



## **Update on TTC's Partnership Approach to Community Safety, Security and Well-being on Public Transit**

**Date:** July 17, 2024

**To:** TTC Board

**From:** Chief Safety Officer

### **Summary**

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In January 2023, the TTC implemented a multidisciplinary approach and measures to address societal challenges impacting the public transit system.

Specifically, the TTC has responded to:

- Mental health issues;
- Substance use issues;
- Use of the TTC as a temporary shelter, particularly at night, and resultant cleanliness in stations and on streetcars;
- Security; and
- Random acts of violence.

This report provides an update on the TTC's community safety action plan, including key findings from community safety metrics and outcomes from the Transport Bus Initiative. Additionally, it includes an update on the partnerships the TTC has established with external organizations and government agencies to improve community safety, security, and well-being.

Ongoing monitoring of community safety metrics has shown a decrease in offences against employees and offences against customers since January 2023 as well as increased interactions by social services and mental health providers as these programs expanded. While community safety is improving, customer sense of personal safety is not yet where we would like it to be. Overall, the TTC is continuing measures in the areas of high-visibility presence and incident management, social supports for individuals in need and community safety program support.

The Transport Bus Initiative was implemented during the first full winter of the Community Safety Program from November 2023 to April 2024 in response to the ongoing use of the transit network by persons experiencing homelessness. TTC buses provided transport from Union and Spadina stations to warming centres and shelters, and offered a temporary respite at Spadina Station when space was unavailable.

The TTC is actively collaborating with the City of Toronto and external partners on plans for the next winter season, including a further assessment of the feasibility of continuing the Transport Bus Initiative, while pursuing alternatives to using the transit network and vehicles as shelter. The next update to the TTC Board in fall 2024 will provide the assessment results and the plan for the winter season.

## **Recommendations**

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It is recommended that the TTC Board:

1. Reaffirm its support for the TTC's multidisciplinary approach to manage ongoing community safety, security, and well-being issues on the system, as outlined in this report; and
2. Request TTC staff in consultation with the City's Toronto Shelter and Support Services to report back on options to reduce dependence on the TTC transit network for shelter during the 2024/2025 winter season.

## **Financial Summary**

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### ***2024 Operating Budget***

The 2024 Operating Budget approved by the TTC Board on December 20, 2023 and by City Council on February 14, 2024 includes \$31.8 million to sustain the TTC's Community Safety, Security and Well-being Program in 2024. As part of the Ontario Toronto New Deal Agreement, the Province provided one-time \$300 million Subway and Transit Safety, Recovery and Sustainability Operations Fund for the TTC, with \$100 million to be allocated to the TTC between 2024 to 2026, in part to support these initiatives. The costs of this program's activities will be fully funded by the Province for the duration of this agreement's terms.

To the end of Period 5, actual expenditures were \$12.8 million, representing an underspending of \$1.1 million, primarily driven by lower average rates of additional station staffing than anticipated. Projected expenditures to the end of the year are anticipated to be \$30.8 million, indicating a projected net underspending of \$1.0 million due to lower-than-anticipated average rates. This is partially offset by increased cost to operate an average of two additional transport buses compared to the budget of four transport buses due to increased demand and an additional \$0.8 million to extend the Temporary Security Guards coverage to October 31, 2024 as the TTC continues to identify emerging issues and assess security operations.

Table 1 below outlines actual expenditures to May 25, 2024 and projected year-end results:

**Table 1: 2024 System Safety, Cleanliness and Mental Health Support**

2024 Community Safety, Security and Well-being Investments (\$M)	Year-To-Date			Year-End		
	Budget	Actual	Variance	Budget	Forecast	Variance
<b>High-Visibility Presence and Incident Management</b>						
Additional staff (130 CSA, 20 Stations Supervisors, 5 Bus Supervisors, 5 Streetcar Supervisors, 1 Slip Clerk)	7.7	6.9	(0.8)	18.4	17.1	(1.3)
Annualization of 25 Additional Special Constables	1.3	1.1	(0.2)	3.2	2.8	(0.4)
Streetcar Midday Cleaning	0.4	0.4	0.0	1.0	1.0	0.0
50 Temporary Security Guards	1.7	1.7	0.0	2.8	3.6	0.8
Six Transit Control Dispatchers	0.3	0.3	0.0	0.7	0.7	(0.0)
Extended Station Cleaning	0.2	0.2	0.0	0.4	0.4	0.0
<b>Subtotal: High-Visibility Presence and Incident Management</b>	<b>11.6</b>	<b>10.6</b>	<b>(1.0)</b>	<b>26.5</b>	<b>25.6</b>	<b>(0.9)</b>
<b>Social Supports for Persons Experiencing Homelessness and Individuals with Complex Needs</b>						
20 Community Safety Ambassadors	0.8	0.8	0.0	1.8	1.8	0.0
Streets to Homes: Annualization of 20 dedicated Resources	0.6	0.5	(0.1)	1.4	1.3	(0.1)
Continuation of Multi-Disciplinary Outreach Team Pilot Program	0.2	0.2	0.0	0.5	0.5	0.0
Transport Buses	0.6	0.7	0.1	1.0	1.3	0.3
<b>Subtotal: Social Support</b>	<b>2.2</b>	<b>2.2</b>	<b>(0.0)</b>	<b>4.7</b>	<b>4.9</b>	<b>0.2</b>
<b>Community Safety Program Support</b>						
Review of Community Safety and Security Operating Model	0.2	0.0	(0.2)	0.5	0.3	(0.2)
One Program Manager - Community Safety & Security	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.0
<b>Subtotal: Community Safety Program Support</b>	<b>0.2</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>(0.2)</b>	<b>0.6</b>	<b>0.4</b>	<b>(0.2)</b>
<b>Total 2024 Community Safety, Security and Well-being Investments</b>	<b>13.9</b>	<b>12.8</b>	<b>(1.1)</b>	<b>31.8</b>	<b>30.8</b>	<b>(1.0)</b>

### ***Transport Bus Initiative***

The transport buses operated from November 16, 2023 to April 15, 2024 and incurred a total cost of \$1.2 million. Based on the year-to-date cost and the number of individuals serviced, the cost to provide a temporary warming location to an individual reduced to \$147, compared to \$209 that was previously reported. This was the result of an increase in individuals using the warming buses due to inclement weather in mid-February and mid-March. The cost per individual shuttled between Spadina and Union stations or transported to a warming centre or a shelter was \$292, slightly lower than the \$297 previously reported.

The costs per individual are summarized in Table 2 below:

**Table 2: Transport Bus and Warming Bus Cost per Individual**

<b>Cost for Transport Bus Initiative</b>	
	<b>November 16, 2023 to April 15, 2024</b>
<b>One-Time Start Up Costs</b>	
Vehicle Modification	270,000
<b>Total One-Time Start Up Costs</b>	<b>270,000</b>
<b>Fixed Cost for Shelter Buses</b>	
Vehicle Maintenance & Fuel	113,999
Operators and Supervisors	479,716
Contract Security	196,638
Portable Washrooms	21,035
Increased Special Constables Presence	41,736
<b>Total Fixed Cost for Shelter Buses</b>	<b>853,124</b>
Number of Individuals Sheltered	5,816
<b>Cost per individual sheltered</b>	<b>\$ 147</b>
<b>Fixed Cost for Transport and Shuttle Buses</b>	
Vehicle Maintenance & Fuel	22,800
Operators	63,748
<b>Total Fixed Cost for Transport and Shuttle Buses</b>	<b>86,547</b>
Number of Individuals Transported or Shuttled	296
<b>Cost per individual transported or shuttled</b>	<b>\$ 292</b>
<b>Total Cost of Transport Bus Initiative</b>	<b>1,209,672</b>

\*Note: There are no variable costs associated with the number of individuals serviced and costs are reflective of operating one transport bus daily. City incurred costs are not included.

