



MAYOR & COUNCIL MEMORANDUM

December 16, 2025

Subject: Discussion and Direction Relating to a Transit Safety and Security Action Plan (City Wide)

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Issue – The Mayor and Council have requested a study session item to review and discuss an action plan to improve safety and security on the transit system, including on buses, at bus stops, and at transit centers.

City Manager's Office Recommendation – The City Manager's Office recommends that the Mayor and Council allocate \$500,000 for one year to fund the proposed near-term actions included in the Transit Safety and Security Action Plan.

Background – During the October 8, 2025, Mayor and Council meeting, staff presented several recommendations to improve safety and security on the City's public transit system. The presentation highlighted recurring safety challenges experienced by operators and riders, including open-air drug use, loitering, behavioral health-related incidents, and inconsistent enforcement of prohibited activities at high-incident stops and transit centers. Staff also outlined limitations within the current security model, the need for stronger coordination with TPD, gaps in lighting and environmental design, and opportunities to expand outreach partnerships and improve reporting tools for operators and riders. Mayor and Council provided extensive input during the discussion, emphasizing the need for a more coordinated and data-driven approach, strengthened operator protections, and a clearer structure for shared responsibility across departments.

At the conclusion of the Study Session, the Mayor and Council directed the City Manager to return within 60 days with a comprehensive action plan that responds to their specific direction and areas of focus. This motion, which now forms the foundation of the Transit Safety and Security Action Plan, instructed staff to incorporate the following considerations:

- Coordinate the presence of TPD and contracted security
- Prioritize hot spot stops and corridors
- Deploy Transit Ambassador/Outreach teams
- Consult with Sun Tran operators to identify safety infrastructure and operator protections (lighting, CCTV, operator enclosures, panic/duress systems) and evaluate opportunities to better protect Sun Tran operators
- Require written operator safety protocols and training for Sun Tran operators
- Review and provide input on the Action Plan with the TTAC and Sun Tran operators
- Adopt and actively promote the use of the free Transit app, widely used by transit systems nationwide, to enable real-time rider feedback.

Further, the Mayor and Council directed that the City Manager work with relevant and appropriate state and local jurisdictions for the provision of mental and behavioral health, and substance abuse resources for impacted individuals.

Discussion and Direction Relating to a Transit Safety and Security Action Plan (City Wide)

Present Consideration(s) – Staff has developed the Transit Safety and Security Action Plan in response to Mayor and Council direction from the October 8, 2025, Study Session. The Plan was shaped through extensive coordination with key stakeholders to ensure that operational experience, enforcement perspectives, and social-service expertise were meaningfully incorporated into the recommended actions. As part of this process, DTM staff engaged with the following groups:

- Teamsters Local 104 leadership
- Sun Tran operators (via Labor–Management sessions)
- Tucson Transit Advisory Committee (TTAC)
- TPD leadership and staff at all four Operations Divisions (East, West, South, and Midtown)
- Community Safety, Health & Wellness (CSHW)
- Sun Tran management and operations leadership

The Safety and Security Action Plan organizes Mayor and Council’s direction into seven thematic elements: (1) Safety Partnerships and Presence, (2) Targeted Safety Interventions, (3) Transit Ambassadors and Outreach Teams, (4) Operator Safety Enhancements, (5) Operator Safety Policies and Training, (6) Stakeholder and Operator Engagement, and (7) Rider Feedback and Communication Systems. Together, these elements provide a structured framework for improving the safety of operators, riders, and the broader transit system.

To support implementation, the Plan outlines a phased approach that prioritizes immediate, no-cost actions while identifying additional near-term and long-term opportunities:

Immediate Actions – No Additional Cost

Immediate efforts focus on operational improvements that can be advanced through existing resources, including deployment coordination, communication improvements, quarterly hot spot analysis, operator engagement, and enhanced reporting and monitoring practices. These actions are already underway or ready to begin immediately upon Mayor and Council direction.

