



Board Report

File #: 2024-0765, File Type: Motion / Motion Response

Agenda Number: 16.

EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
OPERATIONS, SAFETY, AND CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE COMMITTEE
NOVEMBER 21, 2024

SUBJECT: QUARTERLY UPDATE ON TRANSIT COMMUNITY PUBLIC SAFETY DEPARTMENT (TCPSPD) IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

ACTION: APPROVE RECOMMENDATION

RECOMMENDATION

CONSIDER:

- A. RECEIVING AND FILING the Quarterly Update on the Transit Community Public Safety Department (TCPSPD) Implementation Plan; and
- B. AUTHORIZING the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), or their designee, to incorporate new job classifications into appropriate existing collective bargaining units, as determined by the CEO.

ISSUE

In alignment with Metro’s mission and comprehensive safety and security framework, staff has commenced implementing the plan to stand up Metro’s TCPSPD. This report serves as a status update to the Board.

BACKGROUND

At its June 2024 meeting, the Board adopted the TCPSPD Implementation Plan and approved the department's phased establishment over five years. The Board directed staff to report quarterly on the implementation progress.

Phase One (transition planning) activities include establishing a transition team, initiating executive recruitment of key personnel, starting with the Chief of Police position, initiating labor negotiations, and establishing a safety retirement plan with CalPERS, while facilitating community engagement to inform these efforts.

DISCUSSION

Following the Board's approval of the Implementation Plan, Metro’s CEO assembled an interdepartmental task force to support the program rollout. This task force is composed of members of Metro’s key departments, including Homeless Outreach Management and Engagement, Customer Experience, System Security and Law Enforcement, Chief People Office, Vendor/Contract

Management, the Office of the Chief of Staff, Office of Management and Budget, and the Office of the Inspector General. Additionally, the CEO brought on a consultant to oversee and coordinate all activities related to standing up the TCPSP. This team meets bi-weekly to achieve the work plan goals and objectives identified in the TCPSP Implementation Plan. A summary of updates from key components of the Phase 1 Work Plan are included below.

Transition Team Advisory Group

The initial steps toward establishing the TCPSP are well underway. The CEO has assembled an advisory board of highly qualified professionals to form the TCPSP Transition Team. This team will play a critical role in providing strategic guidance and supporting the transition to an in-house public safety department.

The advisory board's purpose is to support the TCPSP's transition through strategic advice on program development, training, and operational protocols. This team will support and guide Metro's leadership in developing a care-first public safety approach focused on reducing escalations, promoting trauma-informed responses, and aligning with Metro's public safety goals. The advisory board includes national experts from diverse fields, with extensive experience in law enforcement, mental health, social services, and public safety reform, (in alphabetical order):

- **Rosamaria Alamo:** Clinical social worker and USC professor with expertise in trauma-informed social services.
- **Carmen Best:** Former Seattle Police Chief known for her diversity and inclusion initiatives.
- **Maris Herold:** Award-winning Police Chief of Boulder, recognized for data-driven and reform-oriented approaches.
- **Scott Holder:** Retired Police Chief, led San Ramon's transition from County Sheriff services to its own police department.
- **Cecily Kahn:** Experienced psychologist specializing in mental health evaluations and therapeutic interventions.
- **Rick Ornelas:** Retired Sergeant with the Los Angeles School Police Department and public safety educator with USC's School of Social Work with a background in crisis intervention.
- **Connie L. Rice:** Civil rights activist and lawyer with experience working with Law Enforcement.
- **Jonathan Sherin, M.D., Ph.D.:** Mental health advocate focused on inclusive, community-based public health systems.

The advisory board is in the final stages of formalization. Members bring a wealth of expertise essential for crafting a comprehensive and sustainable transition plan for the TCPSP. Once convened, the team will begin monthly advisory sessions to review strategic planning, training design, and policy development, ensuring a smooth and effective transition to the new Metro TCPSP.