### ***Provincial Funding – New Deal***

A one-time Provincial funding of \$300 million across three years was made available through the Ontario-Toronto New Deal Agreement, executed in November 2023, between the City and the Province. The funds were directed to support subway and transit safety, recovery and operational sustainability. This funding, available until December 31, 2026, also supports the approaches outlined in this report to manage community safety, security and well-being issues on the transit system, in addition to service recovery to bring back ridership.

The Chief Financial Officer has reviewed this report and agrees with the financial impact information.

## Equity/Accessibility Matters

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As a proud leader in providing accessible public transit in the city of Toronto, the TTC is committed to ensuring reliable, safe, and inclusive transit services for all customers. The TTC also expects that all employees perform their duties in an equitable, inclusive, respectful, and safe manner.

Solving community safety, security and well-being challenges are compounded by Toronto's complex societal challenges. Like other major public-facing services, innovative solutions to support individuals in need are required both short-term and long-term. The solutions to these issues need to be multifaceted and require a compassionate and people-first approach. The TTC has proactively partnered with the City of Toronto's Toronto Shelter and Support Services (TSSS) division (formerly Shelter, Support and Housing Administration), Toronto Police Service (TPS), Streets to Homes, LOFT's Multi-Disciplinary Outreach Team (M-DOT), and community agencies to address the needs of persons experiencing homelessness and individuals with complex needs. This partnership ensures that equity and compassion are central to meeting the needs of the community and TTC operations.

### Decision History

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At its meeting on February 28, 2023, the TTC Board received For Action the [Community Safety Issues and Response Report](#). The report included information on data trends, action plan updates, and the multidisciplinary approach required to manage the increasing number of societal challenges that have shifted onto public transit. During this meeting, the TTC Board adopted recommendations to delegate authority to the CEO to respond to an emergency, including increasing the delegated expenditure authority to a cumulative \$15 million and requesting a detailed update on expenditures at the next TTC Board meeting.

At its meeting on March 30, 2023, the City Council considered agenda item [EX3.13 Community Safety Issues and Response](#), and in so doing, approved various directives to the TTC and City of Toronto related to community safety and security. The TTC is collaborating with the City of Toronto to develop an integrated response, assign accountabilities, and determine timelines for implementation.

At its meeting on April 13, 2023, the TTC Board received a [Community Safety and Security Update](#) from the TTC, City of Toronto, and Toronto Police Service. The information presented insights into the effectiveness of initiatives, discussed current system safety supports, and referenced upcoming actions.

At its meeting on June 12, 2023, the TTC Board received For Action the [Community Safety and Security Update Report](#). The report included an update on the implementation of the multidisciplinary approach undertaken by the TTC and the progress of actions to improve community safety. This included an overview of insights from the analysis of key performance indicators, recommendations about continuing current actions, and the next steps in the TTC's planning process. The TTC Board also

adopted recommendations, with amendments, proposed by the City Council on March 29, 30, and 31, 2023 as outlined in the [TTC Board Decision – Community Safety and Security Update](#).

At its meeting on July 11, 2023, the City of Toronto's Executive Committee received For Action the [Update on City Partnership to Advance Community Safety and Well-being on the Transit System Report](#). The report responded to the City Council directives to the TTC and the City of Toronto to develop further actions to advance the integrated work of the TTC, Toronto Police Service, and City divisions to improve community safety and well-being on the transit system. The report was a companion to the progress report received by the TTC Board at its June meeting.

At its meeting on September 26, 2023, the TTC Board received the [TTC's Partnership Approach to Community Safety, Security, and Well-being on Public Transit Report](#). The report provided an update on the evaluation of current strategies and resources supporting community safety, security, and well-being throughout the TTC's transit network and based on the evaluation of the TTC's experience to date, recommended the strategies and resources required for the fall 2023/winter 2024 season. The TTC Board adopted the report's recommendations for ongoing community safety strategies and resources, directing that funding to sustain these initiatives be included in the TTC's 2024 Operating Budget submission. The TTC Board also adopted additional motions requesting a report back in Q4 2023 that are the subject of this report, as outlined in the [TTC Board Decision](#).

At its meeting on December 7, 2023, the TTC Board received the [Response to TTC Board Motions Report](#). The report provided information in response to the additional motions adopted by the TTC Board at the September 26, 2023 meeting. Responses were organized under the three areas of focus: 1) enhancing high-visibility presence and improving incident management, 2) supporting persons experiencing homelessness and individuals with complex needs, and 3) ensuring community safety program support. The TTC Board received the report for information.

At its meeting on May 16, 2024, the TTC Board approved a new five-year TTC Corporate Plan, '[Moving Toronto, Connecting Communities, TTC Corporate Plan 2024-2028 & Beyond](#)'. Highlighted in Action 2.2.2, the Corporate Plan identified enhancing Community Safety, Security and Well-being on the System; working with partners to support individuals in need and creating supports that focus on providing a positive customer experience for all transit riders. This report provides an update on activities supporting Corporate Plan action 2.2.2.

## **Issue Background**

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Over the last year, the TTC, in partnership with City of Toronto divisional and agency partners, has been working to address societal challenges impacting the public transit system. A multidisciplinary approach was established in January 2023, recognizing that the TTC as a transit system required the skills and supports of social service and mental health providers to ensure community safety and well-being in the system. The collaboration between the TTC, the City of Toronto's Toronto Shelter and Support

Services (formerly Shelter, Support and Housing Administration) and Social Development, Finance and Administration (SDFA) divisions, Toronto Police Service (TPS), and Toronto Public Health supported the deployment of additional resources and implementation of a broad range of training, communications, jurisdictional reviews and analytics integration initiatives.

The TTC monitored the progress of community safety interventions throughout the year, working with the City of Toronto and TPS to develop the Community Safety and Well-being on Transit Dashboard. In June 2023, the TTC determined a need to continue community safety resources based on the findings from an interim assessment of the measures and resources in place. The TTC extended the contracts, initiated in January 2023, for Community Safety Ambassadors and Security Guards to September 30, 2023 as Special Constables and Streets to Homes outreach workers were onboarded, and recommended the continuation of TPS patrols and LOFT's M-DOT pilot program.

The TTC further evaluated current strategies and outlined recommendations on an enhanced approach in preparation for the 2023-2024 winter season. The assessment considered transit safety metrics, customer outreach and the activities of current resources. In September 2023, the TTC Board adopted recommendations to allow the TTC to enhance efforts in three areas:

1. High-visibility presence and incident management;
2. Social support for persons experiencing homelessness and individuals with complex needs; and
3. Community safety program support

## **Comments**

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This report aims to provide an update on the TTC's community safety action plan, including key findings from community safety metrics, outcomes from the Transport Bus Initiative and next steps to sustain the TTC's approach to community safety, security, and well-being.

