



Board Report

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OPERATIONS, SAFETY, AND CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE COMMITTEE JULY 20, 2023

SUBJECT: PUBLIC SAFETY ADVISORY COMMITTEE QUARTERLY REPORT

ACTION: RECEIVE AND FILE

RECOMMENDATION

RECEIVE AND FILE quarterly status report on Metro's Public Safety Advisory Committee (PSAC).

ISSUE

In June 2020, the Board approved motions directing Metro staff to form an advisory committee that would contribute to developing a community-based approach to public safety on the transit system. This Board report provides a quarterly update on the work of the Public Safety Advisory Committee (PSAC).

BACKGROUND

Metro established the first cohort of PSAC as a pilot on April 7, 2021. During their 16-month term, they provided guidance on the development of a community-based approach to public safety, provided input on the development of the multi-agency policing contract renewal, reviewed the Customer Code of Conduct, input on Metro's mission and value statements regarding public safety, and guided the establishment of Metro's Transit Ambassador's program, among other accomplishments. Given that PSAC was established to cover specific objectives over a designated time period, their work concluded on August 17, 2022. At the September 2022 Board meeting, the CEO provided a report with recommendations to continue the PSAC. The second cohort was established on February 25, 2023, and will serve for two years through February 2025.

Executive Committee

PSAC elected an executive committee to serve from February 2023 to February 2024.

Jeremy Oliver-Ronceros, Chair

Misty Wilks, Vice-Chair

Catherine Baltazar, Secretary

Work Plan Objectives

On April 3, 2023, the PSAC Executive Committee met with CEO Wiggins to co-develop the committee's work plan for the first year. The work plan outlines five objectives that frame the scope of work of the PSAC to enhance the customer experience by addressing safety concerns on the

system. Under each objective, the PSAC Executive Committee with Metro staff and the CEO have identified key strategies that the committee can review, evaluate, and/or help initiate.

DISCUSSION

On May 4, 2023, the PSAC held its fourth general meeting with two informational agenda items and one agenda item for committee approval. The System Safety and Law Enforcement (SSLE) Department presented an update on Metro's Public Safety Department Feasibility Study. Staff presented the approach to the feasibility study, an overview of other transit agencies with in-house safety departments, and key potential benefits such as accountability and autonomy over deployment. Comments from members included concerns about resource allocations when restricted to an in-house safety department, preference for a 'public safety department' as opposed to a 'police department', and a suggestion for community oversight as an accountability piece to implementation.

The Office of Civil Rights in partnership with Metro's Accessibility Advisory Council (AAC) presented on Metro's programming and initiatives to improve the ridership experience for people with disabilities. The committee heard directly from AAC Chair, Cynde Soto, and from AAC member and Aging and Disability Transportation Network (ADTN) member, Carrie Madden; both who are transit dependent life-long riders. Comments from members included the desire to see more emphasis on developmental disability mental illness training for security officers and Metro Ambassadors. Members expressed the desire to establish strong working relationships with AAC to identify safety concerns specific to people with disabilities.

At this meeting the committee approved integration of staggered terms into the PSAC Charter and Bylaws. For continuity, cohorts will be staggered in two-year terms, with the current cohort in place between February 2023 through February 2025. The current PSAC cohort will serve a two-year term, with seven members offered the opportunity to serve a third year and set into motion a staggered term that would facilitate institutional memory.

Six motions passed at the May 4th PSAC meeting.

1. Request for update on Metro's Public Safety Department Feasibility Study.
2. Request for information on Metro Bus Stop Cleanliness and Safety Standards.
3. Request for information on Metro Bus stop and bus shelter responsibilities.
4. Request for Metro to Contact Mental Health Organizations and Gather Information on Ridership.
5. Request for information on Metro Bus CCTV monitoring.
6. Request for information on Metro's / LAPD's fare-check policy and procedures.

