

Safety, Security, and Fare Enforcement (SaFE) Reform Community Ambassador Results Report

June 26, 2024



King County

I. Contents

II.	Proviso Text	3
III.	Executive Summary	5
IV.	Background.....	6
V.	Report Requirements	11
	Impacts of Efforts System Wide.....	11
	Impacts of Efforts on Safety Emphasis Areas.....	12
VI.	Next Actions	20
VII.	Appendices	21
	A. Appendix A: Community Engagement Efforts	21
	B. Appendix B: Area routes	22
	Table 1: Engagement description by location.....	10
	Table 2: Engagement event and attendees by location	21
	Table 3: Routes that serve each area.....	22
	Figure 1: Public safety model.....	7
	Figure 2: Care and presence model	8
	Figure 3: System-wide incident trends by type	11
	Figure 4: System-wide incidents by year and quarter	12
	Figure 5: System-wide vs area-specific incidents by month and year	12
	Figure 6: Area-specific incidents by month and year (excluding Third Avenue and CID/Little Saigon).....	13
	Figure 7: Aurora Village Transit Center incidents by year and quarter	13
	Figure 8: Burien Transit Center incidents by year and quarter.....	15
	Figure 9: Incidents by year and quarter – Routes that serve Third Avenue	16
	Figure 10: Incidents by year and quarter – Routes that serve 23rd Avenue South and South Jackson Street.....	17
	Figure 11: Incidents by year and quarter – Routes that serve Chinatown/International District and Little Saigon.....	18
	Figure 12: Incidents by year and quarter – Routes that serve Skyway-West Hill.....	19

II. Proviso Text

P2 PROVIDED FURTHER THAT:

Of this appropriation, \$1,000,000 shall not be expended or encumbered until the executive transmits two reports: first, a SaFE reform community ambassador scoping report; and second, a SaFE reform community ambassador results report. Each report should be accompanied by a motion that should acknowledge receipt of the applicable report. Each motion should reference the subject matter, the Proviso's ordinance number, ordinance section and Proviso number in both the title and body of the motion. Upon passage of each motion, \$500,000 is released for encumbrance or expenditure.

A.1. There has been an increase in reported safety incidents, illegal activity, vandalism and littering on buses, as well as at and around transit stops and transit centers in many areas of King County. The Metro Transit Department's safety, security and fare enforcement ("SaFE") reform initiative implementation report, which was approved by the King County council through Motion 16128, established a goal of safe, accessible and equitable transit that is cocreated to support community well-being. To achieve that goal, the Metro transit department must engage local communities in a co-creative and collaborative approach, utilizing community organizing efforts and community ambassadors to coordinate safety efforts in the areas around transit stops and transit centers with communities, including stakeholders and leaders, residents, community-based organizations, local businesses, public agencies and jurisdictional partners.

2. For the purposes of this Proviso, the co-creative and collaborative approach to transit safety and security issues shall be referred to as the SaFE reform community ambassador effort.

3. For the purposes of the reports required by this Proviso, the SaFE reform community ambassador effort shall be focused in the following areas:

- a. the Aurora Village Transit Center;
- b. the Burien Transit Center;
- c. transit stops in the Skyway-West Hill community service area;
- d. transit stops on Third Avenue in Seattle between South Main Street and Broad Street;
- e. transit stops in the Chinatown/International District and Little Saigon;
- f. transit stops near 23rd Avenue South and South Jackson Street in Seattle; and
- g. other areas in which the level of safety incidents, illegal activity, vandalism or littering, either on buses or at and around transit stops and transit centers, as determined by the Metro transit department, indicates a need for improvement to foster greater community safety and security.

B. The SaFE reform community ambassador scoping report shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

1. A description of the number and purposes of meetings to address transit safety, security, cleanliness or SaFE reform initiative implementation, which Metro transit department staff led or attended or which were led or attended by representatives of community-based organizations under contract to King county, in the areas listed in subsection A.3. of this Proviso;

2. Identification of the community stakeholders and leaders, residents, community-based organizations, local businesses, public agencies, and jurisdictional partners that participated in the meetings identified in response in subsection B.1. of this Proviso; and

3. Narratives describing the following: how follow-up activities were addressed, methods used to ensure that issues regarding all or any areas listed in subsection A.3 of this Proviso were communicated to the respective participants in the meetings described in subsection B.1. of this Proviso, how strategies from the SaFE reform initiative implementation report approved by Motion 16128 have been

implemented and what resources, such as community ambassadors to support safety and security or measures to increase cleanliness at and around transit stops and transit centers, have been deployed.

C. The SaFE reform community ambassador results report, analyzing the impacts of the efforts in the areas listed in subsection A.3. of this Proviso, shall include comparative data by which the Metro transit department can determine if there is a measurable benefit gained by implementing SaFE reform initiative strategies, including community ambassadors and community organizing efforts. The data should include, but not be limited to, a summary of system-wide trends in safety incidents and illegal activities on buses and at transit centers and transit stops year-over-year from June 2018 through June 2023, as well as specific trend data for the areas listed in subsection A3. of this Proviso, and information on the Metro transit department's activities or efforts to maintain cleanliness at and around transit centers and transit stops in the areas listed in subsection A.3. of this Proviso.

The executive should electronically file the SaFE reform community ambassador scoping report and motion required by this Proviso no later than December 31, 2023, and the SaFE reform community ambassador results report and the motion required by this Proviso no later than June 20, 2024, with the clerk of the council, who shall retain an electronic copy and provide an electronic copy to all councilmembers, the council chief of staff and the lead staff for the law, justice, health and human services committee or its successor.¹

¹Ordinance 19546 [\[LINK\]](#)

III. Executive Summary

Background

This report fulfills the requirements of Ordinance 19546, Section 114, Proviso P2. It provides information about system-wide and site-specific trends of safety incidents and illegal activities on buses, at transit centers, and at transit stops. It also includes the SaFE Reform Initiative strategies and cleaning interventions that Metro has undertaken in specific areas, and how those efforts appear to impact safety incidents.