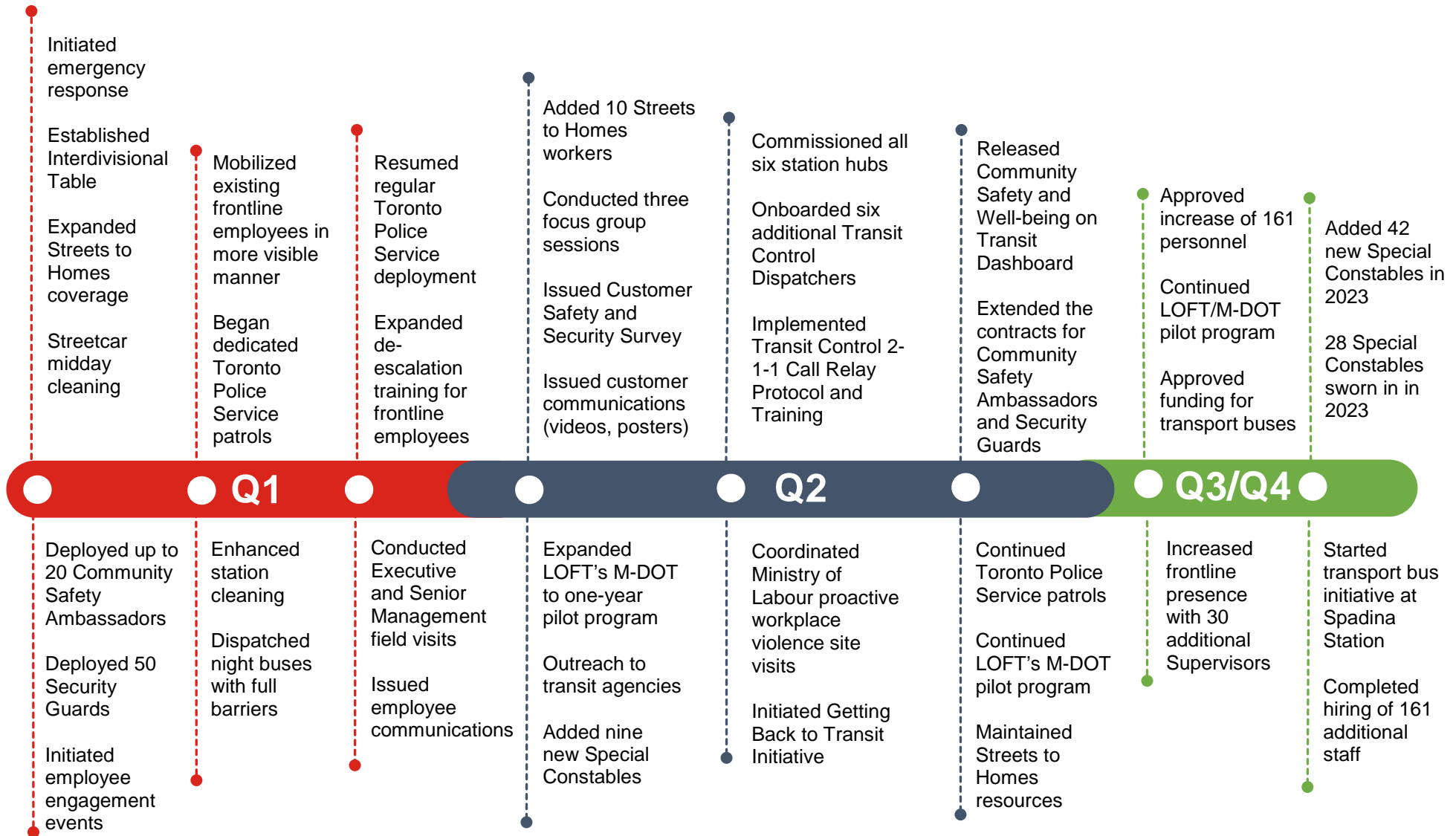
### ***Action Plan Updates***

The TTC continues to implement actions as part of its plan to prevent offences against customers and employees and improve personal sense of safety. The plan is structured by the following categories: data analysis, education and training, engagement and communications, programs and procedures, and incident response and support. The TTC has also continued to collaborate with other orders of government, external agencies, and Union partners.

A timeline of the TTC's actions to improve community safety, security, and well-being in 2023 is outlined in Figure 1 and summarized in Attachment 1. Recent developments are described in the sections below.



**Figure 1: Timeline of Initiatives (2023)**





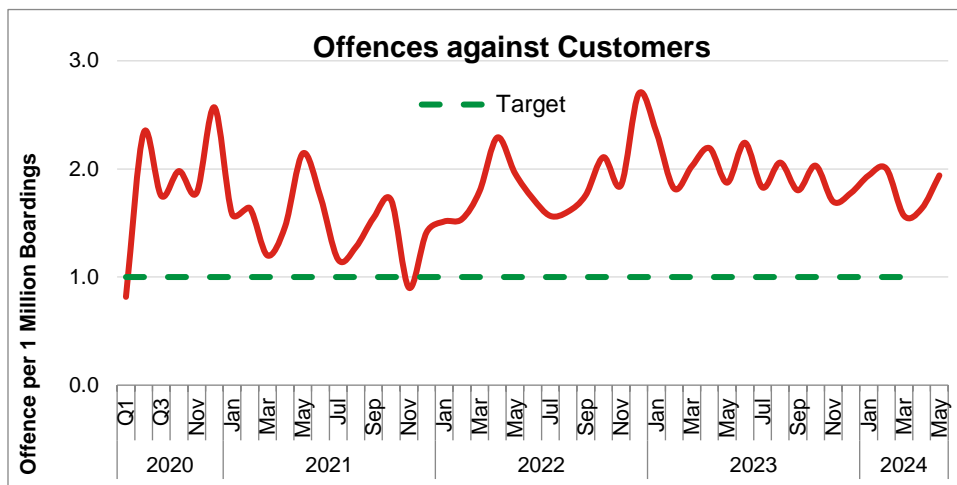
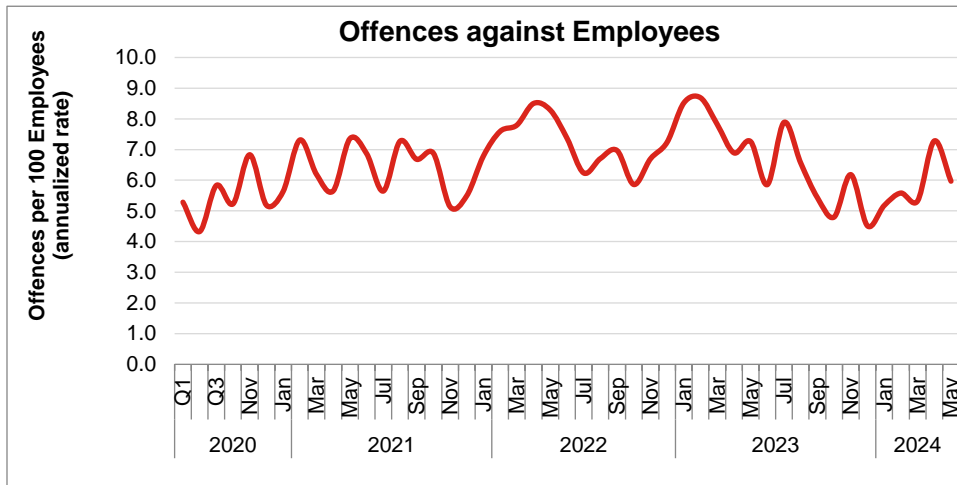
## **Data Analysis – Key Findings from Community Safety Metrics**