CalPERS Safety Retirement Benefits

Establishing a safety retirement plan is essential to successfully stand up TCPSD. Police and safety personnel serve in specialized roles that require specific pension plans designed for law enforcement. As TCPSD is a new department within the agency, the current pension plans offered are outside of the required safety category. CalPERS offers various pension categories that may be used to provide a safety pension plan for the new department. Staff submitted a new pension category questionnaire to CalPERS in August 2024 to initiate the inclusion of the Metro TCPSD Chief of Police position in the safety pension plan. This questionnaire is required to gain concurrence from CalPERS before safety positions within the TCPSD can qualify under the safety category pension plan.

In September 2024, CalPERS notified the agency that after reviewing the preliminary job duty statements for the Chief of Police position, CalPERS determined that the position does qualify as a safety position under Government Code Section 20424 of the Public Employees Retirement Law. With the CalPERS determination, staff has initiated the process to modify Metro's current CalPERS contract to ensure that employees in this new category will be added to the appropriate pension plan once hired. By Spring 2025, staff will present the final Contract Amendment to the Board of for approval. Once approved, the final amendment will also be submitted to the Public Transportation Services Corporation (PTSC) Board for their approval. The CalPERS contract modification will be finalized before the Chief of Police is hired.

Executive Recruitment

The first TCPSD hire will be the Chief of Police, who will report directly to the CEO. This leadership position will set the stage for subsequent efforts to recruit sworn and non-sworn TCPSD personnel. The ideal candidate for this position must not only hold Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) certification but also embody visionary leadership and accessibility while fostering a culture of collaboration within a diverse and dynamic transit community. The candidate should demonstrate a deep commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion, ensuring these principles are not only embraced but actively translated into tangible outcomes through values-based decision-making.

Moreover, the candidate must be well-versed in care-based strategies, recognizing the importance of a holistic approach to public safety. This includes prioritizing de-escalation, mental health awareness, and community-centered policing that fosters trust and mutual respect. A strong understanding of trauma-informed care, behavioral health resources, and the integration of social services into law enforcement practices will be essential in addressing the complex needs of the transit environment. The ability to engage meaningfully with transit riders, community partners, and other key stakeholders, while navigating the intersections of public safety, social services, and law enforcement will be critical to success in this role. These qualities are consistent with Metro's Public Safety Mission and Values Statements, as well as the Bias-Free Policing Policy.

Metro has retained a recruiter who specializes in public safety leadership positions. Metro interviewed three executive recruitment firms before selecting Public Sector Search and Consulting

(PSSC) firm to engage in the recruitment effort for the Chief of Police position. The firm specializes in recruiting police chiefs nationally and has knowledge and expertise in contemporary policing and recruitment methods. The firm is committed to diversity, equity and inclusion and maintains a strong placement rate of diverse candidates. PSSC has participated in various listening sessions and will speak individually with Board members; incorporating input from these events to advertise, market, and recruit candidates, which will be completed by the end of FY25 Q2. The candidates will be screened and vetted through a series of panel interviews which will be completed by the end of the FY25 Q3. The Chief of Police is expected to be onboarded at the start of FY25 Q4.

In support of the recruitment of the Chief position, Metro is currently hosting employee and customer listening sessions designed to create an open, inclusive environment where stakeholders can voice their perspectives on the qualities and leadership styles they value in a Chief for the TCPSD. Metro also hosted a listening session with the business community. The goal is to gather valuable insights that will inform decision-making processes, foster collaboration, and ensure that diverse viewpoints are taken into account when shaping policies, strategies, or leadership roles.

Crisis Response Teams

Staff has initiated several key steps in the development of the crisis response program that will be housed in the TCSPD to support the provision of a care-based response to individuals suffering from mental crisis on the Metro system. Staff has conducted ride-alongs with the LAPD Homeless Outreach Proactive Engagement (HOPE) and LA County Sherriff's Transit Mental Evaluation Team (TMET), which represent one version of a law enforcement crisis response model that pairs clinicians with dressed-down officers. In August and September 2024, staff participated in their respective deployments, learning from the teams' deployment models, engagement tactics, safety protocols and roles/responsibilities.

