



Board Report

File #: 2026-0096, **File Type:** Informational Report

Agenda Number: 34.

OPERATIONS, SAFETY, AND CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE COMMITTEE MARCH 19, 2026

SUBJECT: MONTHLY UPDATE ON PUBLIC SAFETY

ACTION: RECEIVE AND FILE

RECOMMENDATION

RECEIVE AND FILE the Public Safety Report.

ISSUE

Metro is committed to providing outstanding trip experiences for all transportation system users. The agency implemented a multifaceted plan to improve safety outcomes and safety perceptions for riders and employees. The following summarizes current initiatives to accomplish this objective and recent public safety trends. This report summarizes January 2026 activity unless otherwise noted.

BACKGROUND

The Department of Public Safety (DPS) focuses on a human-centered approach, compassion, and a culture of care, recognizing diversity and respecting the wide range of people and communities it serves. DPS seeks a reparative public safety model to address the root causes of crime and disorder that can occur within the system, minimize harm, and promote inclusion. By openly sharing public safety-related statistics, DPS builds trust in the public safety model, fosters transparency, improves public perception of safety in the system, and encourages community engagement. With the launch of the [Metro Safety Hub <https://www.metro.net/safety-support/by-the-numbers/>](https://www.metro.net/safety-support/by-the-numbers/), which includes the data dashboard, this report has been shortened, and previously reported data is now available in the online dashboard. This hub demonstrates the department's commitment to openness, accountability, and the safety and well-being of employees and the transit community.

DISCUSSION

THE SAFETY ENVIRONMENT IN JANUARY

January demonstrates that sustained visible presence, calibrated access control, and coordinated outreach mitigated localized fluctuations as ridership increased. While isolated variations occurred across the system, routine operational review enabled targeted deployment adjustments that reinforced corridor stability. The holiday surge deployment concluded earlier this month and appeared to have lingering positive effects on crime deterrence.

Total reported violent crimes were 167, and property crimes totaled 66, equating to approximately 6.85 and 2.71 per million boardings, respectively. Overall crime decreased this month, reflecting a recovery from an unusual spike in December. As part of a routine monthly review, elevated activity was identified in select areas, prompting adjustments to deployment schedules.

Non-violent quality-of-life and behavioral health-related incidents remained the most frequent type of safety contact. DPS reinforced coordinated visibility and crisis intervention deployment at higher-contact locations (Union Station, 7th Street/Metro Transit Center, and Westlake/MacArthur Park) and will continue monitoring engagement patterns as ridership volumes increase.

METRO'S THREE-PART SAFETY STRATEGY

1. Engaged and Visible Presence

Visible presence contributes directly to order, predictability, and rider confidence across the system. Uniformed personnel maintained proactive patrols in high-ridership corridors and during peak travel periods. Law enforcement conducted 8,085 bus boardings as part of visible engagement and deterrence efforts. Ambassadors and Community Intervention Specialists engaged 47,295 individuals.

Monthly operational review identified disruptive conduct in specific areas at certain times. Patrol timing was adjusted, and end-of-line monitoring was reinforced in response. Customers are observed to be more willing to alight from trains at the end of the line, thus creating a more seamless experience for both riders as they depart for their destination. These visibility efforts remain in place as ridership patterns evolve.

2. Enhancing Access Control & Station Experience

Access control and station stability reduce escalation risks and improve predictability for riders and employees. Transit Security officers conducted weapons-detection screening and monitored faregates at select stations during peak hours, deterring weapons and fare evasion, respectively. Staff also continue to receive feedback from customers that the presence of these tactics makes them feel safer coming onto the system than traveling on foot outside of a station.

Station experience measures - including lighting assessments, rapid graffiti response coordination, and environmental condition monitoring - were reinforced in higher-activity locations to maintain orderly station conditions. These access control and station experience efforts will continue as compliance and rider reports are reviewed.

To address cleanliness and loitering on the A Line, staff launched a pilot on the A Line platform at Union Station in early February, where they are conducting a midline "wellness" check with collaboration between service attendants, security officers, and HOME outreach. Staff will evaluate how different departments work together in a shared environment and plan to make fine-tuned adjustments as needed. Attachment A provides Station Experience updates.

3. Building Partnerships to Address Societal Impacts

Since safety solutions vary by situation, Metro invests in and implements care-based interventions.

Outreach teams engaged 506 individuals experiencing homelessness in January, resulting in 180 interim and 39 permanent housing placements through coordination with regional service providers. Although these numbers reflect January, these efforts put Metro ahead of its goal of 2,100 placements this year.