As a result of King County's pro-equity work in 2021, Metro initiated the SaFE Reform Initiative. In its SaFE Reform work, Metro has prioritized engaging and elevating the voices of BIPOC King County riders and employees to help Metro provide safe, accessible, and equitable transit that is co-created to support community well-being.²

With the SaFE Reform Initiative, Metro has shifted from a traditional public safety model to a care and presence model. One of Metro's main goals is achieving safety while supporting community members who have the greatest needs and without perpetuating systemic racism. Two key pilots to come out of the SaFE Reform Initiative are the SaFE Ambassadors and Behavioral Health Specialists.

The SaFE Reform Community Ambassador effort refers to the collaborative approach that Metro uses to engage with residents, local leaders, community-based organizations, local businesses, public agencies, and jurisdictional partners to address transit safety and security. The insights gained through the SaFE Reform Community Ambassador effort are informing Metro's current work to strategize solutions for safe and clean transit hubs, stops, and buses, both at the specific locations outlined in the Proviso as well through the work of the SaFE Reform Initiative. Metro followed up with the organizations that had originally been invited to participate in the walking tours, focus groups, and one-on-one follow ups that informed the SaFE Reform Community Ambassador Scoping Report.³

According to safety incident reports and feedback from various community members that were engaged as part of the SaFE Reform Community Ambassador effort, Metro's efforts to improve safety and security at and around buses, transit stops, and shelters appear to be improving transit system safety. In addition to continuing to address issues shared by community members, such as the need for clarified and improved methods for reporting and communicating safety incidents to Metro and various jurisdictional partners and stakeholders, Metro will improve communications on the various efforts that Metro and jurisdictional partners have underway and how community members can use existing channels to ensure their concerns are addressed.

² [SaFE Reform Initiative](#)

³ [SaFE Reform Community Ambassador Scoping Report](#)

IV. Background

Department Overview

King County Metro is the Puget Sound region's largest public transportation agency. Metro provides bus, paratransit, vanpool, and water taxi services, and operates Seattle Streetcar, Sound Transit Link Light Rail, and Sound Transit Express bus service. Metro is committed to providing safe, equitable, and sustainable mobility, and prioritizing service where needs are greatest.

Key Historical Conditions

Prior to the launch of the SaFE Reform Initiative, the King County Equity and Social Justice Plan and the Racism as a Public Health Crisis were major drivers of Metro's actions when engaging with community.

[King County Equity and Social Justice Strategic Plan](#) – The King County Equity and Social Justice Strategic Plan has been a blueprint for action and change that guides King County departments' pro-equity policy direction, decision-making, planning, operations and services, and workplace practices to advance equity and social justice within County government and in partnership with communities.⁴

[Racism as a Public Health Crisis](#) – Following the murder of George Floyd, the King County Executive declared racism a public health crisis and announced a commitment to becoming anti-racist and accountable to BIPOC communities.⁵ This led Metro to reevaluate its programs to find ways to more equitably meet the needs of Black, Indigenous, and other people of color (BIPOC) King County residents and communities. Metro specifically reexamined its policies and practices that could perpetuate inequitable practices that directly impact communities of color. Metro, in collaboration with other King County departments, worked to address how its practices regarding the presence of law enforcement personnel can be reshaped to better serve all residents within the county.

[The Safety, Security, and Fare Enforcement \(SaFE\) Reform Initiative](#) – King County Metro initiated the SaFE Reform Initiative in 2021 as a direct response to the King County Executive's declaration of racism as a public health crisis. In its SaFE Reform work, Metro has prioritized engaging and elevating the voices of community members, customers, and Metro employees to identify what equitable safety practices mean to its riders.⁶

Metro's key SaFE Priorities include:

- Increasing presence in and around King County Metro transit hubs.
- Providing timely and appropriate response that is equitable for all transit riders.
- Prioritizing community voices.
- Providing spaces for intentional partnerships that directly impact and improve transit.
- Allowing community to take ownership of current and future safety-related Metro pilot programs to improve customer transit experience.

⁴ [King County Equity and Social Justice Plan](#)

⁵ [Racism as a Public Health Crisis](#)

⁶ [SaFE Reform Initiative](#)

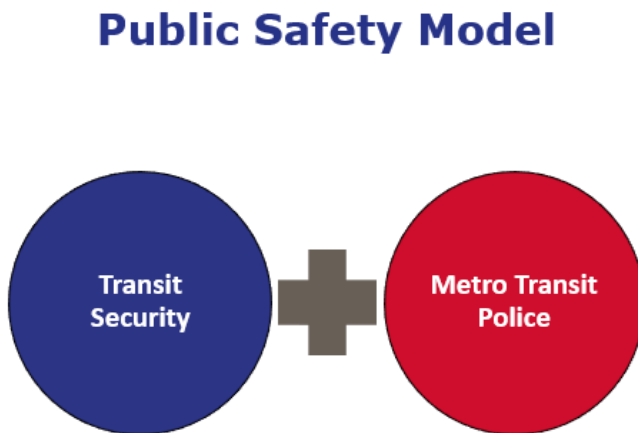
Key Current Conditions

How Metro approaches safety and security has changed significantly over time to ensure that Metro shows up in the right way and with the right resources for the situation. Metro aims to have the lightest touch required to improve safety on its system, only having law enforcement intervene when needed.

Prior to the SaFE Reform Initiative, Metro operated on a traditional public safety model that was comprised of Metro Transit Police and Transit Security Officers (Figure 1). Metro Transit Police and Transit Security Officers both play a role in preventing and addressing safety and security incidents on Metro's systems.