On June 1, 2023, the PSAC held their fifth general meeting with three informational agenda items. Metro's Office of Homeless Initiatives gave a briefing on Metro's approach to supporting unhoused riders by offering various support services. Staff reported on the expanded number of outreach teams, an encampment response and abatement program, a social work licensure partnership, and a pilot services hub. Comments include one member stating that this was the most excited they have been about Metro's approach to homelessness and one member who works at Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA) was very pleased with the update. Members had questions

about services provided across jurisdictional boundaries, about what happens when unhoused riders refuse services, and concerns about loss of property during encampment clean ups.

Metro's Operations Department provided PSAC with an update of the Westlake/MacArthur Park Station Pilot Interventions. Staff presented preliminary data showing improvements in public safety with reports showing decreased vandalism and a support sentiment from station users surveyed by Metro. Comments from members included a recommendation to Metro staff to ensure that ADA accessibility is maintained as the station access has been rearranged, and positive responses to the pilot program's improved lighting and partnership with PATH and Metro Ambassadors. One concern raised during this presentation was for the arrest statistics published for the Westlake/MacArthur Park Station, showing that 20 out of 25 arrests at this station during the month of February 2023, were of black men.

The SSLE Department presented an update on Metro's Drug-Free Campaign piloting drug use reduction interventions on the system. Staff presented tactics to increase safety, cleanliness, and highlighted decreases in customer complaints and Transit Watch App reports. Staff reported the program taking a holistic approach by offering eligible offenders a drug diversion program as well as mental health social services to those experiencing drug addiction.

Comments from members included gratitude towards SSLE from an ex-officio member who works as a supervisor and understands the daily safety risks to bus operators, one member recommended that SSLE utilize the health van deployed at Westlake/MacArthur Park as a resource at other high-priority stations, and one member expressed concerns of fear tactics being used to justify over policing.

There were three motions passed at the June 1st PSAC meeting.

1. Request for information on recent transit arrests data disaggregated by ethnicity.
2. Request that Metro invite the LAPD to speak to PSAC regarding outcomes for people who are offered the Drug Diversion Program.
3. Request that Metro invite AAC members to share their experiences with accessibility at the Westlake/MacArthur Park Station during the pilot interventions program.

On July 6, 2023, SSLE presented the latest update on Metro's Public Safety Department Feasibility Study including direction received from Metro's Board of Directors. PSAC members had a discussion with considerations for the implementation plan. Members were asked what role they see for riders in the development of an implementation plan, how they would ensure that Metro's values of public safety are front and center, and how PSAC would consider addressing community concerns to a Public Safety Department.

Comments from PSAC members included a recommendation for Metro to consider establishing an oversight committee for the law enforcement component of the Public Safety Department. Members recommended that SSLE ensure inclusion of feedback from people with physical and developmental disabilities in the formation the implementation plan and in the creation of the department. Lastly, members shared support of a "public safety" and "community safety" department rather than using the term "law enforcement", as elements of public safety may not always include armed law enforcement.

The meeting included a facilitated conversation planning for a PSAC Community Listening Session. Members suggested that Metro staff and PSAC meet riders where they're at, through tabling and other in-person strategies to gather safety concern and ideas for improving public safety. The PSAC Executive Committee and Metro staff are planning for the first Community Listening Session in September 2023.

EQUITY PLATFORM

One of Metro's goals is for the second PSAC cohort to represent community voices from across the county as a part of Metro's safety policy introduction, implementation, and evaluation processes. As riders from throughout LA County, members of this committee have a unique and expert perspective on how the everyday rider experiences safety policies and programs on our system. As an advisory body committed to equitable safety outcomes across the system, as noted above, PSAC's feedback and recommendations to presenters during the past couple of months have elevated consideration for riders with disabilities, especially during station reconfigurations such as that at Westlake/MacArthur Park. Members have requested Customer Experience Survey data specific to youth and older adults to identify key concerns from these age demographics. Members have also requested arrests data disaggregated by ethnicity and crime type to identify if over-policing is a concern.

