

Metropolitan Council

Meeting of the Southwest Corridor Management Committee
Wednesday, December 4, 2024, 10:00AM, St. Louis Park City Hall

Members/Alternates	Chair Charles Zelle	Lesley Kandaras	Suzanne Sobotka (Alt)
Present:	Dr. Tyronne Carter	Patrick Hanlon	Elie Farhat for Marion
	James Hovland	Brad Wiersum	Greene
	Heather Edelson	Dan Duffy	
	Grant Faulkner for Debbie	Nat Gorham (Alt)	
	Goettel		

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Zelle called the meeting to order at 10:05AM. Introductions were made. Suzanne Sobotka accepted a promotion in Mayor Frey's office and will no longer be serving on the CMC. She introduced her replacement, Kristian Evans.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chair Zelle presented the September 4, 2024, Corridor Management Committee meeting minutes. Mayor Wiersum made a motion to approve the minutes and Commissioner Edelson seconded the motion. Following a vote, the minutes were approved.

3. METRO TRANSIT GENERAL MANAGER UPDATE – Lesley Kandaras

Lesley Kandaras, Metro Transit General Manager, provided an update on Metro Transit operations. Kandaras reported that ridership continues to grow across the system, and it is 7-8% higher than it was last year at this time. We are preparing for operations for the Green Line Extension. Next week, the Metropolitan Council will act on its 2025 budget and it will include about 120 positions to support Green Line Extension Operations.

Kandaras introduced Interim Chief Joe Dotseth. He has been with the Metro Transit Police Department for over 20 years and stepped into the interim role in September 2024.

4. METRO TRANSIT POLICE DEPARTMENT UPDATE – Interim Chief Joseph Dotseth & Captain Salah Ahmed

Interim Chief Joseph Dotseth from the Metro Transit Police Department (MTPD) provided an update on MTPD activities. MTPD has been doing extensive outreach and Interim Chief Dotseth has contacted each one of the Chiefs of Police along the corridor. There was a collaboration meeting last July with many public safety agencies represented and relationships continue to develop. In mid-January, MTPD will convene a law enforcement-specific work group that will include corridor chiefs to collaborate on what public safety looks like on the line as it opens.

Interim Chief Dotseth reminded the group that MTPD officers have the same arrest powers as the local city and county law enforcement agencies, and they can take enforcement action off Metro Transit property. One thing that sets MTPD apart is the real-time information center, which has been a game-changer for public safety on the system.

Metro Transit initiated a Safety and Security Action Plan a few years ago that identified 43 action items to address safety on the system. The MTPD includes supplemental security and a focus on the community approach to public safety. This approach includes using resources from the entire community to focus on public safety.

Interim Chief Dotseth shared crime data for Q3 2024. Mayor Hovland asked about the top crimes. Interim Chief Dotseth said they are defined by the FBI and include serious crimes (homicide, sex offense, robbery, aggravated assault, simple assault, intimidation, larceny, theft, motor vehicle theft, burglary). Mayor Hovland asked what the MTPD's biggest crime-related problems are. Interim Chief Dotseth said it's the quality of life issues including disorderly conduct and smoking that impact the person's experience on

the system. Mayor Hovland said we need to determine how to help MTPD, and Interim Chief Dotseth said conversations like this and collaboration is helpful; we need everyone at the table.

Commissioner Edelson asked if we are looking at the hours of operation for the LRT system. Jim Alexander, Project Director, said the schedule is planned to be 4:30AM to midnight, which is reduced from the schedule identified in the environmental documentation, which is 4:00AM to 2:00AM. The reduced schedule allows more time for maintenance activities. Commissioner Edelson asked if Metro Transit is looking at strategies to address staffing issues. Interim Chief Dotseth said yes, MTPD continues to look at strategies to increase staffing levels including offering hiring bonuses and cash incentives to complete training. Metro Transit's Community Service Officer (CSO) Pathways program is another route to increasing staffing where CSO staff can earn college credits and the program includes a pathway to becoming an officer.