Engagement levels and placement outcomes are reviewed monthly, with outreach deployment focused on higher-contact areas to support stabilization while reinforcing overall system order. Metro's safety model combines accountability with care-based interventions to address transit-related challenges.

IMPLEMENTING METRO'S THREE-PART STRATEGY

Frontline Protection

Any assault on a Metro employee is unacceptable and is addressed with investigative priority. There were 21 assaults on Metro employees and contractors this month. Operator assaults totaled nine in January, up from one in December and six in January 2025. Six of these incidents occurred while the operator was behind the operator safety barrier. For the remaining three, two occurred when the operator stepped outside of the operator area to speak with a patron, and the other was by the side window.

Assaults on other frontline staff, including contract security, MTS, and Ambassadors, totaled 12 in January, a decrease from 17 in December and 16 in January 2025.

Assault incidents are reviewed to identify root causes and potential preventive measures, including de-escalation training. Assaults tend to escalate into physical altercations when staff are enforcing the Code of Conduct or asking a customer to offboard a bus or train. MTS Bus Safety Teams ride the top ten bus lines with the highest operator assault rates, and security is at end-of-line stations when service ends.

Enforcement and Accountability

Maintaining a visible presence is crucial to enhancing both system safety and perceptions of safety. Enforcement activity during January included 619 arrests, 762 citations, and 1,452 removals for Code of Conduct violations.

Surge deployment for the holiday season concluded in early January, and the successful arrest of multiple suspects from at least three robbery crews can be attributed to the decrease in property crimes. Targeted enforcement strategies will continue where conditions warrant.

Major Arrest

On January 8, LAPD officers on a B Line train at Hollywood/Western Station encountered a suspect who failed to show a valid TAP card. They found a loaded handgun with an extended magazine in his waistband and, in his backpack, two large bags of marijuana. He was arrested and booked for carrying a concealed firearm.

Emergency Preparedness and System Readiness

Scenario-based training exercises ensure Metro is prepared for any emergency event. Throughout

January, DPS maintained coordinated emergency preparedness activities across rail and bus operations. Personnel participated in readiness exercises that addressed medical emergencies and service-disruption scenarios.

On January 7, Metro's Emergency Management Department held a Full-Scale Exercise at Wilshire/La Cienega Station, testing response to a train-versus-pedestrian derailment with 48 participants from multiple agencies. All responders completed station and vehicle training, demonstrating proficiency in notifications, emergency controls, and resource deployment. The exercise validated protocols and confirmed effective multi-agency coordination, maintaining transit and safety at one of Metro's soon to be open D line extension stations, and a popular tourist destination leading up to major events like 2026 FIFA World Cup.

Medical Emergencies

Trained staff is essential in emergency medical situations. Narcan reversals in January totaled 19, compared to 11 in December. Overdose response volumes fluctuate monthly and reflect broader regional public health conditions. Each reversal reflects trained intervention and rapid-response capability.

EQUITY PLATFORM

The Metro transit system spans many diverse communities across Los Angeles County. The diversity of Metro's service area includes economically and ethnically diverse areas, as well as diverse public safety needs. Metro continues to take a cross-disciplinary approach to sustain and grow ridership, improve customer experience, and, most importantly, ensure the safety of Metro's system is equitable across Los Angeles County. The Care-Based Services Division demonstrates the agency's holistic approach to improving public safety by bringing together all of Metro's care-centered programs.

VEHICLE MILES TRAVELED OUTCOME

VMT and VMT per capita in Los Angeles County are lower than national averages, the lowest in the SCAG region, and on the lower end of VMT per capita statewide, with these declining VMT trends due in part to Metro's significant investment in rail and bus transit.* Metro's Board-adopted VMT reduction targets align with California's statewide climate goals, including achieving carbon neutrality by 2045. To ensure continued progress, all Board items are assessed for their potential impact on VMT.

As part of these ongoing efforts, this item is expected to contribute to further reductions in VMT. This item supports Metro's systemwide strategy to reduce VMT through operational activities that will improve public safety and customer experience on Metro's bus and rail system and further encourage transit ridership. Metro's Board-adopted VMT reduction targets were designed to build on the success of existing investments, and this item aligns with those objectives.

**Based on population estimates from the United States Census and VMT estimates from Caltrans' Highway Performance Monitoring System (HPMS) data between 2001-2019.*

IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS

The recommendation supports Strategic Plan Goals #2.1: Deliver outstanding trip experiences for all users of the transportation system; Metro is committed to improving security and #5.6: Provide responsive, accountable, and trustworthy governance within the Metro organization; Metro will foster and maintain a strong safety culture.