The status of transit safety metrics is reported monthly through the CEO's Report and the City of Toronto Community Safety and Well-being on Transit Dashboard. The dashboard is available on the City of Toronto's website at [www.toronto.ca/transitdata](http://www.toronto.ca/transitdata) and through a link on the TTC's website at [www.ttc.ca/riding-the-ttc/safety-and-security](http://www.ttc.ca/riding-the-ttc/safety-and-security). The dashboard metrics include incidents (i.e. offences), interventions (i.e. wellness checks, engagements, referrals), and perceptions (i.e. personal sense of safety). A summary of key findings is provided below:

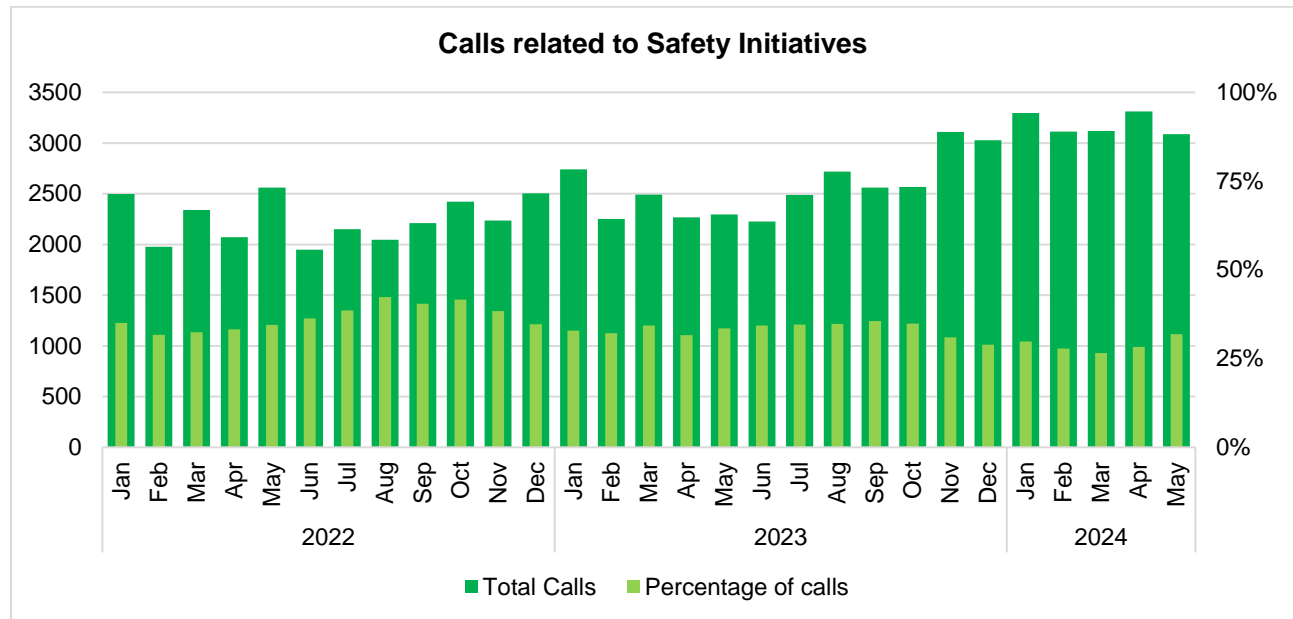
### **Incidents**

- Overall efforts have improved the experience for both employees and customers since January 2023 to May 2024. Community safety issues have been on a downward trend since peaking between December 2022 and January 2023.
- The rate of offences against customers has decreased 17% since January 2023. Incidents vary monthly and continue to decline overall since March 2023 (see Chart 1).
- The rate of offences against employees declined by 30% since January 2023. Incidents vary monthly and have been on an overall decline. There was an increase in the rate of offences against employees between January and April 2024, which we are monitoring closely. Key drivers are principally around the increase in reported threats, which subsequently began to decline in May (see Chart 1).
- The increase is occurring at high volume, terminal and transfer stations (i.e. Union, Kennedy, Kipling, Finch, Bloor-Yonge, Dundas), driven by a higher number of individuals in these stations. In response, Special Constables are assigned to end terminals to assist with closing and to support employees.
- Early results of de-escalation training show on average an 11% reduction in assaults against employees for every 1,000 employees trained (March 2023-March 2024).
- Calls to Special Constables related to safety initiatives as a proportion of calls has increased slightly by 2%, to 32% in May 2024 from 30% in January 2024. Compared to January 2023, calls related to safety initiatives have decreased by 1% (see Chart 2).
- Customer Service Communications related to safety and security complaints/concerns have decreased in May 2024 by 7% since January 2024, and decreased by 57% since January 2023 (see Chart 3).
- Major Crime Indicators reported to TPS decreased to 185 in May 2024, compared to 211 in May 2023, a 12% decrease.

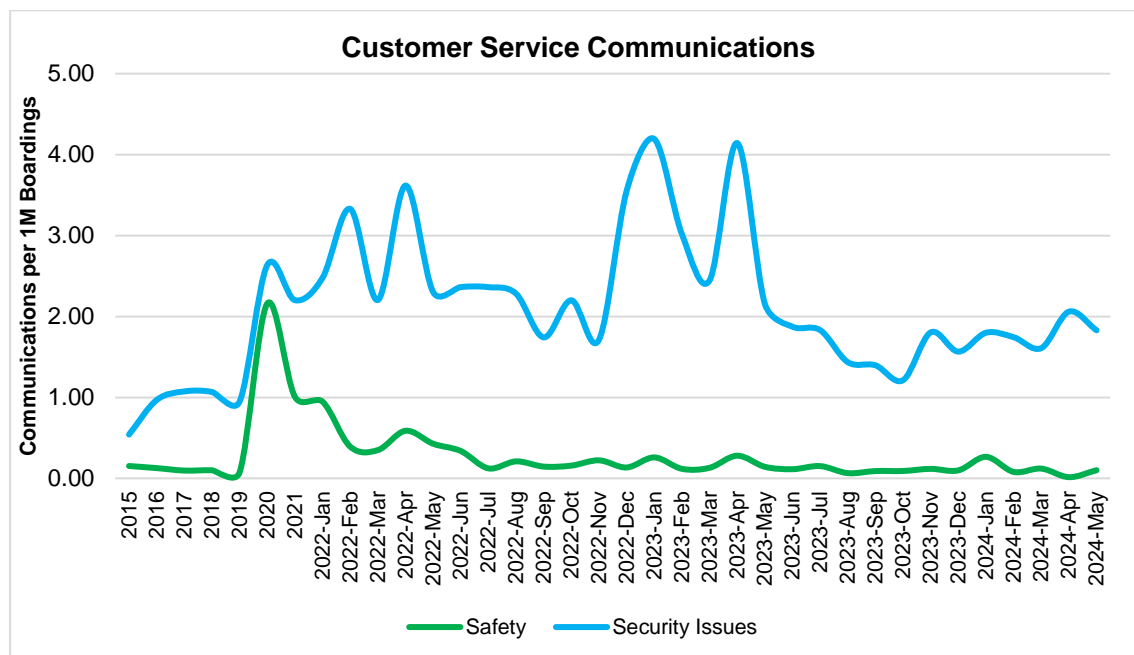
**Chart 1: Offences against Customers and Employees (January 2020-May 2024)**



**Chart 2: Calls related to Safety Initiatives (January 2022-May 2024)**



**Chart 3: Customer Service Communications per 1 million boardings**



**Interventions**

- In February 2024, Community Safety Ambassadors conducted 2,115 wellness checks, compared to 1,312 in February 2023, an increase of 61%. On March 15, 2024, there was a change in the vendor for Community Safety Ambassadors. The data for wellness checks will be updated once available.
- In May 2024, there were 46 persons consenting to receiving services by the M-DOT Mental Health Program, 131 service interactions and 11 service interactions that included nursing. In comparison, there were eight persons consenting to receiving services and 62 service interactions in April 2023, when the program

began. This represents a 475% increase and 111% increase, respectively. Nursing services were not incorporated into the program until July 2023.

