

ACTION TRANSMITTAL – 2022-02

DATE: December 29, 2021

TO: Technical Advisory Committee

FROM: TAC Planning Committee

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SUBJECT: Proposed 2022 Safety Targets Recommendations

REQUESTED ACTION: Staff requests consideration of the recommendations of the Safety Performance Work Group for the 2022 safety performance targets in Table 1 for adoption by the Metropolitan Council.

RECOMMENDED MOTION: That the TAC Planning Committee recommend to TAC that the Metropolitan Council adopt the 2022 safety performance targets in Table 1.

SUMMARY: This item includes recommendations for the 2022 federally-required safety performance measure targets MPOs must adopt annually. These targets are shown in Table 1 on Page 2. Comparisons of actual numbers to annual targets are shown on Page 4. The desired trend is for the numbers of people killed or seriously injured in traffic crashes to decline, yet actual numbers are increasing significantly in 2021. The Safety Performance Work Group also had three other recommendations for staff actions to improve safety.

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE OF ACTION: All State Departments of Transportation (DOTs) and Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) must adopt a program to measure system performance and set performance targets to monitor progress. Targets for the safety performance measures are required annually. Safety is one of five categories for federally-required performance measures.

After DOTs adopt their annual statewide safety targets, MPOs are given an additional 180 days to either support the statewide target or choose an alternative target. MnDOT officially adopted its updated safety performance measures and established statewide targets on August 31, 2021. The Council must adopt updated safety performance targets no later than February 27, 2022.

Federal requirements specify five safety performance measures for both state DOTs and MPOs that must have annual targets:

1. Number of all fatalities
2. Fatalities per 100 million vehicle miles travelled (VMT)
3. Number of all serious injuries
4. Serious injuries per 100 million VMT
5. Number of combined pedestrian and bicycle fatalities and serious injuries

State DOTs are obligated to make significant progress on performance against their state safety targets. There are additional federal requirements for state DOTs in the federal Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) if they fail to make significant progress. The USDOT does not place additional requirements on MPOs if they fail to make progress on their required safety targets.

In previous years, the Council used the same methodology as MnDOT to calculate safety targets for the Council’s metropolitan planning area. Repeating this practice for 2020 would have resulted in an increase in the Council’s adopted targets for fatalities, which was of concern to local partners. As part of the adoption of the 2020 targets, the Council recommended establishing a safety performance work group to recommend a methodology for calculating future targets to address these concerns. This work group convened at the end of 2020 to make a recommendation for setting the 2021 targets.

Also in 2020, MnDOT finalized the 2020-2024 Strategic Highway Safety Plan. This plan is intended for traffic safety partners at every level in Minnesota – state, regional, county, and local levels of government. It acknowledges the long-term goal of zero deaths and serious injuries on roads in the state, and the Plan set 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 2040 Transportation Policy Plan supports the long-term goal of zero deaths and serious injuries on roads in our region. Based on average performance from 2015-2019, the region’s share of 2025 statewide goals are:

- 74 fatal injuries,
- 464 serious injuries, and
- 115 pedestrian and bicycle fatal and serious injuries.

Safety Performance Work Group Recommendations

For its 2021 targets, the Council adopted the recommendation of the Safety Performance Work Group, which are shown in Table 2. Approved targets relative to crash data is shown in this table for 2019 through 2021.

At their November 19, 2021, meeting, the Safety Performance Work Group reviewed year-to-date crash data and reaffirmed its support for continuing the use of this methodology for 2022, which reduces the targets annually to reach our region’s share of MnDOT’s 2025 Strategic Highway Safety Plan goals.

Using this methodology, 2022 targets would be as shown in bold in Table 1.