NEXT STEPS

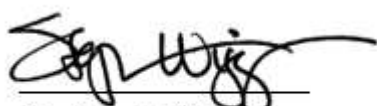
DPS will continue to monitor the performance of its law enforcement partners, private security, Transit Security Officers, and Care-Based Services members, as well as the agency's crime statistics. It also considers information from system operations, surveys, customer complaints, and physical security assessments, amongst other sources, to analyze safety-related issues, adjust deployment strategies, and formulate new interventions.

ATTACHMENT

Attachment A - Station Experience Updates

Prepared by: Robert Gummer, Deputy Chief, System Security and Law Enforcement Officer, (213) 922-4513
Craig Joyce, Senior Executive Officer, Special Programs (213) 418-3008
Stephen Tu, Deputy Executive Officer, Operations, (213) 418-3005
Karen Parks, Senior Director, Special Projects, (213) 922-4612

Reviewed by: William Scott, Chief of Police and Emergency Management, (213) 922-5448
Conan Cheung, Chief Operations Officer, (213) 418-3034
Jennifer Vides, Chief Customer Experience Officer, (213) 922-4060



Stephanie Wiggins
Chief Executive Officer

Station Experience Updates (January 2026)

Enhanced Cleaning & Fare Compliance Pilot on A Line Trains at Union Station

With the opening of the Regional Connector, the Metro A Line has become the longest, one-seat ride on light rail in North America, scheduled at 2 hours and 12 minutes one-way, or nearly 4 hours and 30 minutes round-trip between Long Beach and Pomona.

Rider and community feedback indicate that the extraordinarily long trip also presents unique challenges, such as a gradual accumulation of trash and spills on board and the presence of individuals who may remain on board for hours without exiting the train.

As other rail lines take only 30 minutes to an hour to reach their terminals, Metro's standard procedure of "resetting" the train at the end of the line works well, with frequent cleaning and security checks at the terminals, as seen at North Hollywood. However, the unprecedented length of the Metro A Line means staff need to rethink how to maintain safe, clean conditions throughout the entire trip, not just at its far-flung terminals.

Therefore, in February, staff launched a pilot collaboration across the Department of Public Safety (DPS) and Rail Operations on the A Line platform at Union Station, the midpoint of the line where train operators switch off to continue the trip in both directions. Conducting a midline "wellness check" during a train operator swap is also a common operational strategy in Latin American transit systems. This builds off last year's demonstration over two nights, where DPS was able to remove over 130 individuals on the A Line without a valid fare at Union Station, resulting in several days of reduced incidents upstream to Pasadena and Azusa.

During the momentary hold when train operators switch off at Union Station, the following duties would be conducted:

- **Service Attendants** from Rail Fleet Services will conduct an "express clean" of the train, which includes sweeping up trash and mopping up onboard spills as time permits
- **Transit Security Officers, Contract Security and Law Enforcement partners** from DPS will visibly walk through the trains, ensuring Code of Conduct compliance, and fare inspections as time permits
- **HOME Outreach** will have dedicated teams to engage with individuals and offer services to those willing to accept, where services and connectivity are substantially more available in Downtown LA compared with Pomona

When comparing the week before to the week after pit stop cleaning (January 26 to February 1, 2026, vs. February 2 to February 8, 2026), preliminary data indicate:

- Rider-reported cleanliness issues dropped -17% for the entire A Line (from Pomona to Long Beach)
- Rider-reported cleanliness issues dropped -63% for the ten A Line stations surrounding Union Station (from Highland Park to Pico/LA LIVE), which means

Metro is delivering noticeable and lasting improvements to the core of the A Line where trains are most ridden.

Staff will continue to evaluate how different departments work together in a shared environment and plan to make fine-tuned adjustments as needed. They will also evaluate upstream/downstream effects to determine whether this targeted effort serves as a force multiplier to improve safety and cleanliness across the entire line.

Interagency Walkthrough at Downtown Santa Monica Brings Renewed Coordination to Improve Safety & Cleanliness

On January 29, Local Government Relations convened an interdepartmental visit with representatives from the Santa Monica Business Improvement District (BID) and the City's Housing & Human Services Division to review key challenges and opportunities at Downtown Santa Monica (E) Station. The engagement included a station walkthrough and focused discussions on the TAP-to-Exit program, station access configurations, and Throne Restroom operations.

Participants also received updates on Metro's upcoming TAP Plus Contactless Credit and Debit Payment launch, discussed strengthening partnerships for outreach and services to unhoused individuals, and reviewed recent developments within Metro's DPS. Next steps include extending additional invitations and creating opportunities for continued engagement on regional transit initiatives.