Public Safety Model

Figure 1: Public safety model



While there can be overlap in where they are deployed and how they are improving safety, Metro Transit Police and Transit Security Officers differ in the specifics of their charge.

- The King County Metro Transit Police is a division of the King County Sheriff's Office contracted with King County Metro. Metro Transit Police ensure the safety and security of passengers and staff by patrolling, responding to emergencies, enforcing laws, and investigating criminal activities. In addition to investigating crimes on transit and at transit properties, Metro Transit Police also work to prevent crimes from happening.
- Transit Security Officers are contracted security personnel that provide non-law-enforcement security presence to deter incidents, monitor activities, address behavioral issues, and assist customers and operators with questions and safety concerns. Metro's Transit Security Officers provide on-coach security and customer services on routes and transit areas with the highest reported security incidents as well as terminal security at certain locations throughout King County. They also provide outreach supplies (e.g., power bars, water, and socks) to individuals that are unhoused and information for resources within a three-block radius of the terminal where they can receive additional services.

Care and Presence Model

One of Metro’s main goals is achieving safety while supporting community members who have the greatest needs and without perpetuating systemic racism. To support that goal, Metro has shifted from a traditional public safety model to a care and presence model, as shown in Figure 2. This new model reinforces Metro’s values through visible and approachable staff dedicated to passenger and employee safety and well-being and fostering empathy.

Figure 2: Care and presence model

Care and Presence Model



In order to address security challenges effectively, using the most appropriate resource for the situation, Metro developed several pilot programs in accordance with the SaFE Reform Initiative, including SaFE Ambassadors and Behavioral Health Specialists.

- *SaFE Ambassador Pilot* – The SaFE Ambassador Pilot, which launched in Q1 of 2023, was formed based on a recommendation from Metro’s SaFE Equity Workgroup, which is comprised of community members from across King County. SaFE Ambassadors are light-duty employees from bus operations, rail, transit facilities, and vehicle maintenance divisions who provide in-person customer service, create a welcoming presence, and have broad knowledge of the system. Teams of SaFE Ambassadors are located at key transit center locations to provide information about routes and fares, assistance with wayfinding and fare payment, and general customer support. The SaFE Ambassadors are one of the SaFE Reform Initiative’s first steps toward developing non-police forms of presence in high traffic transit locations. The work conducted by the SaFE Ambassadors is informed by the SaFE Equity Workgroup’s central goal to intentionally develop ways for Metro’s riders to “feel safe, secure, and welcome on transit.”⁷

⁷ [SaFE Reform Initiative](#)

- *Behavioral Health Specialists Pilot* – As recommended by the SaFE Equity Workgroup, Metro is partnering with the King County Department of Community and Human Services (DCHS) to provide behavioral health specialist outreach services at the Burien Transit Center from 6 p.m. to 2 a.m., daily.⁸ Since April 2023, the Behavioral Health Specialists conducting outreach have provided de-escalation, crisis intervention, peer support, and connection to social support services to community members in crisis.

SaFE Reform Community Ambassador effort – As established by the Proviso, the SaFE Reform Community Ambassador effort refers to the co-creative and collaborative approach to transit safety and security. Instead of being a specific project or program, the SaFE Reform Community Ambassador effort is an ongoing approach for how Metro engages with the community as it works to improve safety conditions on its system. Metro staff led the SaFE Reform Community Ambassador effort by engaging with various residents, community members, local businesses, jurisdictional partners, and other public agencies. The insights from that effort are informing how Metro coordinates and responds to safety efforts in areas around transit stops and transit centers.

Report Methodology

Metro’s Partnerships and Engagement Team researched the six locations identified in the King County Council Proviso. They were supported in this work by Metro’s:

- Safety, Security, and Quality Assurance Team
- Transit Route Facilities Team
- Transit Facilities Maintenance Team

Metro’s Partnerships & Engagement Team followed up with the organizations that had been invited to participate in the walking tours, focus groups, and one-on-one follow ups that informed the Reform Community Ambassador Scoping Report.⁹ A list of the organizations that provided feedback for this report can be found in Appendix A.

In following up with organizations, Metro shared the community’s feedback and actions Metro had taken. Metro collected the feedback either via email or via these meetings and incorporated that into these findings. Table 1 describes the different types of engagement that Metro conducted by location.

⁸ [SaFE Reform Initiative](#)

⁹ [SaFE Reform Community Ambassador Scoping Report](#)

Table 1: Engagement description by location

Location(s)	Description of Engagement
Aurora Village Transit Center	In the first quarter of 2024, Metro staff reached out to organizations that had either participated in or had previously been invited to participate in the walking tour. Representatives from those organizations provided feedback on any changes in safety conditions at the transit center since the walking tour conducted in Fall of 2023.
Third Avenue	Metro connected with businesses that have been involved in larger conversations on how to improve safety conditions on Third Avenue.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chinatown/International District and Little Saigon • 23rd Avenue South & South Jackson Street • Burien Transit Center • Skyway-West Hill 	Metro’s Community Liaisons engaged with organizations that were involved in previous community engagement efforts to inform safety improvements as well as with additional organizations. Metro’s Community Liaisons are part-time employees piloting a new approach to improve Metro’s capacity to have ongoing and consistent relationships with community organizations. They connect with organizations they have existing relationships with as well as identify new organizations that Metro can start to build relationships with. Organizations were invited to either share any updated feedback that they had via email or to meet with Metro staff.

In addition to hearing from the community, Metro’s Safety, Security, and Quality Assurance Team provided historical and current safety incident data to examine safety trends across Metro’s system. To make these observations, Metro relied primarily on safety incident reports that are made by Metro operators to the Transit Control Center. Metro’s Transit Control Center is staffed 24/7 and is operators’ first response when an incident occurs. Safety incidents included in this report encompass various categories from spitting to alcohol or drug use to assault. The most frequent safety incident classifications across Metro’s system include non-destinational riders, disruptive behavior/yelling, refusal to get off the bus, harassment/threats, and property damage/graffiti.