- In May 2024, Streets to Homes conducted 857 site visits and made two referrals to shelters, compared to 877 site visits and 53 referrals in May 2023. This represents a 2% decrease and 96% decrease, respectively. Since the program began in January 2023, there has been a 384% increase in site visits and a 94% decrease in referrals.

### Perceptions

- Overall customer satisfaction and satisfaction with personal safety increased in May 2024 compared to January 2024, to 73% and 61%, respectively. There has been a stabilization since April 2023, and a slight upturn since late 2023 (see Chart 4).

**Chart 4: Customer Satisfaction and Personal Level of Safety Felt (April 2021-May 2024)**



### Education and Training – Equipping Employees with Skills to Handle Difficult Situations

#### De-escalation Training

- The TTC’s Operations Training Centre continues to deliver de-escalation training for frontline employees, including bus, streetcar, subway and Wheel-Trans Operators, as well as Collectors and Customer Service Agents. As of May 31, 2024, 6,029 out of 11,032 frontline employees (54%) have been trained. The TTC has committed to delivering de-escalation to all of its frontline employees by the end of 2024.

## *Engagement and Communication – Informing Employees and Customers of TTC Initiatives*

### **Engagement Events Focused on Employee Safety and Well-being**

- The TTC continued its safety and awareness marketplace events at transportation divisions, holding 10 events in 2023 and planning eight events in 2024. These events provide an opportunity for employees to ask questions to multiple department representatives (i.e. Special Constables, Court Advocates) and obtain information on programs to help protect and support employees (i.e. Trauma Assist Program). This program is a voluntary, structured program over and above the current Employee Family and Assistance Program (EFAP) offering, and is focused on early intervention for individuals who have experienced a traumatic event and are experiencing mild-to-moderate post-traumatic stress symptoms.

### **Community Engagement Unit**

- The Community Engagement Unit (CEU) currently has five uniformed Special Constables and one Sergeant. Its primary mandate is connecting with the community and maintaining partnerships with community safety partners, businesses and stakeholders. The team actively participates in community events, often partnering with the TPS, the Toronto District School Board and Toronto Catholic District School Board, as well as various other agencies and organizations. This includes Streets to Homes, M-DOT, Downtown Yonge Business Improvement Area (BIA) Community Engagement Team, Furthering Our Communities By Uniting Services (FOCUS), and most recently with the Specialized Program for Inter-Divisional Enhanced Responsiveness (SPIDER). From February 2023 to May 2024, the CEU engaged with 17 schools, 32 Focus Tables, 26 Community Workshops focusing on Transit Safety for students, and 43 Streets to Homes and Partners meetings focusing on assisting persons experiencing homelessness.

### **Communications**

- On December 17, 2023, the TTC and ATU Local 113 acknowledged the third Transit Worker Assault Awareness Day as a way to raise awareness about and help prevent transit worker assaults and threats. The campaign focused on key messages on TTC initiatives, de-escalation steps and available support systems. The TTC also issued communications to educate customers about safety and security, raise awareness of the risks of unsafe behaviour, how to report an incident through the SafeTTC App, and how to obtain assistance when needed.

## *Programs and Procedures – Improving Safety on Vehicles and in Facilities*

### **Bus Barriers**

- In Q1 2020, the TTC started implementation of an extended barrier, eventually expanding fleet-wide. In Q1 2021, the full height prototype was piloted, first on two buses then increasing to 10 buses. This pilot program is currently ongoing. In Q4 2023, the TTC implemented the extended sliding glass option on hybrid buses. As part of the Bus Transit Innovation Project, the TTC, in partnership with

ATU International, is continuing to explore options to modify the barriers by looking at new prototypes to improve the overall safety of our Operators.

### **CCTV Upgrades**

- All stations achieved 75% CCTV camera coverage as part of Phase 1 upgrades. Phase 2 is in progress and will increase the station camera coverage to 90%. There are 59 of 71 stations or 83% that have 90% coverage as of May 2024. The increased camera coverage provides added visibility for Stations staff, improving customer service and increasing the safety and security of TTC customers and employees.

### *Incident Response and Support – Deployment Outcomes and Working with External Partners*

#### **Supervisor and Customer Service Agent Deployment**

- As part of efforts to improve high-visibility presence and incident response, the TTC hired an additional 161 employees (130 Customer Service Agents, 30 Supervisors and one Slip Clerk) to be deployed at key locations to supplement existing resources. The presence of Customer Service Agents helps to improve customers' sense of safety and enhance customer service. These individuals are strategically deployed to 37 secondary entrances across 33 stations in the subway system.
- Supervisory staff assist with incident response, employee engagement and customer service. Station Supervisors help extend coverage to 36 locations during peak hours. Operations Supervisors are deployed to end terminal stations (i.e. Kipling and Kennedy) and transit hubs (i.e. Scarborough Town Centre Station) to support bus and streetcar operations.

#### **Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development (MLITSD)**

##### **Proactive Visits**

- On March 29, 2023, the MLITSD Violence Working Group unveiled its plans to conduct proactive workplace violence site visits at various TTC locations due to recent worker assaults in the transit system. The MLITSD dedicated four inspectors to conduct site visits at high-risk areas or locations where a workplace violence incident occurred. The first proactive visit took place on May 1, 2023 and the MLITSD was on TTC property 30 times related to this initiative. There were seven orders issued because of these visits, consisting of five non-compliance orders and two requirement orders, including assessing or reassessing the risks of workplace violence. All of the orders have been complied with and are considered to be closed. Information on regulatory interactions is provided in the monthly CEO's Report.
- The MLITSD held a progress meeting on April 17, 2024, approximately one year after the initiative began, with representatives from TTC and ATU Local 113. The TTC provided an overview of its workplace violence program, assault prevention updates and its multidisciplinary approach to community safety. The MLITSD's areas of focus were investigation processes, training, risk assessments and

communication processes. The MLITSD is continuing the proactive workplace violence site visits in 2024 and the TTC will co-ordinate interactions and communicate updates.