As part of PSAC's mission to take an equitable approach to public safety, at the July 6th meeting, members will be discussing logistics and planning for a PSAC listening session. The listening session is intended to gather community feedback and input on key safety initiatives such as Metro's Westlake/MacArthur Park Pilot interventions and Metro's Feasibility Study to establish an in-house Public Safety Department.

IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS

The PSAC work supports Goal 2:
Deliver outstanding trip experiences for all users of the transportation system.

Metro's Vision 2028 second goal outlines that the agency will specifically take action to improve security and ease of use by preventing crime and enforcing Metro's code of conduct. To achieve a safe system, Metro will rely on a multi-layered, integrated security program that includes technology, people, and partnerships. The PSAC is a key component of this goal as the committee will work to safeguard the transit community by taking a holistic, equitable, and welcoming approach to public safety.

NEXT STEPS

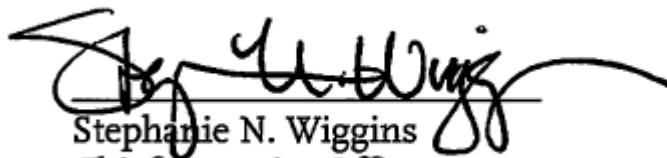
To ensure that the priorities of the Board are met, the CEO will continue to meet with the PSAC Executive Committee monthly.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A - PSAC May and June 2023 Motions and Responses

Prepared by: Jefferson Isai Rosa, Manager, Community Relations, (213) 922-7249
Yvette Rapose, Deputy Chief, Customer Experience, (213) 418-3154

Reviewed by: Jennifer Vides, Chief Customer Experience Officer, (213) 922-4060



Stephanie N. Wiggins
Chief Executive Officer

Metro Public Safety Advisory Committee (PSAC)

May 4, 2023 General Meeting Motions

1. Request for Report Back on Metro's Public Safety Department Feasibility Study.

Motion: Share Feasibility Study with PSAC Committee after it is brought to Metro Board this month.

Staff: Imelda Hernandez

Dept: SSLE

Response:

The feasibility study report back to the Board has been pushed from May to June's Board meeting. This will be available to come back to PSAC in July 2023.

2. Request for information on Metro Bus Stop Cleanliness and Safety Standards.

Motion: Share guidelines for Metro bus stop standards regarding cleanliness & safety.

Staff: David Daniels

Dept: Facilities Maintenance - Stops & Zones Department

Response:

Metro does not implement standards or guidelines for cleaning bus stop zones. Bus stop zones include sidewalks and bus stop amenities which fall under the jurisdiction of each city's Department of Public Works (DPW). Each city's DPW has internal maintenance or contracts with vendors that are responsible for cleaning street furniture and the surrounding sidewalks.

3. Request for information on Metro Bus stop and bus shelter responsibilities.

Motion: Request to have a briefing on universal bus stop design. Who is in charge? What will it look like? How does that collaboration work with the various cities.

Staff: Patty Soto

Dept: Customer Experience

Response:

Metro serves over 12,000 bus stops throughout Los Angeles County. There are 88 cities, and each jurisdiction owns and maintains bus shelters in its own way. In most cases, Metro only owns the bus stop poles where it places its bus blades with bus line information. Metro is increasing its regional

collaborative efforts in planning, designing, and maintaining bus stop improvements through several efforts: 1) developing a Bus Stops Initiative Sketch Plan to share best practices, including accessible design; 2) identifying opportunities to assist cities in overcoming challenges through technical assistance, grant MOUs, and funding; and 3) building partnerships across the region with government, non-profit, and community-based organizations to build support for a regional bus stop vision. To learn more about bus shelter design and how they are selected for placement, it is recommended you contact that jurisdiction directly. In the City of Los Angeles for example, jurisdiction falls under the purview of Public Works.

4. Request for Metro to Contact Mental Health Organizations and Gather Information on Ridership.

Motion: Reach out to organizations working in the Alzheimer's, dementia, traumatic brain injury, intellectual disability, mental illness, and autism spectrum space to facilitate providing information on this ridership community to PSAC.