Table 1: Recommended Safety Targets for 2022

Year	Number of All Fatalities	Rate of Fatalities Per 100 Million VMT	Number of All Serious Injuries	Rate of Serious Injuries Per 100 Million VMT	Number of Pedestrian/Bicyclist Fatalities & Serious Injuries
2022	98	0.33	669	2.24	164
2023	90	0.30	601	2.00	148
2024	82	0.27	532	1.76	131
2025	74	0.24	464	1.53	115

Later years are shown as illustration of this progress toward the goal. The Council will still be asked to set targets annually. The targets should help the region evaluate how we are doing on these safety goals over the time frame covered by the state safety plan. Under this method, our targets fall annually by approximately 8 fatalities, 69 serious injuries, and 17 pedestrian and bicycle fatal and serious injuries.

The work group also recommended additional actions to work toward reducing the number of people being killed and seriously injured on the region's transportation system. Staff will address these recommendations as part of the regular work plan.

1. Create a policy framework of accountability when we are not meeting our regional targets. Although the USDOT does not review MPO progress with additional requirements for not making progress, the region should hold itself accountable. A similar approach could be used where increased funding from the Regional Solicitation is focused on safety when the region is not meeting its targets.
2. The region needs to discuss the different policy goals, investments, and tradeoffs before the 2050 Transportation Policy Plan to better understand and communicate priorities, including safety. The 2022 Unified Planning Work Program includes a study for TPP goals review, engagement, and update to inform the 2050 TPP that should address this need.
3. A work group should review the Regional Solicitation criteria and weightings and make recommendations for changes to emphasize safety improvements that will help address these safety targets for fatalities and serious injuries. This could be addressed as part of the routine evaluation that follows each solicitation or as a separate process.

RELATIONSHIP TO REGIONAL POLICY: The current 2040 Transportation Policy Plan includes performance measures used to monitor and assess system performance. These performance measures support the six over-arching transportation system goals of the TPP. The proposed safety performance measures and targets directly support the Safety and Security goal of the 2040 TPP, while fulfilling the federal requirements of an MPO. Achieving regional safety targets will take coordinated action on resource allocation, policies, and investment decisions from partners at all levels in the region.

STAFF ANALYSIS: Overall, the metro tends to represent a lower percentage of the statewide fatalities and serious injuries compared to our share of the population, except for pedestrian and bicyclist fatalities and serious injuries, where the region tends to have a higher share of the statewide numbers. The desired trend is to continue to make progress on reducing deaths and serious injuries for people traveling by all modes within the region.

The work group reviewed crash data for January through October for 2021 compared to the targets set for the year. The following table includes actual numbers compared to targets for 2019 and 2020, along with the year-to-date data for 2021. Measures where targets were not achieved are highlighted in grey. For example, the fatalities target for 2021 was 106, but between January and the end of October, there were 156 fatalities, and this target will not be achieved.

Table 2: Adopted Safety Targets Compared to Results

Measure	2019 Target	2019 Actual	2020 Target	2020 Actual	2021 Target	2021 Actual Jan-Oct
All Fatalities	108	131	106	121	106	156
Fatal Injury Rate per 100m VMT	0.34	0.45	0.34	0.50	0.36	TBD
All Serious Injuries	748	699	738	691	738	703
Serious Injury Rate per 100m VMT	2.37	2.39	2.36	2.86	2.49	TBD
Non-Motorized Fatal and Serious Injuries	190	182	181	157	181	182

Serious injury rate target and performance in 2020 differ in part due to lower actual VMT than estimated when targets were set due to COVID-19. For 2021, YTD numbers are for the seven-county metro region only, not including urbanized portions of Wright and Sherburne counties.

The work group also reviewed year-to-date data compared to the previous year and the three-year average. This table shows the numbers of fatalities and serious injuries only without the rates. Measures where performance significantly worsened are highlighted in grey.

Table 3: Comparison Between Three-Year Averages and Performance for 2020 and 2021

Measure	2017-2019 Average Jan-Oct	2020 Actual Jan-Oct	2021 Actual Jan-Oct	% Difference Between 2021-2020	% Difference Between 2021 & 2017-19 Average
All Fatalities	106	100	156	+56%	+47%
Pedestrian Fatalities	21	15	30	+100%	+41%
Bicyclist Fatalities	4	5	1	-80%	-77%
All Serious Injuries	672	609	703	+15%	+5%
Pedestrian Serious Injuries	99	82	119	+45%	+21%
Bicyclist Serious Injuries	40	31	32	+3%	-21%

Public comments about safety the Council received on the draft 2022-2025 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), which is required to include the adopted safety targets, are attached to this action transmittal and were provided to the work group for their consideration. Commenters requested either lower targets and/or a Vision Zero approach to safety.