V. Report Requirements

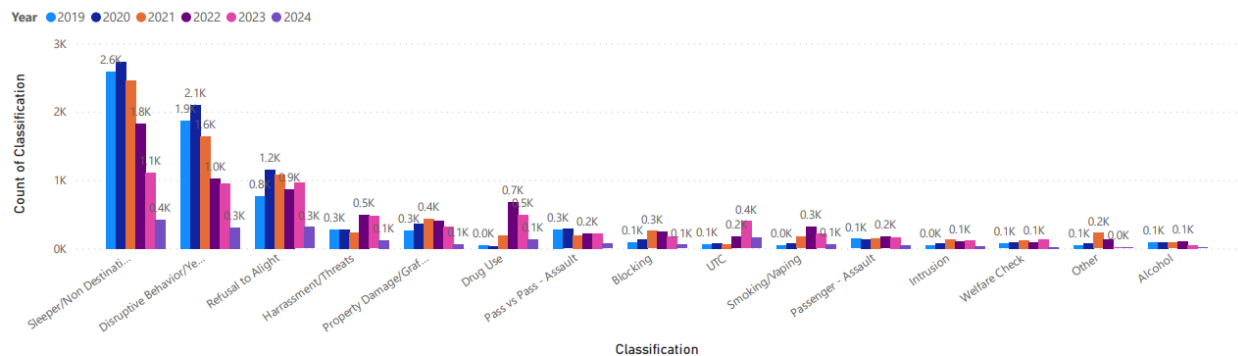
This report outlines how safety, security, and cleaning interventions have impacted safety incidents at Metro, first examining trends across the whole system over the past three years. The report then examines safety incident trends at all six locations identified in the Proviso. In each of these analyses, the report highlights actions that Metro has taken to improve conditions in each area, including SaFE Reform Initiative strategies, as well as how the community ambassador effort—which engages community members to make recommended improvements—has impacted safety in each area.

Impacts of Efforts System Wide

Data for this report is provided starting from January 2019, when the data is first readily available, through March 2024. The safety incidents shown in the following sections reflect incident reports that span a variety of behaviors, including alcohol/drug use, non-destinational riders, and disruptive behavior/yelling. System-wide incident trends reflect the total number of safety incident reports that have been made across all of Metro’s routes.

The most common incident types that are included in this report are documented in Figure 3.

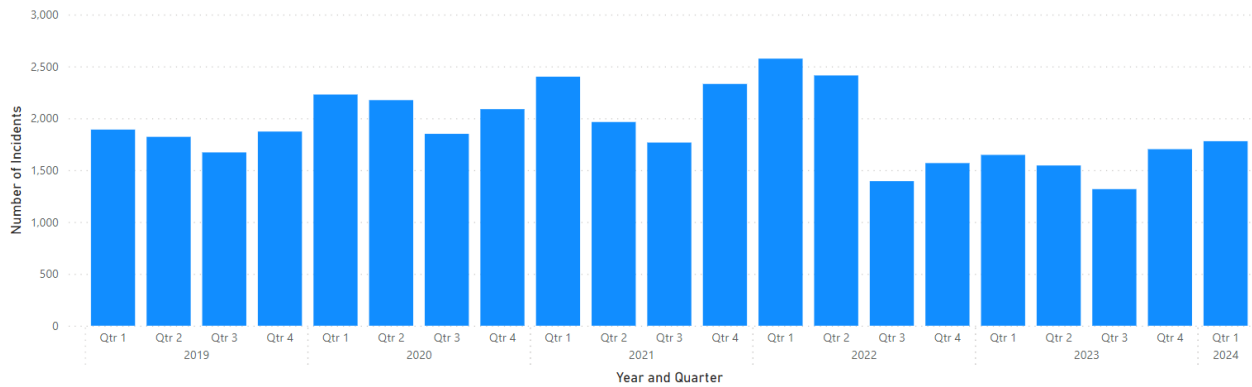
Figure 3: System-wide incident trends by type



Between 2019 and 2024, the number of safety incidents reported has gone down. Specifically, in 2023 there were fewer reports of sleeper/non-destinational riders, disruptive behavior/yelling, and drug use – which have been some of Metro’s biggest challenges during the pandemic. However, in 2023, safety incidents did increase in the categories of refusal to alight (i.e., refusal to get off the bus), Unlawful Transit Conduct (UTC), intrusion, and welfare checks.

Figure 4 below tallies system-wide incidents by year and quarter.

Figure 4: System-wide incidents by year and quarter



As noted in Figure 4, safety incidents increased to an all-time high at the start of 2022 and began to decline and stabilize starting in July 2022. Slight increases in safety incidents in the fourth quarter of 2023 and first quarter of 2024 reflect a historical trend of safety incidents increasing in the winters and are still lower than pre-pandemic levels.