The engagement reinforced interagency coordination and a shared commitment to ongoing collaboration, aligning resources and joint problem-solving efforts to enhance station access, safety, and the overall customer experience.

Wayfinding Improvements at Metro J Line's Patsaouras Busway Skybridge

This week, the Station Experience team worked with Facilities Maintenance and SEG D to implement helpful wayfinding for J Line riders boarding at Union Station. J Line riders have historically experienced confusion because busway traffic typically travels on the left-hand side, leading unfamiliar riders to board J Line buses in the wrong direction. Previously, riders would walk along an extensive skybridge and not know which side to board until they arrived on the platform, where they found individual bus signs.

This advanced approach to wayfinding takes advantage of the opportunity to inform riders along the extensive walk across the skybridge, so they can prepare and digest information before arriving on the busy, noisy boarding platform that coexists with freeway traffic. Staff know from previous efforts that these tactical signs help reduce customer anxiety and mental gymnastics by providing timely signage for key decision-making.

On-The-Move Travel Buddies Affirm Impact of Station Experience

At the February quarterly, hands-on training for Metro's On the Move Riders Program Travel Buddies, Station Experience provided updates on recent station interventions,

including enhanced signage and wayfinding, new faregate designs, accelerated Throne restroom expansion, and the Union Station Pit Stop Pilot Project.

Travel Buddies shared positive feedback on Throne restrooms and recent cleanliness and safety improvements—including at Fillmore (A) Station in Pasadena—and expressed support for new faregates and appreciation for Metro staff presence at major events. As older adults who lead Metro trips and teach their peers how to ride, Travel Buddies provide trusted, frontline insight. Their strong awareness of these interventions highlights the meaningful impact Station Experience efforts are having on senior riders across LA County.

Key feedback included:

- **Fillmore Station** - One Travel Buddy from the Pasadena area has noticed a significant decrease in loitering following recent Station Experience improvements here
- **Rose Bowl Game** - One Travel Buddy rode Metro and was extremely impressed with Metro staff support, signage, and Rose distribution on New Year's Day
- **Throne Restrooms** - Most Travel Buddies have now used a Throne and strongly support them when riding Metro
- **A Line Pit Stop Pilot at Union Station & Taller Faregates** - Travel Buddies were extremely supportive of both efforts



Monthly Update on Public Safety

Operations, Safety, & Customer Experience
Committee Meeting

March 19, 2026

Metro Safety Hub / Safety Dashboard



Metro Safety Tracker: Transparency in Action

The Metro Safety Hub launched in February 2026. Data dating back to July 2017 is now available in the online dashboard.

We pay close attention to safety and crime on our system, monitoring data from Metro as well as our partners.

This platform reflects our commitment to transparency, accountability, and creating a secure transit experience for everyone.

Our Reach and Scale

Systemwide

Bus

Rail

1 Million +

Daily Riders

88

Cities Served

200 +

Neighborhoods

4000 +

Square Miles

Engaged & Visible Presence

January 2026

Incident Free Trips

99.998%

Passenger Boardings

24M

Crime per 1M Boardings

25

January 2026: Total Crimes

605

763 (-21%)

Dec 2025

490 (+23%)

Jan 2025

December 2025: Total Crimes

763

609 (+25%)

Nov 2025

532 (+43%)

Dec 2024

vs Previous Year (Jan 2025 to Jan 2026)