### **SafeTO Executive Leadership Table**

- The TTC continues to participate in the SafeTO Executive Leadership Table, a strategic table that brings together institutional partners to support multi-sectoral approaches to reducing violence. The Executive Leadership Table has reconvened to support alignment with SafeTO, Toronto's 10-Year Community Safety and Well-being Plan. The plan responds to calls for a fundamental shift in how the City thinks about community safety by centring the well-being of people and places, while factoring in inequities and other root causes that threaten safety and well-being. [SafeTO](#) will move 26 Actions across seven Strategic Goals. The plan includes reducing harm and repeated victimization, which can be a risk factor for conditions that impact community safety (e.g. mental health crisis, substance use, human trafficking).

### **Canadian Urban Transit Association (CUTA) Safety and Security Task Force**

- The TTC, alongside other transit agencies, joined the CUTA's Safety and Security Task Force in June 2022. The Task Force sought to address the root causes of violence on transit and provide safety recommendations that are national in scope (not just agency-specific) and include timeframes and accountability. The [recommendations](#) were released publicly on April 24, 2023, including a recommendation that reinforced the need for a working group/task force that includes government officials. The TTC continues to engage with transit industry peers to share lessons learned and identify solutions.

### **Joint Labour Management Committee**

- In August 2022, a Joint Labour Management Committee was formed with ATU Local 113, focusing on assault prevention and the 10-Point Action Plan. The Joint Labour Management Committee meets quarterly to discuss the progress of initiatives, including de-escalation training, outreach to Joint Health and Safety Committees (JHSCs), communication campaigns, risk assessments, employee support programs, employee concerns, extended protective barriers and community safety programs.

### ***Transport Bus Initiative***

#### *Overview of Initiative*

Toronto's shelter system is the largest in Canada, providing more beds per capita than any other Canadian city. The City continues to experience unprecedented demand and pressure for shelter services. As of May 5, 2024, the City is accommodating 12,221 people experiencing homelessness. More than 1,000 beds have been added to the system in the last year and still the system is struggling to meet demand.

Demand for shelter services has increased significantly over the past few years and is projected to continue throughout 2024 for many reasons including, but not limited to, insufficient affordable housing supply, increased costs of living, inadequate wage and



income supports, and an increase in the number of refugee claimants arriving in the city who become immediately homeless. In 2023, 37,831 unique callers contacted the City's Central Intake service seeking access to a shelter program.

During the winter months, to support people experiencing homelessness living outdoors who are vulnerable to illness and injury related to exposure to cold temperatures, the City implements a Winter Plan where additional service responses are activated. This includes adding hundreds of additional spaces in Toronto's shelter system. Also, a network of 24/7 warming centres are opened when temperatures dip below -5 C degrees, a threshold lowered from -15 C degrees in 2023 to ensure centres are accessible for more days throughout the winter season.

However, even with this increased capacity, people often seek respite in other public spaces, such as hospital emergency departments, libraries, coffee shops, and the transit system.

Anticipating an increase in the use of the transit network for shelter in the winter months, and in response to the number of individuals sheltering at Union Station, the TTC, in consultation with its partners at the City and other agencies, mobilized dedicated buses in November 2023 to provide transportation to warming centres and shelters, as well as provide a temporary warming location while individuals are awaiting transport.

The transport buses operated from November 16, 2023 to April 15, 2024, between 7 p.m. to 5 a.m. to provide transport. Individuals sheltering within the transit network were encouraged to move to Spadina Station, where social support services and buses were available. When transport was not needed because shelters and warming centres were at capacity, which was the case on most nights, buses remained stationary at Spadina Station. Access to temporary portable washroom facilities was available at Spadina Station in a well-lit and easy-to-access area.

The number of transport buses increased to six from two over the start of the initiative, with seven buses staged on occasion. An additional one to two buses were made available each night to assist if extra capacity was needed (i.e. up to eight buses in total). eBuses were introduced to the initiative in January 2024 to assist with the reduction in emissions.

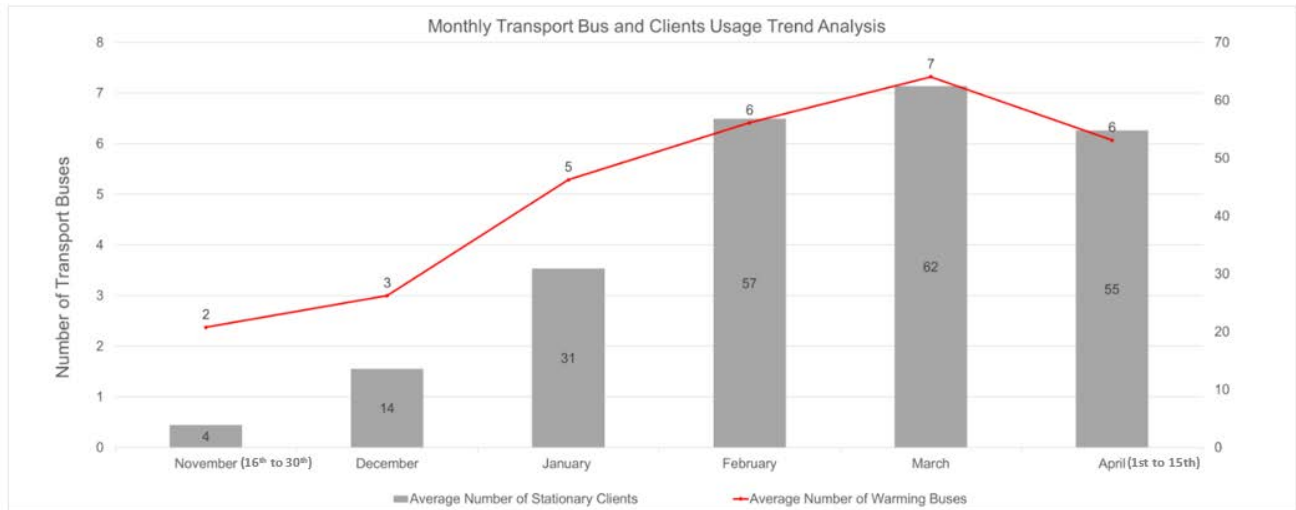
There were a number of different supports provided for the Transport Bus Initiative. TSSS provided community safety teams to support clients and make connections to available spaces in the shelter system. The TTC provided Security Guards to assist with managing incidents and a TTC Supervisor was available for additional support. Incidents were reported to the TTC's Transit Control Centre to co-ordinate the appropriate response. TTC employees responsible for operating the buses received an e-learning training module developed by City experts and resources to ensure they were well-equipped to provide this service. Frontline employees were also provided de-escalation training as part of the TTC's training initiative.

The TTC communicated the progress of the initiative in the Transport Bus Initiative Dashboard starting in January 2024. Overall, the TTC provided transport and a

Update on TTC's Partnership Approach to Community Safety, Security and Well-being on Public Transit

temporary warming location on 5,914 occasions. The average number of nightly stationary clients increased substantially since November, peaking at 62 clients in March, before decreasing in April (see Chart 5). Despite the warmer winter, an increase in the number of people using a bus was seen in mid-February and mid-March due to winter storms. From January 21 to April 15, 2024, the TTC recorded 15 Medical, seven Equipment, 12 Security and two Other incidents related to the initiative.

**Chart 5: Transport Bus Clients Usage (November 16, 2023 to April 15, 2024)**



Following the end of the initiative in April 2024, the TTC issued communications informing employees of the outcomes and how to approach individuals within the system moving forward. If employees observe someone sheltering or loitering in the system, they are to inform them that supports are available, then contact Transit Control. As stations close for the night, individuals can go to Union or Spadina stations where Streets to Homes workers or Community Safety Ambassadors continue to be available. These partners also met on a weekly basis to identify issues, support operations and problem solve.