Impacts of Efforts on Safety Emphasis Areas

In addition to examining system-wide trends, Metro also analyzed safety incident trends in each of the following specific subareas:

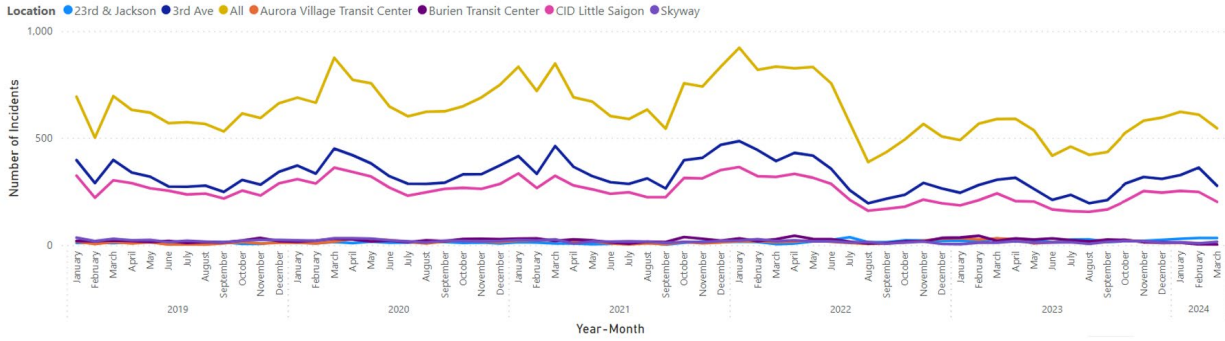
- Aurora Village Transit Center
- Burien Transit Center
- Skyway-West Hill community service area
- Third Avenue in Seattle between South Main Street and Broad Street
- Chinatown/International District and Little Saigon
- 23rd Avenue South and South Jackson Street in Seattle

For Aurora Village Transit Center and Burien Transit Center, incident trends reflect instances that occurred at the respective transit centers, since that is data that is already collected and available. For Skyway-West Hill, Third Ave, Chinatown/International District and Little Saigon, and 23rd Avenue South and South Jackson Street, incident reports reflect incidents on bus routes that service those areas.¹⁰ Most safety incidents in the data used for this report correspond to routes, not specific stops. Analysis by Metro staff finds that route-based safety incident reports are typically representative of safety and security concerns that occur at bus stops, as rider behaviors that are observed at bus stops often continue onto the buses that serve those stops.

Figure 5 shows the system-wide versus area-specific incidents for comparison. Area-specific incidents for Third Avenue and Chinatown / International District and Little Saigon make up the majority of safety incidents on Metro’s system.

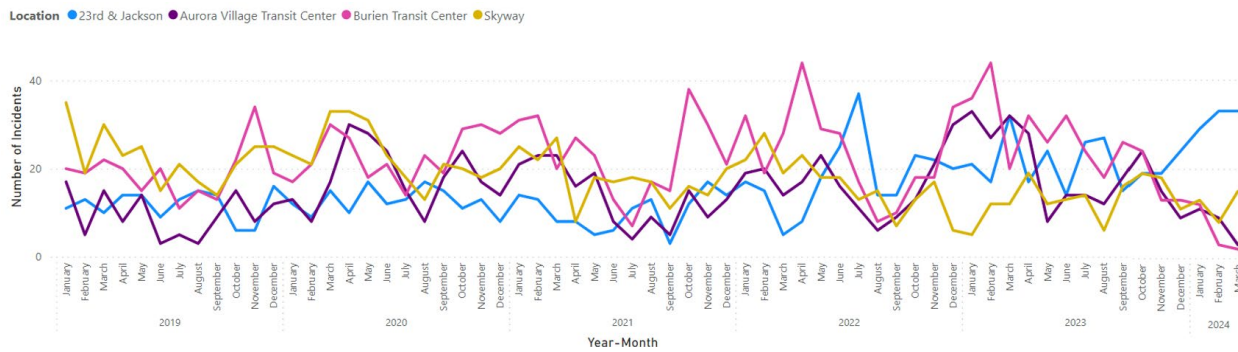
Figure 5: System-wide vs area-specific incidents by month and year

¹⁰ The list of routes included for each location can be found in Appendix B.



Safety incident rates at 23rd & Jackson, Aurora Village Transit Center, Burien Transit Center, and Skyway-West Hill are relatively small in comparison to Third Avenue and Chinatown/International District and Little Saigon, and so are shown in Figure 6 below to better show the details of those safety incident trends.

Figure 6: Area-specific incidents by month and year (excluding Third Avenue and CID/Little Saigon)



Aurora Village Transit Center

Figure 7 tallies incidents at Aurora Village Transit Center. Similar to system-wide trends, historically there were spikes in incident reports coinciding with winter months. This trend was not seen in Q4 2023-Q1 2024 after Metro interventions described below.

Figure 7: Aurora Village Transit Center incidents by year and quarter



Safety and security interventions – In March 2023, Transit Security Officers began overnight coverage at Aurora Village Transit Center and in May 2023, pivoted to 24/7 coverage.

Cleanliness and environment interventions – In December 2023, Metro installed portable restrooms at the Aurora Village Transit Center. Removing the broken payphone and graffiti, as well as better addressing the litter in the area have also contributed to the general cleanliness in the area.

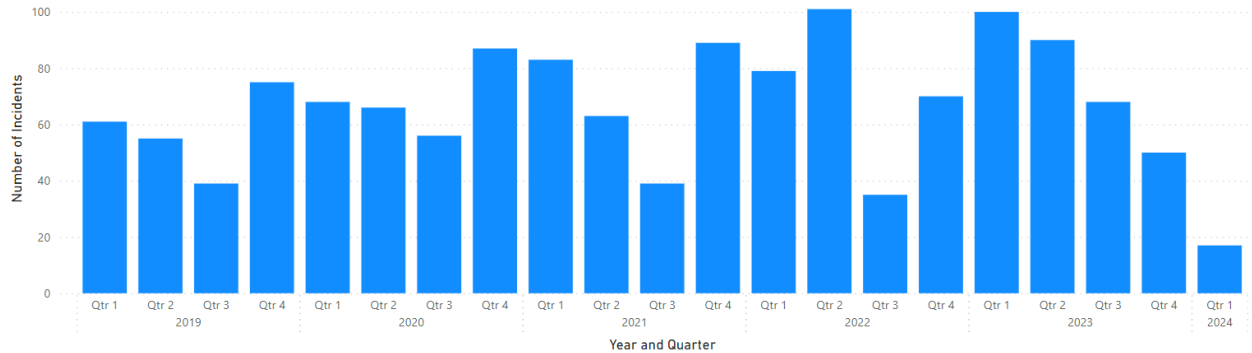
Community members highlighted that they have seen a noticeable improvement in cleanliness and safety conditions at Aurora Village Transit Center since December of 2023, following the installation of portable restrooms. Additionally, community members expressed that they were pleased with the crosswalk improvements they've seen on North 200th Street and the improvements to the vegetation/landscaping at the Aurora Village Transit Center.