Staff also completed a peer review in summer 2024 of several national Crisis Response and Intervention models. These evidence-based programs describe the efficacy of combining mental health resources with field-based engagements that are deployed through a dispatch center. They highlight the importance of integrating community stabilization facilities that offer various levels of care to support individuals in crisis. While none of the peer-reviewed models are specific to transit agencies, they offer detailed roadmaps for integration into Metro's TCPSD.

Staff has also reached out to transit agencies nationally, like Austin, TX CapMetro and Oakland, CA BART, which currently deploy crisis response teams, to conduct additional peer agency reviews. Outreach to non-transit crisis response teams such as the CAHOOTS program in Eugene, OR, and our local LA County Department of Mental Health SMART team has also occurred during this period. The goal is to engage and shadow their teams, as well as hold in-depth discussions on their design model, method of implementation, operations, lessons learned, best practices, and exploration of outcomes.

An Inclusive Process

Metro's public safety mission calls for a holistic, equity, holistic and welcoming approach to public

safety. As such, it's important that the process to stand up the TCPSD be done by empowering both our employees and our customers to provide their input and feedback. Metro is also pursuing extensive public stakeholder engagement to gather input to determine what qualities, principles, and values Metro employees and customers find important for candidates being considered for this role. Recognizing that marginalized groups within communities that Metro serves are often underrepresented, targeted outreach efforts will be included to ensure all voices are heard, including Listening Sessions and gathering feedback from individuals at community events across the County. (Attachment A)

In addition, communicating with the community at large about Metro's plans to implement the TCPSD is a priority. Leading up to and immediately following the Board's vote to approve the TCPSD, the public relations team worked with reporters to ensure they had the most accurate information possible about the department - the reasons the decision was good for Metro, and how the implementation process would proceed. The result was a significant amount of neutral to positive media coverage recognizing Metro's bold step to address public safety on the system. Metro has also published articles on The Source and El Pasajero, as well as posts on social media to share the news with riders. Metro staff have also used social media to invite participation in listening sessions about the Chief of Police recruitment.

Emergency Security Operations Center (Metro Center)

Metro's current law enforcement and public safety response system is decentralized, with various personnel operating from different locations. While the surge created a unified command structure, the Metro Center will provide the necessary infrastructure to house it. Law enforcement contractors, security teams, field-based contractors, and Metro staff, including dispatchers, data analysts, and CCTV observers, all play distinct roles without a unified command center to coordinate their efforts. The System Security and Law Enforcement team relies on the Security Operations Center (SOC) as a dispatch hub, coordinating with the Rail Operations Center (ROC), Bus Operations Center (BOC), 911 emergency services, and handling direct calls for in-field support. However, with the use of contracted law enforcement, private security, and Ambassador services, there is no single, centralized dispatch location for these teams.

This lack of centralized command and communication poses challenges to efficient public safety responses across Metro's ecosystem. Establishing a cohesive command structure is critical for the success of the new TCPSD and will significantly improve public safety coordination system-wide. The upcoming Metro Center, slated for completion in early 2025, will address this issue by serving as a centralized hub for transportation emergencies and public safety operations. By bringing together key staff and resources in one location, the Metro Center will enhance communication and coordination between Metro's public safety personnel and regional partners, enabling a more efficient response to emergencies, serious incidents, and potential security threats.

The new facility will co-locate the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) and the SOC, providing 24/7 support for public safety operations related to bus and rail incidents, Metro facility protection, and daily connectivity to all transit systems. The Metro Center will centralize key TCPSD dispatch and operations personnel. It will also include areas dedicated to Emergency Management, Physical Security, Data Analytics, Cyber Security collaboration, and SOC activity to support bus and rail operations. This consolidation will not only enhance the agency's ability to manage day-to-day public

safety but will also support agency-wide and regional incidents, including major special events and future system expansions.