Staff: Benjamin Alcazar

Dept: Office of Civil Rights

Response:

Metro's Office of Civil Rights is proactively supporting outreach efforts for Metro's Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC) with the goal of increasing diversity of membership to include individuals with neurological, mental, psychiatric, and developmental disabilities, as well as those who may be within the autism spectrum. Part of this work has been in partnership with the Aging and Disability Transportation Network (ADTN). The Office of Civil Rights will work with AAC and ADTN on how to gather feedback from individuals with disabilities listed above, with a focus on their challenges while using the Metro system and services, particularly those that relate to safety and security. This summer 2023 the Office of Civil Rights is supporting ADTN outreach, which includes a survey soliciting creative and innovative ideas to better meet the needs of older adults and persons with disabilities.

5. Request for information on Metro Bus CCTV monitoring.

Motion: Update Committee with more information regarding the CCTV monitoring that previously existed on buses and eventually transferring to a closed captioning system.

Staff: James Pachan

Dept: Operations, Maintenance

Response:

Background

Installation of on-board video surveillance and recording on the Metro bus fleet began 25 years ago and has now become an industry standard for several reasons, including safety and security of passengers and bus operators, verifying bus operator compliance with rules and procedures, recognizing operators who provide exceptional service to our customers, and investigating accidents, complaints, and criminal incidents. The video solutions evolved over time as cameras, resolution, and recording features improved, and incident triggered video devices (SmartDrive) came onto the market. These new systems help to define events rather than searching video to identify and validate an incident.

Camera/Video Recorder Types

Metro has two types of camera/video systems installed on the Metro revenue bus fleet. Depending on the bus size, the systems have a total of between 9 and 16 cameras installed on the interior and exterior of the bus. The cameras are installed in locations that capture and record front (Street traffic events) and rear (Interior bus operator/patron incidences). The events are recorded when a certain g-force threshold is met for a traffic event, or manually by the bus operator for internal bus operator/patron incidences. These recordings are captured on the camera itself and downloaded upon arrival to the bus division. Videos can be retrieved for viewing and captured in a format suitable for evidentiary purposes.

Live View Capabilities

With the exception of the older fleet of ninety-five articulated buses, all Metro buses are being equipped with Live View systems that allow for remote viewing of camera video with offsite recording capabilities. This Live View capability has been activated on over 1,000 buses to date with the remainder of the fleet in process. Metro currently has a fleet of 1,911 buses in direct operation.

Monitor Display Security System

As a component of the bus CCTV system, newer buses have interior monitor screens. The monitor screens were placed to visually inform passengers of the camera security system on buses. To date 1,435 buses of the total 1,911 buses are equipped with monitor screens, as older buses are retired from the system the number of buses with monitors will increase.

Sample of monitor:



6. Request for information on Metro's / LAPD's fare-check policy and procedures.

Motion: Update Committee regarding random fare checks being performed within the system that are causing commute issues for riders.

Staff: Imelda Hernandez

Dept: SSLE

Response:

Fare enforcement is conducted by Metro's Transit Security Officers whose procedure is to confirm proof of fare payment. LAPD is not conducting fare enforcement. In response to a 270% (year over year January) increase in trespassers and illegal drug use on the rail system, LAPD is performing visual confirmation of possession of a TAP card and that is the extent of the interaction regarding fare. The majority of individuals who were arrested for drug-related crime did not produce a TAP card after their arrest. LAPD has been instructed to perform the fare checks equitably, meaning when performing a visual confirmation, it is to occur with all riders in the rail car or bus. At no time is train or bus service to be held up to conduct a fare check.

Metro Public Safety Advisory Committee (PSAC)

June 1, 2023 General Meeting Motions

7. Request for transit arrest data disaggregated by ethnicity.

Motion: Request the most recent data from Metro regarding transit arrests broken down by ethnicity.