While community members noted that conditions have significantly improved, they also shared feedback on what Metro can do better by improving signage.

Burien Transit Center

Figure 8 tallies incidents at Burien Transit Center. Similar to system-wide trends, historically there were spikes in incident reports coinciding with winter months. This trend was not seen in Q4 2023-Q1 2024 after Metro interventions described below.

Figure 8: Burien Transit Center incidents by year and quarter



Safety and security interventions – In March 2023, Transit Security Officers began overnight coverage at Burien Transit Center and in May 2023, pivoted to 24/7 coverage. Since April 2023, the Behavioral Health Specialists conducting outreach have provided de-escalation, crisis intervention, peer support, and connection to social support services to community members in crisis at Burien Transit Center.

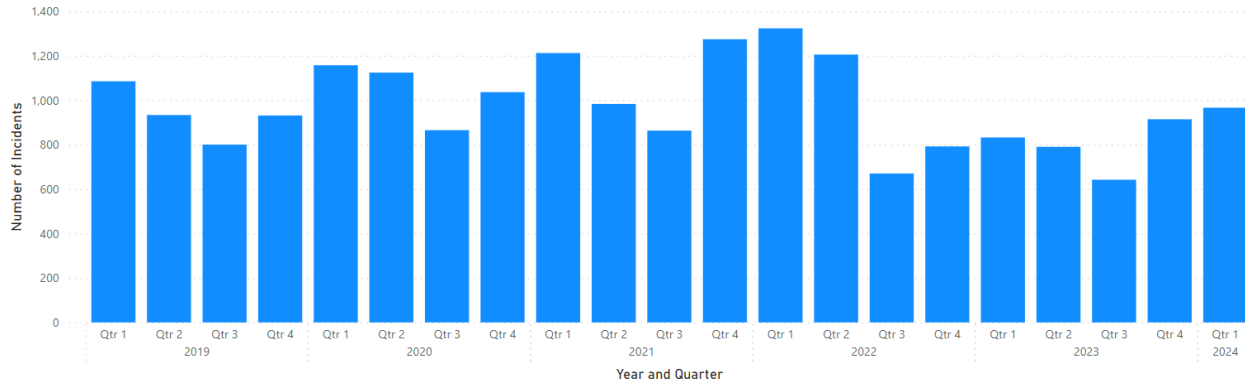
Cleanliness and environment interventions – Metro’s standard cleaning at Burien Transit Center includes sweeping and trash removal five days a week, along with pressure washing at least monthly. Additionally, Metro conducted additional cleaning emphasis at Burien Transit Center.

Community members reported that security presence does improve the environment. Community members indicated continued feelings of lack of safety at the Burien Transit Center. Individuals recommended increasing security and cleaning frequency to further improve conditions in the area.

Third Avenue

Figure 9 tallies incidents on bus routes that serve Third Avenue. Similar to system-wide trends, historically there were spikes in incident reports coinciding with winter months.

Figure 9: Incidents by year and quarter – Routes that serve Third Avenue



Safety and security interventions – In April 2022, Metro started a pilot deployment to address the most frequently reported security incidents on Metro transit: people continuously riding coaches with no intended destination. People riding on coaches for hours on end were resulting in more escalated incidents, unsanitary conditions, and operators not having personal time for their breaks. Metro deployed Transit Security Officer teams to Third Avenue & Virginia Street and Third Avenue South & South Main Street from 9:30 p.m. to 5:30 a.m. to clear terminating coaches on every trip to ensure all riders disembark. Transit Security Officers also provided customer service to those needing to get to a specific location by directing them to the appropriate bus zone to catch a coach and engaging those sheltering on buses. Starting in August 2023, Transit Security Officer teams have been contacting anyone at transit zones to provide customer service and address Unlawful Transit Conduct along Third Avenue, including along the RapidRide E line from Mondays through Thursdays, 3 p.m. to 11 p.m. Starting April 19, 2024, that presence increased to 6 a.m. to 11 p.m., seven days a week.

Cleanliness and environment interventions – Transit Route Facilities inspects all stops on Third Avenue looking for damaged Metro property, graffiti, unsanitary conditions, or other items requiring corrective action. In some cases where Metro is not able to keep up with the pace of repairs and graffiti abatement required to keep the bus shelters clean, Metro has removed elements of shelters, such as panels. In addition to regular cleaning, reports of conditions that prevent riders from safely occupying a bus shelter, such as biohazards, broken glass, and illegal activities considered urgent were addressed as soon as possible.

In the third quarter of 2022, security incidents dropped significantly and remain at lower levels than they were pre-pandemic, indicating that the increased presence of Transit Security Officers that began in the second quarter of 2022 was making an impact. According to feedback from the community, the increased Metro presence along Third Avenue has been observed and has appeared to improve conditions.

There continue to be concerns about loitering, selling stolen merchandise, drug use, verbal harassment, graffiti, and biowaste at and around transit stops. Metro will continue to work with community members and jurisdictional partners to continue to improve conditions.

23rd Avenue South and South Jackson Street

Figure 10 tallies incidents on bus routes that serve 23rd Avenue South and South Jackson Street.