Near-Term Actions – \$500,000 Safety Allocation

The Plan also identifies a set of near-term improvements that require dedicated funding to implement. These items are included in the table below, and are recommended for support through a proposed \$500,000 one-time allocation:

Plan Element	Action/Improvement	Responsible Party	Proposed Budget Allocation
Element 1 – Safety Partnerships	E1.F – Enhance police presence and enforcement opportunities: Fund targeted overtime deployments or Special Duty officers to support transit safety enforcement.	ST, DTM, TPD	\$350,000 <i>(≈25 weekly hours, 3 officer deployment)</i>

Plan Element	Action/Improvement	Responsible Party	Proposed Budget Allocation
Element 2 – Targeted Safety Interventions	E2.C – Implement Environmental Design (CPTED) improvements: Targeted installations which may include lighting upgrades, placement of deterrent rocks, removal of obstructions, and signage improvements at select high-priority stops.	ST, DTM	\$150,000 <i>(Spot improvement at various locations)</i>
TOTAL			\$500,000

Long-Range Actions – Contingent upon RTA Next Allocation, \$2M+ Annually for 20 years

Long-term strategies that would provide systemwide improvements in future years. These efforts, including expanded security, law enforcement, and ambassador staffing, systemwide lighting and CPTED upgrades, enhanced camera coverage, modernized operator protections, and comprehensive analytics integration, are dependent on available funding and may be supported through the proposed RTA Next regional transit safety allocation, which will be considered by voters in March 2026.

Next Steps

Staff will continue advancing the immediate, no-cost actions identified in the Plan and is requesting Mayor and Council approval of the proposed \$500,000 allocation to implement the near-term improvements. Long-term strategies will remain contingent on future funding availability and may be refined or reprioritized based on Mayor and Council direction as the Safety and Security Action Plan continues to evolve as a living document.

Plan Tucson Consideration(s) – Based on Plan Tucson Goal 13: Expand and Improve Access to High-Quality Transportation Choices, Enhance Safety, and Improve the Condition of City Streets and Other Infrastructure, the following policies directly support the themes of safety, operational coordination, infrastructure improvement, and mobility access within the Transit Safety and Security Action Plan:

Transportation 4 –

Develop safe, convenient, accessible, and connected transportation networks for walking, biking, and rolling that are in alignment with the Complete Streets Policy.

Transportation 5 –

Support policies and initiatives to develop a coordinated multimodal transportation system that improves efficiency, safety, and reliability of transporting people and goods in and outside of the region.

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Transportation 6 –

Design future streets and rights-of-way, as well as retrofits, that are sized in a way and include amenities that will make multi-modal transportation choices convenient, attractive, safe, and heat resilient.

Transportation 8 –

Improve road conditions and implement design features to reduce crashes and enhance public safety.

Transportation 9 –

Develop and enhance transportation and other infrastructure to increase our community's resilience to extreme heat, extreme drought, flooding, fire, and all emergencies.

Transportation 12 –

Continuously evaluate transit service provision to identify opportunities to expand the Frequent Transit Network, increase and extend service hours, transit coverage, and invest in infrastructure that supports speed, reliability, and service quality.

Financial Considerations – A one-time allocation of \$500,000 is requested to support the near-term actions in the Transit Safety and Security Action Plan, consisting of targeted off-duty officer support, and priority CPTED improvements at high-incident locations. These targeted investments address the most urgent safety needs while longer-term improvements remain dependent on future funding sources.

The RTA Next plan includes \$51M for 20 years to fund “Safety and Security of the Regional Transit System”. It is expected that the plan will allocate \$43M of that funding to the City of Tucson which would provide approximately \$2.15M annually for additional security, bus stop cleaning and rehabilitation, and TPD special deployments. This allocation would support the long-range recommendations included in the Safety and Security Action Plan.

Legal Considerations – None at this time.

Respectfully submitted,



Kristina Swallow
Assistant City Manager

KS/SC/AB/JC/hw

TRANSPORTATION AND MOBILITY
TUCSON POLICE

Attachment(s): A – Transit Safety and Security Action Plan