

Business Item

Transportation Committee



Committee Meeting Date: November 13, 2023

For the Metropolitan Council: December 13, 2023

Business Item: 2023-210

2022 Service Equity Evaluation Report and Title VI Review

District(s), Member(s):	All
Policy/Legal Reference:	Federal Transit Administration Circular 4702.1b OEE0 1-1 Equity Policy; OEE0 6-1 Title VI Major Service Change Policy; OEE0 6-2 Title VI Disparate Impact and Disproportionate Burden Policy
Staff Prepared/Presented:	Lesley Kandaras, General Manager, 612-349-7513 Adam Harrington, Director, Service Development, 612-349-7797 John Levin, Director, Strategic Initiatives, 612-349-7789 Celina Martina, Senior Manager of Equity & Inclusion, 612-349-7582 Cyndi Harper, Manager of Route Planning, 612-349-7723 Rachel Dungca, Manager of Strategy & Performance, 612-349-7536 Victoria Dan, Senior Planner, 612-349-7648
Division/Department:	Metro Transit

Proposed Action

That the Metropolitan Council approve the results of the 2022 Title VI Service Equity Analysis (SEA) for the 2022 Service Equity Evaluation (SEE) Report.

Background

To improve transparency of service-related decisions, Metro Transit is committed to producing an annual report assessing service equity, including a Title VI SEA reviewing service changes that occurred in the 12-month period. The Title VI SEA reviews service changes to determine whether there is potential for discrimination based on race or income. This business item pertains to the latest SEE documenting all cumulative 2022 service changes.

2022 Service Changes and Metrics

Compared to December 2021, Metro Transit scheduled 15% fewer trips in December 2022 due to the workforce shortage. Despite efforts to increase wages and recruit more operators, staffing levels remained below required levels until December 2022. Service reliability and equity were among the guiding principle used by Metro Transit to inform service reduction decisions. Metro Transit uses service metrics related to service availability, utility, and reliability, disaggregated by race, to understand potential differences in how residents access and experience transit.

Title VI SEA Results

The Title VI SEA examined effects of cumulative changes over one year (December 2021 –

December 2022) and three years (December 2019 to December 2022). The review concluded that in both scenarios there was no disparate impact on BIPOC residents and no disproportionate burden on low-income residents due to service changes in 2022. The 2022 review showed that non-low-income and White, non-Hispanic groups experienced about an 8% decrease in service, while BIPOC and low-income communities had a very slight increase in service. This demonstrates that, even when facing a challenging workforce shortage Metro Transit continued to prioritize and protect those who rely on transit the most.

Rationale

Prior to implementation of a Major Service Change, FTA and Council policy requires providers to complete a Title VI SEA to determine if the change may adversely affect BIPOC communities or disproportionately burden low-income populations.

Thrive Lens Analysis

The SEE and Title VI SEA primarily advance the Thrive Equity outcome, which means that all communities share the opportunities and challenges of growth and change. This is especially important in the context of severe reliability issues stemming from the operator shortage, which forced significant service reductions over the course of 2022. By providing a transparent accounting of 2022 service changes and their potential effects on low-income and BIPOC residents, the evaluation is an important status check that reinforces equitable transit service planning decisions.

Funding

The SEA is funded with the Metro Transit operating budget.

Small Business Inclusion

The Title VI analysis was performed by SRF Consulting as a work order under master contract 19P018 Contract for Fulfilling Title VI Requirements. The master contract was procured in 2019 in compliance with the Council Procurement procedures, which include a review by the Office of Equity and Equal Opportunity. They did not set a Disadvantaged Business Enterprise goal.