In addition to improving current operations, the Metro Center will play a pivotal role in supporting Metro's transition to its in-house police department by centralizing command and communications functions. This facility will enable Metro to streamline its public safety and emergency response efforts, enhancing its overall capacity to respond quickly and efficiently to emergencies while positioning the agency for future growth and system expansion.

Collective Bargaining

The TCPSP implementation will include the establishment of multiple job classifications for hundreds of new positions, including law enforcement officers, management, and administrative staff, among others. To allow for efficient collective bargaining concerning terms and conditions of employment, it may be necessary to quickly determine which existing collective bargaining units are appropriate to absorb the new classifications. Through ongoing labor relations and day-to-day administration, staff is deeply familiar with the specifications, duties, departments, geographical locations, and other distinctions and commonalities associated with existing job classifications for union-represented positions. Staff is in the process of developing new job classifications and specifications for positions associated with the TCPSP. As these new classifications are established, the CEO is well-positioned to fairly and efficiently determine the appropriate collective bargaining unit for each. In addition, the Collective Bargaining Agreements (CBA) for AFSCME and TCU were ratified last month, which allows staff to begin negotiations for supervisorial positions and crisis intervention positions, respectively. Negotiations with TEAMSTERS will commence once the current CBA negotiations are completed.

DETERMINATION OF SAFETY IMPACT

The TCPSP will improve safety on the Metro system as it will allow for a transit policing style of engaged visibility where officers are more visible across the system, thus increasing the feeling of safety for Metro riders and employees.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

This recommendation has no financial impact.

EQUITY PLATFORM

Metro recognizes that relationships between law enforcement and communities of color and other marginalized individuals have been strained due to unjust actions such as racial profiling and a disproportionate number of issuance of tickets and arrests of people of color. An in-house Transit Community Public Safety Department would empower the agency with the authority to implement safeguards, oversight, and training of officers based on agency priorities and values, promoting the equitable treatment of all riders with dignity and respect in accordance with the Board-approved Bias-Free Policing Policy. Furthermore, an in-house Transit Community Public Safety Department would allow for a transit policing style of engaged visibility where officers are more visible across the system, thus increasing the feeling of safety for Metro riders and employees.

Community Engagement during each phase of the Implementation Plan provides Metro with opportunities to establish and maintain positive relationships with transit riders and the broader community, taking into account their unique perspectives, diverse needs, and direct feedback. Metro will continue to conduct outreach activities, educational programs, and public safety campaigns to raise awareness and build public trust in the leadership and values of the TCPSD. The feedback gathered during each employee and community outreach event informs Metro as the department develops. Metro wants to understand employee and rider concerns and work collaboratively towards solutions.

By integrating employee and public feedback into the hiring process for the new TCPSD Chief of Police and development of the department, Metro will ensure a comprehensive approach to public safety that prioritizes care, compassion, and community collaboration. This holistic strategy not only addresses immediate safety concerns but also fosters equity and collaboration with marginalized communities to improve public safety on the transit system.

IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS

The recommendation supports strategic plan goal 2.1 of committing to improving security. Based on the In-House Public Safety Feasibility Study findings, transitioning to an in-house Transit Community Public Safety Department would enhance safety.

NEXT STEPS

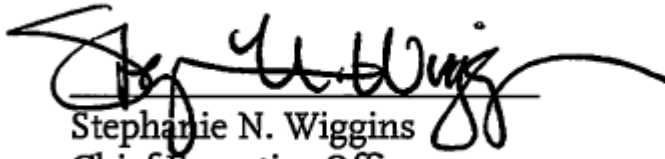
Staff will continue to actively engage employees and the public in the process of the implementation of the TCPSD. Staff will report back to the Board quarterly with progress updates.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A - Listening Sessions

Prepared by: Robert Gummer, Deputy Chief System Security and Law Enforcement (Interim), (213) 922-4513
Elba Higueros, Deputy Chief of Staff, (213) 922-6820
Yvette Rapose, Deputy Chief Customer Experience, (213) 418-3154
Desarae Jones, Senior Director, Special Projects (213) 922-2230
Imelda Hernandez, Senior Manager, Transportation Planning (213) 922-4848