The Council is working on completing a pedestrian safety action plan in the first part of 2022 and will begin a follow up study on other vehicle crashes later in 2022 to help identify trends and potential strategies for the region to decrease the numbers of people killed or seriously injured in traffic crashes.

COMMITTEE COMMENTS AND ACTION: In 2020, TAB recommended the creation of a Safety Performance Work Group to evaluate the best methodology for setting the regional targets. Members for this work group were recruited from TAC members, in addition to coordinating with appropriate staff from MnDOT. Work group members included representation from Scott County, Ramsey County, Minneapolis, Saint Paul, and three offices at MnDOT: Metro Planning, Program Management, and Transit; Office of Transportation System Management; and the Office of Traffic Engineering. This group met in December 2020 to review potential methodologies and recommended the one that was adopted for 2021.

On November 19, 2021, the work group reconvened to review performance numbers to date and reaffirmed its support for continuing with the adopted methodology for the 2022 safety targets. The group’s recommendations are described in the Background and Purpose of Action section. Participants in the work group this year included: Bill Dermody from the City of Saint Paul; Ethan Fawley from the City of Minneapolis; Scott Mareck from Ramsey County; Jon Solberg from MnDOT Metro Planning, Program Management, and Transit (also TAC Chair); Steve Misgen from MnDOT Office of Traffic Engineering; Derek Leuer from MnDOT Office of Traffic Engineering; Eric DeVoe from MnDOT Office of Traffic Engineering; and Katriona Molasky from MnDOT Office of Transportation System Management.

The TAC Planning Committee unanimously recommended these targets at their December 9, 2021, meeting.

ROUTING

TO	ACTION REQUESTED	DATE COMPLETED OR EXPECTED
TAC Planning Committee	Review & Recommend	12/9/2021
Technical Advisory Committee	Review & Recommend	1/5/2022
Transportation Advisory Board	Review & Recommend	1/19/2022
Metropolitan Council Transportation Committee	Review & Recommend	1/24/2022
Metropolitan Council	Review & Adopt	2/9/2022