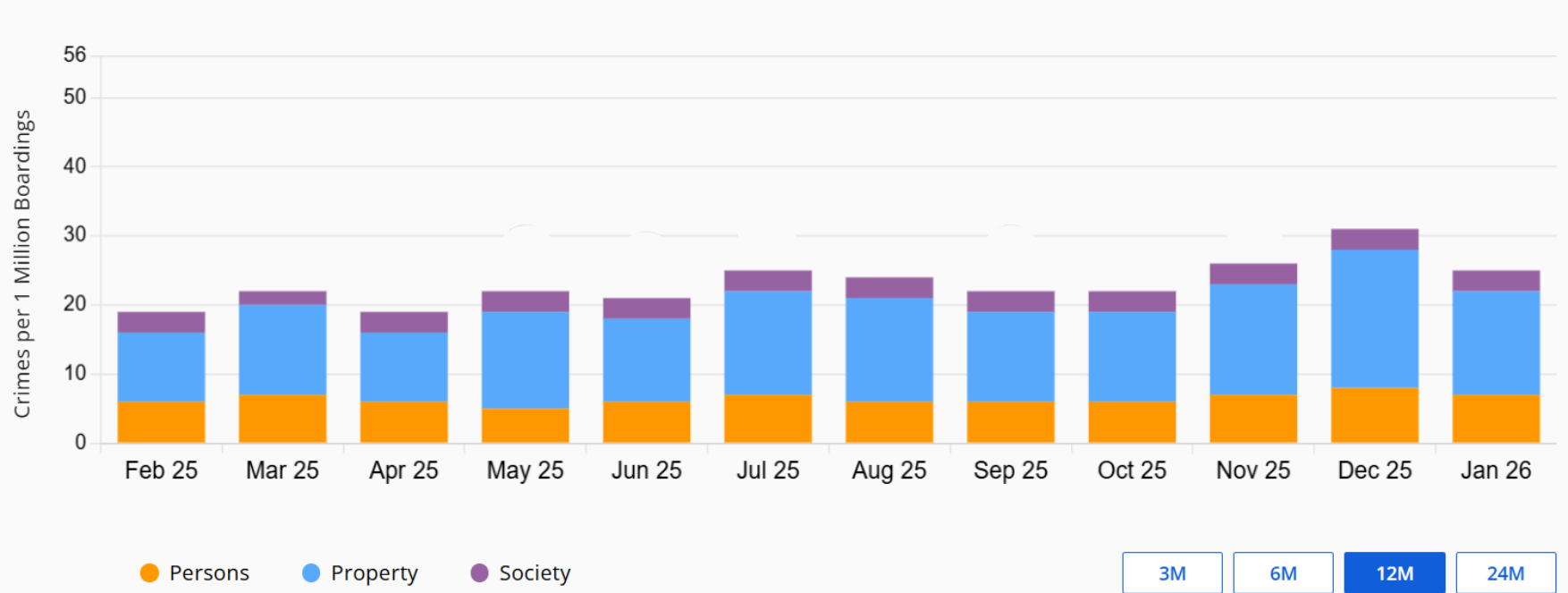
↑ 23%

vs Previous Month (Dec 2025 to Jan 2026)

↓ -21%

Crimes per 1 million boardings (Jan 2026)

25 (0.0025%)



Overall crime decreased this month, reflecting a recovery from an unusual spike in December.

👁

65,853

Tap Visual Inspections

🎫

9,960

MTS Fare Checks

📄

1,183

Citations

🚫

5,512

Ejections

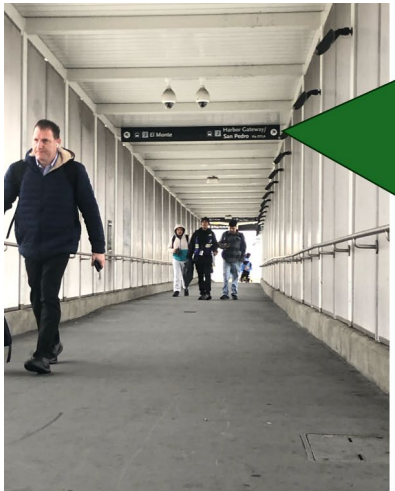
Fare evasion is 20%

3

Access Control & Station Experience

January 2026

- A Line Pit-Stop Pilot at Union Station brings 63% reduction in rider-reported cleanliness issues along the core segment
- Wayfinding improvements along J Line's Patsaouras Busway Skybridge at Union Station East
- On-The-Move travel buddies affirm impact of station experience



Partnerships to Address Societal Impacts

January 2026

Since safety solutions vary by situation, Metro invests in and implements care-based interventions.

**Ambassador & Community
Intervention Specialist
Engagements**

47,295 people

**HOME
Engagements**

506 people

**Interim
Housing**

108 people

**Permanent
Housing**

39 people

To date, the HOME teams have placed 1,552 individuals in interim or permanent housing, positioning Metro to exceed its FY26 goal of 2,100 total placements.



- In January, there were 21 assaults on Metro frontline personnel, with nine operator assaults.
- Six of these incidents occurred while the operator was behind the operator safety barrier. For the remaining three, two occurred when the operator stepped outside of the operator area to speak with a patron, and the other was by the side window.
 - None required medical transport to a hospital.
- MTS Bus Safety Teams ride the top ten bus lines with the highest operator assault rates, and security is at end-of-line stations when service ends.

Assaults on Metro Employees & Contractors		
Type	Dec-25	Jan-26
Bus Operators	1	9
Rail Operators	0	0
Transit Security Officers	4	0
Contract Security Officers	10	5
Ambassadors	1	1
Blue Shirts	0	0
Community Intervention Specialists	0	4
Custodians	2	2
Total	18	21