Reviewed by: Ken Hernandez, Chief Safety Officer (Interim), (213) 922-2990
Jennifer Vides, Chief Customer Experience Officer, (213) 922-4060
Nicole Englund, Chief of Staff, (213) 922-7950
Dawn Jackson-Perkins, Chief People Officer (Interim), (213) 418-3166



Stephanie N. Wiggins
Chief Executive Officer

Employee Listening Sessions

Metro first conducted listening sessions for employees. To encourage maximum participation, sessions are being held both in person and virtually, with thoughtful consideration given to the timing and locations to ensure accessibility for front-line staff and employees from all Divisions and departments.

The first listening session took place in September 2024 at the Rail Operations Control Center, where employees shared their insights and priorities for the new leadership role. Additional sessions have been held throughout September and October at various Metro locations, including Divisions and the headquarters building. The executive recruiter is participating in each session to facilitate discussions and document feedback, which will play a crucial role in shaping Metro's recruitment strategy for the Chief of Police position.

To further enhance employee engagement, Metro has introduced a QR code that allows staff to easily access a short survey, where they can provide additional feedback on the qualities and priorities they believe the TCPSD Chief of Police should exemplify. This survey has been communicated via the Metro Daily Brief and direct emails, offering another means for employees to share their input.

Additionally, in July 2024, Metro began an internal Interest List to provide Metro employees with an opportunity to become a sworn officer within the TCPSD. As of October 9, there have been 515 employees who have expressed interest in learning more about TCPSD positions. The employees range from bus operators, custodians, service attendants, customer service agents, transit security officers, supervisors, and managers.

Public Listening Sessions

The Public Safety Advisory Committee (PSAC) has hosted three Community Listening Sessions to engage with the public as of the date of submission of this report. The first Listening Session took place at Los Angeles Union Station with 25 attendees, and the second session was conducted virtually with approximately 40 people in attendance. The third Listening Session took place at the Michelle Obama Neighborhood Library in Long Beach on Saturday, October 26, with about 15 attendees. At these community listening sessions, the public had the opportunity to share their vision for Metro's new Chief of Police and Emergency Management. The public was asked to share the values, skills, and traits they believe are essential for the role. Their input will help shape the future of safety in the community and on Metro. In two special meetings that were scheduled, the PSAC members themselves had an opportunity to meet with the executive recruiter and provide their own feedback and comments related to the traits, skills, and values they believe should be considered when recruiting a new Chief. In addition to these listening sessions, the PSAC engaged with the public at tabling events across the County through the Fall. In August, the PSAC tabled at National Night Out in Sun Valley, Queer Mercado in East Los Angeles, CicLavia-Meet the Hollywoods in West Hollywood, Levitt Pavilion Summer Concert at MacArthur Park, and NoHo Farmers Market in North Hollywood. The PSAC also attended the Belmont Shore Car Show in Long Beach and the

Hispanic Heritage Festival in Inglewood in September, reaching 65-100 people per event. And finally in October, they attended CicLavia in the Heart of LA, and the Taste of Soul with an estimated attendance of over 10,000 at each event.

In addition to those listening sessions and tabling opportunities hosted by the Public Safety Advisory Committee, staff engaged various targeted groups to ensure we heard from a cross-section of people with diverse lived experiences within the County of LA.

In August 2024, the Community Advisory Committee (CAC) requested an update on current Metro initiatives to discuss the TCPSD and learn what progress had been completed so far. SSLE briefed on the implementation plan, the 5-year timeline, and the status, which included building the job specifications for the Chief of Police, gauging interests in current Metro staff on joining the TCPSD, and hiring the recruitment and transition teams. The CAC expressed excitement about Metro's vision for the TSCPSD and requested frequent updates on the progress and will be meeting with the facilitator to provide their own feedback for the recruitment of the Chief of Police and Emergency Management on November 20, 2024.