Safety-Related Public Comments on Draft 2022-2025 TIP

Commenter Number	Commenter Name	Organization	Comment Topic	Full Comment	Source	Response
23.0	Sam Penders		Safety targets	We need a lower target for serious roadway injuries/deaths. 1000 per year is too high. Let's aim for zero and change our streets to achieve that.	Email	Thank you for your comment. The Council agrees that any people dying or being seriously injured from traffic crashes is unacceptable. We will include your comments for consideration in our discussion with our local partners when setting the 2022 annual targets. The Council is currently leading a pedestrian safety action plan to identify strategies to eliminate fatalities and serious injuries for people walking and rolling in the region. The Council will also be expanding its safety planning work to help elevate the need to end traffic deaths and serious injuries in the region through working with our partners across the region, including state and local governments.
24.1	Derek Eicholz		Safety targets	Additionally, I find it abhorrent to just accept the huge amount of people being killed by motorists. Vision Zero is zero for a reason, it's not Vision Hopefully Maybe A Couple Less People Dying If We're Lucky. These lives are in this councils hands, and I can't believe how little they seem to matter. These changes are possible to save lives needlessly lost each year. It simply takes prioritizing those lives instead of the holiness of the automobile and the incorrect assessment that more highways will reduce congestion.	Email	Thank you for your comment. The Council agrees that any people dying or being seriously injured from traffic crashes is unacceptable. We will include your comments for consideration in our discussion with our local partners when setting the 2022 annual targets. The Council is currently leading a pedestrian safety action plan to identify strategies to eliminate fatalities and serious injuries for people walking and rolling in the region. The Council will also be expanding its safety planning work to help elevate the need to end traffic deaths and serious injuries in the region through working with our partners across the region, including state and local governments.
26.0	@lieholepiehole		Safety targets	First up: safety targets (p. 17). The TIP aims for 844 traffic and 108 non-motorized fatalities/serious injuries in 2021. (Non-motorized fatalities/injuries = people not in cars.) https://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/hcip/spm/docs/spm_factsheet.pdf The plan acknowledges that the Council supports working toward Vision Zero but claims that incremental change is necessary. I don't think this is really acceptable when incremental change allows for nearly 1,000 preventable traffic deaths this year alone. (4/12)	Twitter	Thank you for your comment. The Council agrees that any people dying or being seriously injured from traffic crashes is unacceptable. We will include your comments for consideration in our discussion with our local partners when setting the 2022 annual targets. The Council is currently leading a pedestrian safety action plan to identify strategies to eliminate fatalities and serious injuries for people walking and rolling in the region. The Council will also be expanding its safety planning work to help elevate the need to end traffic deaths and serious injuries in the region through working with our partners across the region, including state and local governments.
115.0	Jesse Lorenz		Vision Zero	The Met Council should be pursuing Vision Zero targets more aggressively - especially for vulnerable road users. Having a goal of 181 pedestrians and bicyclists being killed or seriously injured is appalling, and should be reduced rapidly, not "incrementally".	Email	Thank you for your comment. The Council agrees that any people dying or being seriously injured from traffic crashes is unacceptable. We will include your comments for consideration in our discussion with our local partners when setting the 2022 annual targets. The Council is currently leading a pedestrian safety action plan to identify strategies to eliminate fatalities and serious injuries for people walking and rolling in the region. The Council will also be expanding its safety planning work to help elevate the need to end traffic deaths and serious injuries in the region through working with our partners across the region, including state and local governments.
119.3	Mark Snyder		Vision Zero	I was also disappointed to see the stated objective for safety targets. While Vision Zero is an aspirational goal, surely the Council can do better than "incremental progress" towards that goal. Every traffic fatality is preventable. Every traffic fatality not only cuts that person's life short but destroys the lives of their families and loved ones. We cannot continue to let safety take a back seat to driver convenience. Do more. Do better.	Email	Thank you for your comment. The Council agrees that any people dying or being seriously injured from traffic crashes is unacceptable. We will include your comments for consideration in our discussion with our local partners when setting the 2022 annual targets. The Council is currently leading a pedestrian safety action plan to identify strategies to eliminate fatalities and serious injuries for people walking and rolling in the region. The Council will also be expanding its safety planning work to help elevate the need to end traffic deaths and serious injuries in the region through working with our partners across the region, including state and local governments.
129.1	Aileen Cole		Traffic fatalities and serious injuries targets	<p>Furthermore, given my particular concern for bicyclist, pedestrian, and transit-user safety, I am disappointed and mortified by the targets identified in Table 2 of the Draft TIP (page 17). While it is commendable that, "The Council supports [efforts like Towards Zero Deaths and Vision Zero] and will consistently work towards reducing fatalities and serious injuries," this statement lacks ambition, defers to underwhelming incrementalism, and is inconsistent with other efforts to reduce vehicular injuries and fatalities both nationwide and here in the Twin Cities metropolitan area. Per Table 2, the Council's 2021 "target" 2021 traffic fatality rate is 106, and its "target" number of serious injuries is 738. Comparatively, the Metropolitan Transportation Commission for the Bay Area Association of Governments, a regional metropolitan planning association serving an area nearly thrice as populous as the area served by this Council—has a clearly identified and ambitious goal of eliminating all traffic fatalities and injuries regionwide by 2030.¹ More locally, the Hennepin County 2040 Plan identifies an even more ambitious goal of eliminating such deaths by 2027.² Given that Hennepin County is the most populous county within the Council's planning area, and that the Council specifically reviewed the Hennepin County 2040 Plan in 2019, I request that the Final TIP be updated to provide a specific goal date—no later than 2027—by which the Council aims to eliminate vehicular fatalities.</p> <p>¹ Metropolitan Transportation Commission. 2021. "Bay Area Vision Zero Working Group." Regional Safety Policy. https://mtc.ca.gov/about-mtc/what-mtc/mtc-organization/interagency-committees/bay-area-vision-zero-working-group</p> <p>² City of Minneapolis. 2019. Minneapolis 2040 Comprehensive Plan. Policy 26. Vision Zero: Eliminate fatalities and severe injuries that are a result of crashes on City streets by 2027. https://minneapolis2040.com/policies/vision-zero/</p>	Email;#Letter	Thank you for your comment. The Council agrees that any people dying or being seriously injured from traffic crashes is unacceptable. We will include your comments for consideration in our discussion with our local partners when setting the 2022 annual targets. The Council is currently leading a pedestrian safety action plan to identify strategies to eliminate fatalities and serious injuries for people walking and rolling in the region. The Council will also be expanding its safety planning work to help elevate the need to end traffic deaths and serious injuries in the region through working with our partners across the region, including state and local governments.