Figure 10: Incidents by year and quarter – Routes that serve 23rd Avenue South and South Jackson Street



Safety and security interventions – Starting August 2023, Transit Security Officers made stops along South Jackson Street Monday through Thursday from 3 p.m. and 11 p.m. Starting April 19, 2024, Transit Security Officers extended their coverage to seven days a week from 6 a.m. to 11 p.m. SaFE Ambassadors continue to have a presence in the area along South Jackson Street, from Fifth Avenue to 23rd Avenue, between the hours of 1 p.m. and 5 p.m. Following a shooting at a Metro bus stop across the street from Garfield High School in March 2024, SaFE Ambassadors have increased their presence on 23rd Avenue up to East Cherry Street during school dismissal hours and will continue to do so as long as staffing capacity allows.¹¹

Cleanliness and environment interventions – Metro had already removed the bench inside the shelter at the stop on the northeast corner of 23rd Avenue South & South Jackson Street and worked with Vulcan to remove the three benches across from the shelter in November 2023 to address the loitering that was happening there and blocking the pedestrian walkway. In addition to emptying the trash can daily and cleaning and sanitizing the bus stops around this intersection up to five times per week, Metro is also doing enhanced cleaning at the bus stops on 23rd and Jackson, including monthly pressure washing and deep cleaning.

Community members mentioned that progress has been noticed in the area, emphasizing the noticeable collaboration with the Seattle Police Department.

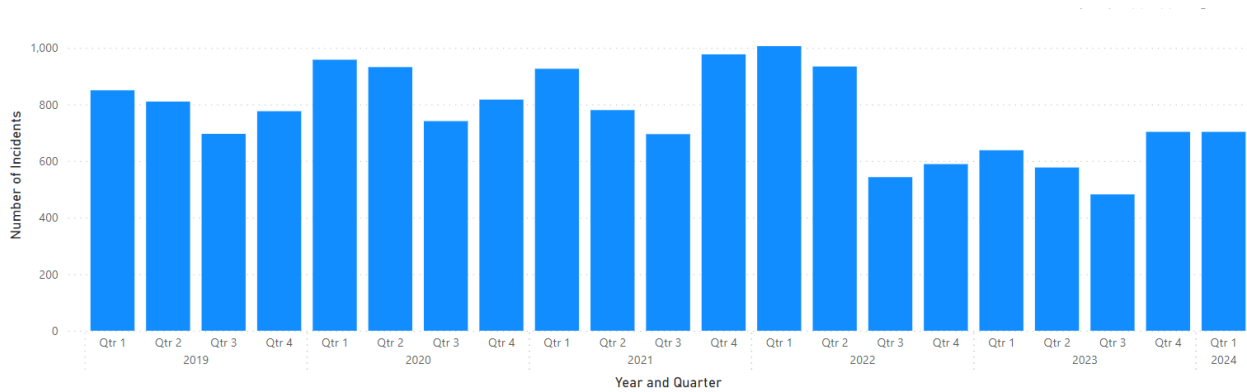
Community members continue to be concerned about shootings near 23rd Avenue South and South Jackson Street, as well as incidents of loitering at and around Metro bus stops. While concerned for everyone’s safety, community members highlighted the vulnerability that youth have when interacting in this area as they wait for buses on their way to and from school.

¹¹ SaFE Ambassadors are light-duty employees from bus operations, rail, facilities, and vehicle maintenance divisions whose timeframe for returning to their roles as bus operators can be unpredictable. Due to this, the number of SaFE Ambassadors available at any given time may fluctuate.

Chinatown/International District and Little Saigon

Figure 11 tallies incidents on bus routes that serve Chinatown/Internal District and Little Saigon.

Figure 11: Incidents by year and quarter – Routes that serve Chinatown/International District and Little Saigon



Safety and security interventions – Metro Transit Police patrol 12th Avenue South & South Jackson Street and Transit Security Officers have a pilot deployment making stops along South Jackson Street. From August 2023 through April 2024, Transit Security Officers were making those stops along South Jackson Street on Mondays – Thursdays between 3 p.m. and 11 p.m. On April 19, 2024, that presence increased to seven days a week from 6 a.m. to 11 p.m. SaFE Ambassadors continue to have a presence in the area along South Jackson Street between Fifth Avenue and 23rd Avenue between the hours of 1 p.m. and 5 p.m.

Cleanliness and environment interventions – Metro has also been working with the City of Seattle to improve safety conditions around 12th Avenue South & South Jackson Street including tree trimming, discarding broken curbs, cutting back vegetation, replacing lighting, and replacing the Metro trash bin on southwest corner of the 12th Avenue South and South Jackson Street intersection. In addition to emptying the trash can daily and cleaning and sanitizing the bus stops around this intersection up to five times week, Metro is also doing enhanced cleaning at the bus stops on 12th Avenue South & South Jackson Street, including weekly pressure washing and deep cleaning.

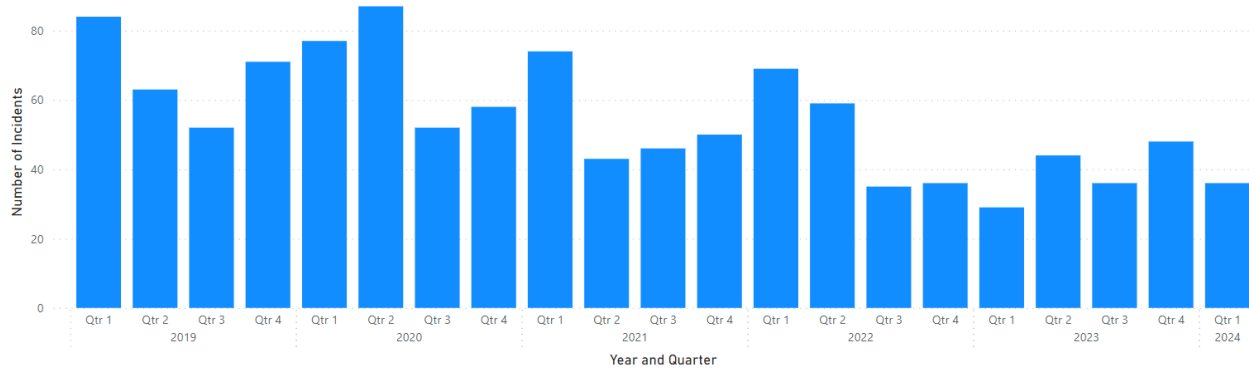
Incident rates appear to have gone down significantly starting in the third quarter of 2022, compared to prior months and years, though increasing slightly again in the fourth quarter of 2023 and first quarter of 2024. Individuals that Metro engaged with reported that general safety conditions around 12th Avenue South & South Jackson Street have improved.