In September 2024, SSLE briefed the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), which was the first time that the group requested a security presentation. The TAC requested an update on the TCPSD and wanted to understand how the organization would be different than current law enforcement and specifically asked to understand what type of oversight would be in place for this agency. SSLE explained that there would be a civilian oversight committee that would take the best practices of the current Metro advisory committees but also highlighted that the current committees would still have the same opportunities to provide feedback.

To round out the Listening Sessions, the facilitator also engaged with the business community in a listening session hosted by BizFed that yielded about 60 participants, approximately 45 faith based leaders at Metro's Faith Leaders Roundtable, 20 older adults during a listening session with On the Move Riders Program, about 25 participants at the Accessibility Advisory Committee meeting and about 25 members of the Women & Girls Governing Council. Staff will also be engaging the Youth Council on November 18 and the Aging and Disability Transportation Network in a meeting to be held in November, ensuring that we have a cross section of people with disabilities, women, youth and older adults.

**QUARTERLY UPDATE ON
TRANSIT COMMUNITY PUBLIC
SAFETY DEPARTMENT
(TCPSD) IMPLEMENTATION
PLAN**



TCPSD Implementation Plan

Develop a “care-first” public safety model that prioritizes de-escalation, mental health support, and community engagement over the next five years

Objectives:

- Enhance transit system safety for riders and employees
 - Provide a visible engaged presence on buses and trains
 - Fiscally sustainable
 - Accountability and transparency
-

Executive Recruitment for Chief of Police

- National recruitment to secure a Chief of Police who embodies Metro's values and commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion
- Held listening sessions with employees, riders, community members, and the business community to gather diverse perspectives:
 - Multiple internal listening session with employees across various shifts
 - PSAC hosted three Community Listening Sessions to engage with the public
 - Listening sessions with the Technical Advisory Committee, Women and Girls Governing Council, Accessibility Advisory Council, Metro Youth Council, and Aging and Disability Transportation Network and a Business Community Listening Session with BizFed
- Feedback collected to inform the selection criteria and leadership qualities sought in the new TCPD Chief of Police

Transition Team Advisory Group

- Successfully implementing the TCPD requires subject matter experts with specialized knowledge in public safety, care-based strategies, and transit operations to serve as the TCPD Transition Team Advisory Group.
- These team members will support Metro in shaping TCPD policies, training, and care-based practices, providing input and feedback at key milestones to ensure that the new public safety model aligns with Metro's strategic goals and public safety best practices.
- Advisory body comprised of experts from law enforcement, mental health, and social services
- Identified 8 out of 10 members

CalPERS Safety Retirement and Project Manager

- CalPERS approval received for Chief of Police position to be classified as a safety role under Government Code Section 20424
- Process initiated to modify Metro's CalPERS contract for TCPSD's inclusion in a specialized retirement plan for safety personnel, expected completion by Spring 2025
- Hired a dedicated project manager to oversee all TCPSD efforts

Crisis Intervention Teams

- **Crisis Intervention Focus:**

- Establishing teams within TCPD to address mental health crises on Metro through a compassionate, non-policing approach

- **Learning from Peer Programs:**

- Staff ride-alongs with LAPD's Homeless Outreach Proactive Engagement (HOPE) and LA County Sheriff's Transit Mental Evaluation Team (TMET)
- Peer reviews of successful crisis intervention models like Eugene's CAHOOTS program, Austin's CapMetro, and Oakland's BART

- **Goals for Crisis Response:**

- Integrate mental health clinicians with first responders
- Develop a dispatch system for crisis response that connects individuals with stabilization facilities and community resources

Next Steps

- Continuation of public and employee engagement initiatives, including listening sessions - and Community Advisory Council Meeting (11/20).
- Ongoing recruitment for TCPSD Chief of Police
- Finalizing Transition Team Advisory Group
- Finalizing Metro's CalPERS contract amendment for TCPSD's inclusion in the safety retirement plan