Commenter Number	Commenter Name	Organization	Comment Topic	Full Comment	Source	Response
132.3	Alicia Valenti		Vision Zero	I am also disappointed by the safety goals--while I know this is a federal standard, as someone who typically walks, bikes, and takes transit to get around, it is hard to accept that the plan allows for more than 100 deaths (caused by drivers) for people walking and biking, particularly given that people of color are disproportionately injured and killed by cars while walking/biking. The plan should be updated to more aggressively work toward Vision Zero by encouraging/requiring street design that slows traffic and improves sightlines as much as possible.	Email	Thank you for your comment. The Council agrees that any people dying or being seriously injured from traffic crashes is unacceptable. We will include your comments for consideration in our discussion with our local partners when setting the 2022 annual targets. The Council is currently leading a pedestrian safety action plan to identify strategies to eliminate fatalities and serious injuries for people walking and rolling in the region. The Council will also be expanding its safety planning work to help elevate the need to end traffic deaths and serious injuries in the region through working with our partners across the region, including state and local governments.
136.0	Serafina Scheel		Safety targets	1. Traffic deaths and injuries are rising in our state. The current goals of allowing 1000 preventable deaths are not acceptable. Drivers and roads are becoming less safe. We need to reverse that trend by thinking how we can better engineer for safety. We've learned in the past year that congestion and slower traffic, although they may be minor annoyances, make transportation safer.	Email	Thank you for your comment. The Council agrees that any people dying or being seriously injured from traffic crashes is unacceptable. We will include your comments for consideration in our discussion with our local partners when setting the 2022 annual targets from this year's target of no more than 106 fatalities. The Council is currently leading a pedestrian safety action plan to identify strategies to eliminate fatalities and serious injuries for people walking and rolling in the region. The Council will also be expanding its safety planning work to help elevate the need to end traffic deaths and serious injuries in the region through working with our partners across the region, including state and local governments.
139.1	Kathryn Murray	St. Anthony Park Community Council/District 12	Safety targets	In keeping with the St. Anthony Park Community Council's 10-year plan, SAPCC finds that while the Transportation Improvement Program's nod toward Vision Zero is good, a goal as high as almost 1,000 deaths in 2021 is too high, and indicates a lack of underlying strategies in the plan to lower the number of deaths.	Email;#Letter	Thank you for your comment. The Council agrees that any people dying or being seriously injured from traffic crashes is unacceptable. We will include your comments for consideration in our discussion with our local partners when setting the 2022 annual targets from this year's target of no more than 106 fatalities. The Council is currently leading a pedestrian safety action plan to identify strategies to eliminate fatalities and serious injuries for people walking and rolling in the region. The Council will also be expanding its safety planning work to help elevate the need to end traffic deaths and serious injuries in the region through working with our partners across the region, including state and local governments.