**Social Supports Provided by External Partners**

The Transport Bus Initiative was well-supported by external partners, namely the City of Toronto’s TSSS division, One Community Solutions, TPS and M-DOT. Each partner provided support to individuals experiencing homelessness and vulnerable people while they rested and stayed warm on TTC buses when there was no shelter or warming spaces available.

TSSS provided support through their Streets to Homes teams as well as contracted services through One Community Solutions’ Community Safety Teams (CSTs) dedicated to each bus. TSSS also provided ongoing and direct support through its Duty Office to notify staff where available spaces were in the shelter system, including warming centres to transport people. Streets to Homes visited both Union and Spadina stations in the evening and overnight hours ensuring that individuals were aware of the transport buses, and if shelter or warming centre space could not be found then there would be warming buses available at Spadina Station. The Streets to Homes teams had

1,174 engagements and provided water, TTC fare media, gift cards for meals, 11 sleeping bags and 10 blankets. They also made 10 referrals to shelter or hotel spaces.

The CSTs assisted with co-ordinating the movement of individuals from stations onto the buses and to warming centres and shelters. They engaged with and provided support to clients to help address their immediate needs, connected them with social supports and prevented incidents from occurring. They have extensive experience with the community and are equipped with de-escalation skills and trained to respond to overdoses. Streets to Homes teams worked well with the CSTs. There was seamless transition for clients who were directed by Streets to Homes to the buses.

M-DOT also provided support during the last six weeks of the initiative. They attended Spadina Station every Friday morning at 4:30 a.m. from March 8 to April 12, 2024. Over the six weeks, they connected with clients and provided winter jackets, backpacks, socks, gloves, hand and foot warmers, sleeping bags and sweatpants. They were able to connect with 10 new clients and provided the following services to several of the clients: case management, identification replacement, two clients connected to their team psychiatrist, housing applications and referrals, Streets to Homes Street Outreach Counsellor referrals (for a housing worker), primary medical care, tax clinics, mental health assessments, referrals to income supports, completion of several Ontario Disability Support Program applications and Developmental Services Ontario service referrals. It was noted that there were several repeat clients over the course of the six weeks.

### ***Identified Challenges***

The initiative faced several challenges, including unavailable shelter space, insufficient heating solutions, logistical constraints, safety incidents and concerns about sustaining social supports. At its core, these issues are linked to the housing and homelessness crisis, including shelter demand that exceeds availability, increasing cost of living, inadequate wage and income supports, and other social crises, such as the drug toxicity and mental health crisis.

#### **1) Shelter System Capacity and Demand**

- An overburdened shelter system made it difficult to transport clients. When engaging with individuals, Streets to Homes noted the inability to find shelter space for those who wanted to come inside as the shelter system was at capacity.
- Buses had to remain stationary because there was no space to take individuals. The growth in the number of buses provided through the winter season reflects this demand. This is linked to several additional issues related below.

#### **2) Heating Challenges**

- Initially, dedicated buses due for decommissioning were used. The vehicles were idling to generate heat, which led to complaints from neighbouring residents and staff due to diesel fumes and engine noise.

- Subsequently, mobile battery packs were installed to power electric heaters onboard the vehicles to generate heat while the engines were off. However, the generated heat was insufficient, resulting in further complaints.
- To mitigate these concerns, battery-electric buses were introduced to the initiative as they could provide sufficient heat, while emitting zero emissions.

### 3) Logistics and Location Challenges

- The compact footprint of Spadina Station created logistical challenges when it came to positioning the buses and washrooms. The bus bay can safely accommodate three to four buses, but when the number of buses increased, this resulted in Operators parking on Spadina Avenue. Support staff were then required to monitor clients in multiple locations.

### 4) Safety Incidents and Concerns

- Reports from TTC staff indicated drug paraphernalia, biohazards and garbage were found onboard the vehicles and inside the station. To ensure cleanliness standards were maintained, the TTC increased cleaning requirements at Spadina and Union stations.
- Contracted security guards were subject to assaults during the course of the initiative. In addition, there were reports of individuals smoking narcotics, drinking alcohol, being disorderly and carrying weapons inside the station and on the buses. These actions resulted in complaints from staff and customers concerned for their own safety and well-being.
- On a year-over-year basis, TPS noted a reduction in calls for service on the TTC system (January to March 2023 to January to March 2024). However, as a result of having the warming buses at Spadina Station, TPS attended the station more frequently due to drug-dealing activities. The CSTs recorded 70 safety incidents over the five months that the initiative was in place.
- In response to the illicit activity, a joint investigation between TTC Special Constables and TPS was launched. This investigation resulted in an increase in uniformed and plainclothes presence from both groups to address the concerns. However, there were insufficient resources to monitor this area on a consistent basis or without the use of overtime.

### 5) Challenges Sustaining Social Supports

- Stakeholders from the TTC, City of Toronto and TPS took a collaborative approach in creating a safe and supportive environment for all. Adequate social supports played an integral role in ensuring that clients received information on services, shelters and housing solutions.
- In a letter dated April 24, 2024 from the Diocese of Toronto, Anglican Church of Canada, addressed to the Mayor, Toronto City Council, General Manager, TSSS, TTC Board Chair and Commissioners and Toronto Board of Health, the Diocese of Toronto expressed concerns with the City and the TTC providing a temporary warming location on buses overnight. In response, the City indicated it conducted outreach to investigate potential properties last season. However, many institutions were unable to provide exclusive use of their space or did not meet requirements.

- While the City was able to add more than 700 spaces, demand still exceeded the available spaces. The City is continuing its advocacy for additional government funding and support to address the homelessness crisis.

Initially intended to provide transportation to warming centres and shelters, the Transport Bus Initiative transitioned to a warming bus solution due to the lack of available spaces in these facilities. Overall, the warming bus solution provided during the 2023/2024 winter season was implemented to address immediate needs and was not intended to be a long-term solution. Lessons learned, including the challenges noted above, found the warming bus component of the initiative to be unsustainable on an ongoing basis. However, a further assessment is required to determine the feasibility of continuing the Transport Bus Initiative for the 2024/2025 winter season, including a review of alternate shelter options. An update will be provided to the TTC Board in fall 2024. Addressing homelessness will require ongoing commitment and investments from other orders of government in areas such as affordable and supportive housing, poverty reduction, harm reduction, and mental health. These commitments are critical to prevent and respond to homelessness and make it rare, brief and non-recurring.

### ***Next Steps***

Community safety, security and well-being remains a priority for the TTC. The TTC is sustaining its multidisciplinary approach and working with its external partners to plan for the future. To sustain the improving trends in customer and employee safety and well-being, it is recommended that the TTC continue to implement measures in the following three areas:

1. Enhancing High-Visibility Presence and Incident Management.
2. Supporting Social Support for Persons Experiencing Homelessness and Individuals with Complex Needs.
3. Providing Community Safety Program Support.

### ***Enhancing High-Visibility Presence and Incident Management***

To enhance high-visibility presence and incident management, continue to:

- Maintain the current number of Security Guards as the TTC continues to hire Special Constables. It was expected that the full complement of Special Constables will be onboarded by June 30, 2024. Full deployment is delayed due to the release of the Community Safety and Policing Act and its associated regulations, which came into effect on April 1, 2024. The Act requires:
  - New application for approval of a Special Constable employer to the Ministry of the Solicitor General; and
  - Renewed agreement with the TPS Board to appoint or re-appoint Special Constables.

