain at an elevated level following a sharp rise in 2022.
 - Safety performance targets were not achieved in 2023 (Table 1).

*Table 1: Measure Performance, 2023, Metropolitan Planning Area**

Measure	2017-2019 Average	2021-2023 Average	2023 Actual	2023 Target
All fatalities	130	171	147	90
Fatal injury rate per 100m VMT	0.44	0.63	0.53	0.33
All serious injuries	796	888	924	600
Serious injury rate per 100m VMT	2.71	3.25	3.32	2.18
Non-motorized fatal and serious injuries	202	207	199	147
Pedestrian fatalities	27	33	29	N/A
Bicyclist fatalities	6	3	4	N/A
Pedestrian serious injuries	127	120	112	N/A
Bicyclist serious injuries	42	50	54	N/A

* Data courtesy of MnDOT.



Preliminary 2024 Performance

- Preliminary data for January-October show fatal and serious injuries have remained roughly flat compared to the same period in 2023, but these outcomes remain elevated compared to the three-year average prior to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Non-motorized fatal and serious injuries rose in 2024 compared to the January-October period for years prior. Total non-motorized fatal and serious injuries in 2024 have already exceeded the year-end total for 2023.
- Safety performance targets will not be achieved in 2024 (Table 2).

Table 2: Preliminary Performance, Jan-Oct 2024, Metropolitan Planning Area*

Measure	2017-2019 Average	2021-2023 Average	2024 Actual	2024 Target (Jan-Dec)
All fatalities	111	145	126	82
All serious injuries	685	761	781	532
Non-motorized fatal and serious injuries	168	178	208	131
Pedestrian fatalities	22	25	29	N/A
Bicyclist fatalities	4	3	3	N/A
Pedestrian serious injuries	100	104	122	N/A
Bicyclist serious injuries	41	47	54	N/A

*Preliminary data courtesy of MnDOT. The final data may change.

Rationale

The current 2040 Transportation Policy Plan (TPP) includes performance measures to monitor and assess system performance. The proposed safety performance measures and targets directly support the Safety and Security goal of the 2040 TPP, while fulfilling federal metropolitan planning requirements. Reducing crash injuries to or below the regional safety targets will require coordinated action on resource allocation, policies, and investment decisions from partners at all levels in the region. This action was reviewed and recommended by the Transportation Advisory Board (TAB), Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), and TAC Planning Committee.

Thrive Lens Analysis

The highway safety performance measures are broadly associated with all five Thrive Outcomes, most directly to the Livability outcome. This action promotes the Livability outcome by focusing on the lives and safety of all residents within the region and actions that affect their health and wellness. The safety performance measures promote creation and improvement of infrastructure necessary for a safe transportation system.

Funding

There are no direct funding implications with this action.