Mayor Wiersum said crime on the train impacts the public's perception of safety on the entire system, and really working on the perception is important to make people feel safe. Council Member Dr. Carter asked about the crime rate data slide and why there was a peak; Interim Chief Dotseth said whatever is happening with crime trends in the area impacts the MTPD as well.

Mayor Hanlon asked about the regular cadence of meetings/collaborations among the public safety agencies. He also asked about recruitment in policing for young people. Interim Chief Dotseth said the cadence of meetings will be on a regular basis, but he does not yet have a specific timeline established. Part of the messaging is that we will all be sharing resources, and we want to collaborate on developing a cohesive incident action plan prior to opening the line. Staffing has been difficult, but MTPD has been fortunate to have a nearly fully staffed administrative department which works on policy and other administrative work. This allows officers more time to be out on the system. The CSO Pathways program is for students pursuing law enforcement careers to receive tuition assistance and on the job training; it has been MTPD's pathway to success and we continue to recruit. Metro Transit also has a Homeless Action Team (HAT) that has been in existence for several years. The team includes a sergeant and three officers, and they are a resource to the cities as well. MTPD is also working on joint powers agreements with the corridor agencies.

Mayor Hovland asked what metropolitan areas the Chief admires in terms of their policing, and what that causes him to think about what system operations might change here to make sure we're maximizing safety for people riding the system. Interim Chief Dotseth said we are part of a peer advisory group with all the transit agencies in the country and that has been a big resource; it includes a monthly call. We are looking at best practices from around the country. The BART organization in San Francisco has done a great job and there's also a group called APTA that Transit Operations works with.

5. PROJECT UPDATE

Jim Alexander, Green Line Extension Project Director provided a project update. Alexander provided an update on the Risk Review with the FTA and noted that the FTA has approved the \$2.86 billion cost estimate as the new project budget. The estimate is consistent with the amount reported in 2023. The Met Council's Transportation Committee approved the updated budget on November 25 and this action will be brought to the full Council on December 11. We are also requesting the Council acknowledge 2027 as the beginning of revenue service. Overall, the project is over 80% complete. The Kenilworth LRT tunnel is about 95% complete, the tunnel structure is complete in 22 of the 30 cells. The contractor is currently building the raised roof for the exhaust fans in the west end of the tunnel, and we are looking completing the structure toward the end of Q1 2025. We started stringing rail through the east part of the tunnel, which is key for the Systems Contractor to start working in the tunnel over the winter. In Q3 2025, we are planning to start pushing trains through the system for testing.

Currently, there are 71 of 87 Minnesota counties represented by construction workers on the project (up from 70). Development is also increasing along the corridor with over \$3 billion either permitted or built. Photos of development were shared. Alexander shared photos of construction progress.

Mayor Hanlon asked about the Shady Oak and Excelsior development pad. Alexander said the area north of the station is essentially complete. Staff continue to work on property documentation.

Commissioner Edelson asked about the development and how we know it's tied to the LRT. Mayor Hanlon said a lot of it is anecdotal in talking to the developers. Mayor Wiersum said transit-oriented development includes a radius that allows developments to qualify as TOD; we're confident that it's there because the train is coming and the access to the system is available.

6. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT UPDATE – David Davies

David Davies, Manager of Public Involvement, provided an update.

The Outreach Team has been attending various community events, conducting tours of the Kenilworth tunnel, and working on content development and telling success stories. Please share the videos as they come out in the Construction Updates.

6. DBE UPDATE – Jon Tao

Jon Tao from the Council's Office of Equity and Equal Opportunity discussed the DBE achievement numbers.

7. ADJOURN

Meeting adjourned at 11:00AM. The next meeting will be announced in early 2025.

Respectfully Submitted,

Emily Getty, Recording Secretary