- Extend the Security Guard contract to October 31, 2024 (up to 50 individuals), as the TTC continues to identify emerging issues and assess security operations.
- Maintain the 161 additional TTC stations staff, six Transit Control Dispatchers and four additional TTC janitorial staff.

*Supporting Social Support for Persons Experiencing Homelessness and Individuals with Complex Needs*

Continue measures to ensure effective supports are in place for persons experiencing homelessness and individuals with complex needs through:

- Maintaining the current number of Streets to Homes resources dedicated to the TTC (20 employees in total), connecting people with shelter and housing services.
- Maintaining the current number of Community Safety Ambassadors (20 contracted employees in total) to provide support for persons experiencing homelessness and individuals with complex needs.
- Continuing the M-DOT pilot program into 2025, providing transitional services to individuals with complex psychiatric and/or concurrent disorders.
- Reviewing alternate shelter options with the City at the Interdivisional Table, to reduce dependence on the TTC transit network for shelter during the 2024/2025 winter season.

*Providing Community Safety Program Support*

To build capacity to sustain the TTC's community safety program management and support:

- Continue the process of obtaining a dedicated program manager to oversee and formalize the Five-Year Community Safety, Security and Well-being Plan.
- Evaluate the submissions from the RFP to conduct a review of all TTC security operations, security assets, and third-party resources, as well as provide a best practice review from other jurisdictions.

**Contact**

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## **Signature**

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Betty Hasserjian  
Chief Safety Officer

## **Attachments**

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Attachment 1 – Overview of Community Safety, Security and Well-Being Action Plan



## Attachment 1 – Overview of Community Safety, Security and Well-being Action Plan

Category	Action Item No.	Action Item	Recent Updates
Data Analysis	1	Review and expand data analysis to inform action items	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monthly reporting of transit safety metrics through the CEO's Report and Community Safety and Well-Being on Transit Dashboard.</li> <li>• Incident data analyzed in greater detail and communicated in quarterly Operator assault reports.</li> <li>• Since January 2023, there has been a noticeable decrease in offences against employees and customers, underscoring the positive impact of initiatives.</li> </ul>
Education and Training	2	Review and improve existing training for employees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• De-escalation training for frontline employees provided by the TTC's Operations Training Centre. As of May 31, 2024, 6,029 frontline employees (over 50%) have been trained.</li> <li>• Mandatory modules on workplace violence, customer service and de-escalation are included in training for customer-facing employees. Courses are also available on preventing discrimination, harassment, and workplace violence.</li> </ul>
Engagement and Communication	3	Develop and deliver internal and external communications campaigns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communications issued to employees to enhance awareness of safety issues: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ "Stay Calm, Stay Safe, Seek Help" message in communication campaigns;</li> <li>○ Reminders on responsibilities under the Workplace Violence Program;</li> <li>○ Guidance on the Getting Back to Transit and Transport Bus Initiatives; and</li> <li>○ Promotion of Transit Worker Assault Awareness Day.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Campaigns issued to educate customers about safety and security, raise awareness of the risks of unsafe behaviour, how to report an incident and how to obtain assistance when needed.</li> </ul>

Programs and Procedures			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New advertisements in vehicles and in stations to promote the ways customers can report safety issues in the system, including using the SafeTTC app.</li> </ul>
	4	Increase employee and community engagement programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Posters issued in TTC stations and vehicles to support the Toronto for All campaign to confront and eliminate all forms of discrimination and racism.</li> <li>• Executive town halls with frontline employees and safety and awareness marketplace events at transportation divisions.</li> <li>• JHSC workshops held in 2023 on topics, including workplace violence, work refusals and inspections. JHSC conference was held on June 18, 2024.</li> </ul>
	5	Strengthen penalties for assaults against all transit workers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The TTC supports changes to the Criminal Code to expand the application of the law to all transit workers. A meeting will be coordinated with representatives from the TTC and the office of the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada.</li> <li>• The TTC is committed to working with all levels of government to coordinate a table of representatives to work on a national framework aimed at eliminating transit worker assaults.</li> </ul>
	6	Implement vehicle and facility improvements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Station cleaning blitz conducted in 2023, with the support of more than 100 summer students in janitorial roles. Cleaning blitz planned for 2024.</li> <li>• Midday cleaning of vehicles on streetcar routes and increased daily station cleaning is ongoing.</li> <li>• Security gates installed at Union Station to increase safety and provide additional security to the closed section after subway hours.</li> <li>• Relocation of on-street relief points at seven locations completed, with a planned system-wide review for Line 3 closure and Lines 5 and 6 commissioning.</li> <li>• Secure access to facilities and TTC-access-only spaces, enclosed cabs, and protective barriers on vehicles. Implementation of extended barrier on buses started in Q1 2020 and expanded fleet-wide.</li> </ul>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The TTC, in partnership with ATU International, is exploring new barrier prototypes to improve overall safety.</li> <li>• Phase 2 upgrades to CCTV camera coverage in progress, with 59 of 71 stations or 83% achieving 90% coverage as of May 2024.</li> </ul>
	7	Continue to benchmark against international best practices in transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Outreach to North American transit agencies conducted in 2023, with findings supporting a multi-disciplinary approach to community safety.</li> <li>• Ongoing engagement with other transit agencies to share data and information on initiatives and strategies through GOAL and COMET and meeting with regional transit agencies in the Greater Toronto Area.</li> </ul>
Incident Response and Support	8	Increase frontline presence throughout the network	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased stations staff by 161 employees (including 130 Customer Service Agents, 30 Supervisors and one Slip Clerk) deployed at key locations to supplement existing resources.</li> <li>• Maintained current number of Security Guards (50) and continuing to increase number of TTC Special Constables.</li> </ul>
	9	Formalize the process for employee outreach and support following an incident	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employee support procedure in development outlining the process and available support following a traumatic event.</li> <li>• Existing programs include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Employee follow-up within 24 hours to check on well-being and upon returning to work. Information provided for available support programs (i.e. EFAP, Peer Support, Court Advocate);</li> <li>○ Comprehensive Employee Family and Assistance Program (EFAP) and Trauma Assist Program focused on early intervention for individuals who have experienced traumatic events;</li> <li>○ Employee-to-employee support is available through the Peer Support Program; and</li> <li>○ Court Advocate Program to provide support and act as a resource to TTC employees who are victims of or witness to a crime.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
	10	Co-ordinate with the external partners to enhance community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interdivisional table established with the City of Toronto, TPS and Toronto Public Health to address societal issues and challenges that impact the public transit system.</li> <li>• Participation on SafeTO Table to support the City's 10-Year Plan.</li> </ul>

		support and incident response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partnership with ATU Local 113 through the Joint Labour Management Committee to discuss and communicate updates on action items.</li> <li>• Participation in CUTA's Safety and Security Task Force to leverage advocacy efforts.</li> <li>• Engagement with UITP's Working Group to address social issues in transit networks.</li> <li>• Enhanced social support through expansion of Streets to Homes and LOFT's M-DOT programs, deployment of 20 Community Safety Ambassadors and mobilization of dedicated transport buses.</li> </ul>
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