Author Member: Olga Lexell

Responding Staff: Isai Rosa

Dept: Customer Experience

Response:

During the May Board meeting Director Bass requested a multi-year report of arrests on the system, highlighting demographics and crimes committed. The report will be shared at the July Board meeting. That report will be shared with PSAC.

8. Extend an invitation to LAPD partners to share Drug Diversion Program Experiences with PSAC.

Motion: Invite the LAPD to speak regarding outcomes for people who are offered the Drug Diversion Program. The PSAC is interested in knowing how cases are handled when our law enforcement partners provide resources and who is qualified for the Drug Diversion Program.

Author Member: Brandon Cheng

Responding Staff: Patty Soto

Dept: Customer Experience

Response:

Staff will work with the PSAC Executive Committee to identify key interest points to share with LAPD along with an invitation to present at a future PSAC meeting.

9. Request for information on Metro Bus stop and bus shelter responsibilities.

Motion: invite Accessibility Advisory Council (AAC) members to share their experiences with the MacArthur Park Station Pilot Program.

Author Member: Cadis Welch

Responding Staff: Jefferson Isai Rosa

Dept: Customer Experience

Response:

Staff has reached out to Office of Civil Rights and AAC with an invitation to members with experience using Westlake MacArthur Station. An AAC speaker has been added to the August 2023 agenda.



Metro

Public Safety Advisory Committee (PSAC)

PSAC Feedback to Metro Initiatives

May 4, 2023

Metro's Public Safety Department Feasibility Study

- Concerns expressed over resource allocations when restricted to an in-house safety department.
- PSAC expressed preference of a 'public safety department' as opposed to a 'police department'.
- Suggestion for community oversight as an accountability piece to implementation.

Metro's Safety Initiatives for People with Disabilities

- Desire to see more emphasis on developmental disability and mental illness training for Metro security officers and Metro Ambassadors.
- Desire to establish strong working relationships with AAC to identify safety concerns specific to people with disabilities.

PSAC Feedback

June 1, 2023

Metro's Homeless Initiatives

- Excitement about Metro's approach to homelessness and appreciation for the update as well as concerns about loss of property during encampment clean-ups.
- Members had questions about services provided across jurisdictional boundaries as well as what happens when unhoused riders refuse services.

Metro's Westlake/MacArthur Park Station Interventions (Update)

- Recommendation that Metro staff ensure that ADA accessibility is maintained as the station access has been rearranged.
- Positive responses to the pilot program's improved lighting and partnership with PATH.
- One concern was raised over the arrest statistics published for the Westlake/MacArthur Park Station, showing that 20 out of 25 arrests at this station during the month of February 2023, were of Black men.

PSAC Feedback

June 1, 2023 Continued

Metro's Drug-Free Campaign, 90-Day Report Back

- Gratitude expressed towards SSLE from an ex-officio member who works as a supervisor and understands the daily safety risks to bus operators.
- Recommendation that SSLE utilize the health van deployed at Westlake/MacArthur Park as a resource at other high-priority stations.
- PSAC members approved a motion to extend an invitation to LAPD partners to share their experience with this effort and the drug diversion program.

PSAC Feedback

July 6, 2023

Metro's Public Safety Department Feasibility Study (Next Steps)

- Recommendation that SLLE reference the CX Survey results as community guidance.
- Recommendation that Metro establish an oversight committee for the law enforcement component of the Public Safety Department.
- Recommendation that SSLE ensure feedback from people with physical and developmental disabilities in the formation of the department.

PSAC Listening Session

- Metro partner with existing community events for community input.
- Suggestion that school districts and community colleges be invited to the PSAC Listening Session so that student voices and experiences are heard.
- Hosting the PSAC Listening Session within an Equity Focused Community (EFC) ensuring that those with limited mobility options can attend in person.

Upcoming Topics

August 2023 & Upcoming Agenda Priorities

- Station Interventions: Westlake/MacArthur Park
- Transit Community Safety Department
- Metro Bus Riding Teams
- PSAC Listening Session
- Metro Ambassadors
- Metro Crisis Response Teams



Thank You



Metro