There are still concerns around accessibility of sidewalks (including the accessibility of the bus stop), safety, and the trash around the bus stop located at the southwest corner of 12th Avenue South and South Jackson Street, closer to South King Street. Participants shared that loitering and street vending of stolen merchandise make it difficult for riders in the area to make it to and from that bus stop.

Skyway-West Hill

Figure 12 tallies incidents on bus routes that serve Skyway-West Hill.

Figure 12: Incidents by year and quarter – Routes that serve Skyway-West Hill



Safety and security interventions – Starting April 2023, SaFE Ambassadors have been supporting customers in the Skyway-West Hill area between the hours of 1 p.m. and 5 p.m.

Cleanliness and environment interventions – Metro empties the trash cans, cleans, and sanitizes the bus stops at Skyway-West Hill at least once/week. Additionally, reports of conditions that prevent riders from safely occupying a bus shelter, such as biohazards, broken glass, and illegal activities considered urgent are addressed as soon as possible.

Safety incident reports declined starting in the third quarter of 2022 and continue to be lower than they historically have been, though still with some fluctuation from quarter to quarter.

Metro will assess potential shelter amenity improvements using Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles to minimize loitering around the stop.

Conclusion

While the impacts may vary from location to location, according to incident reports and as shared by various community members, Metro’s various efforts to improve safety and security at and around transit stops and shelters appear to be making an impact. Even with these improvements, there are still opportunities for Metro to continue to improve safety conditions.

Among the feedback provided to Metro from the various engagement efforts, community members consistently requested clearer communications from Metro regarding the various efforts in place to address safety – both system-wide and within specific geographic areas. Additionally, community members requested increased clarity in knowing how to determine what feedback should go to Metro versus other jurisdictions and how to submit requests/complaints to their respective channels. To improve those methods of communication Metro has been in constant communication with its jurisdictional partners, by presenting updates and findings at the relevant committee meeting spaces, as well as by facilitating one-on-one meetings to provide more direct updates on more urgent items in need of address and build partnership.

VI. Next Actions

Metro is deeply committed to improving public safety and the perception of safety on its system. The SaFE Reform Initiative allows Metro to hear from customers and community members regarding what they would like to see from Metro in public safety and fare enforcement. Feedback drives Metro's values, leading to the adoption of a care and presence approach. This in turn results in visible and approachable staff dedicated to passenger and employee safety and well-being, fostering empathy, and addressing security challenges effectively by using the most appropriate resource. Metro's SaFE Ambassador and Behavioral Health Specialist programs continue to be well-received and are important tools that Metro uses to improve safety in an equitable manner.

Metro focuses on relationship-building as a central component of engagement, hoping to continue to build trust with King County residents, leading to additional productive recommendations and more timely solutions. Metro will continue to engage with community partners to improve communities' awareness and use of reporting channels to share feedback on improvements that need to be made. Additionally, Metro will continue to communicate back to community members on how Metro and jurisdictional partners are using feedback from those reporting channels to address those safety concerns.

Metro continues to engage with partners to leverage resources and increase coordination to create a better experience for the public both on and off the transit system. Metro welcomes additional partnership opportunities and coordination efforts to provide a seamless and safe customer experience.

VII. Appendices

A. Appendix A: Community Engagement Efforts

Table 1 documents the engagement events in each of the six locations listed in the Proviso, as well as a list of organizations that provided updated feedback.

Table 2: Engagement event and attendees by location

Location	Engagement Event(s) Hosted	Community Based Organizations, Community Groups, and Partnering Agencies Involved
Aurora Village Transit Center	Email One-on-one engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Echo Lake Neighborhood Association • Condo Association Board
Burien Transit Center	One-on-one engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Para Los Niños • Latino Civic Alliance • Sea Mar Burien Health Center • The Maverick • Merrill Gardens • Seattle Credit Union
Third Avenue in Seattle (Between South Main Street and Broad Street)	One-on-one engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clise Properties
Chinatown/International District and Little Saigon	One-on-one engagement Walking Tour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seattle Housing Authority – Yesler Terrace • Sumit Sierra • Seattle Chinatown International District Preservation District Association • Friends of Little Saigon • Seattle Police Department • Seattle Public Utilities • City of Seattle’s Mayor’s Office
23rd Avenue South and South Jackson Street	One-on-one engagement Community events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Catholic Community Services • Community Safety Forums

B. Appendix B: Area routes

Table 3: Routes that serve each area

Location	Routes
Third Avenue	1, 11, 113, 124, 125, 13, 131, 132, 14, 17, 2, 21, 21, 24, 27, 28, 3, 33, 36, 4, 40, 43, 49, 5, 56, 57, 62, C, D, E, H, 7, 70, 994
Chinatown/International District and Little Saigon	1, 101, 102, 106, 111, 124, 13, 131, 132, 14, 150, 17, 177, 2, 21, 212, 218, 24, 257, 28, 3, 311, 33, 36, 4, 40, 43, 49, 5, 545, 550, 554, 599, 60, 62, 630, 7, 70, 9, 96, 984, 987, 994
23rd Avenue South and South Jackson Street	14, 4, 48, 8
Skyway-West Hill	106, 107