



Transit Safety Task Force

Final Recommendations – FOR INFORMATION

April 12, 2023



TO INSPIRE AND INFLUENCE
THE EVOLUTION OF
INTEGRATED URBAN MOBILITY

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L'ÉVOLUTION DE LA
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Recommendation Development

Recognizing that safety concerns on public transit at times reflect broader societal complexities, CUTA has developed the following broad-based recommendations intended for transit agencies, partnering organizations and all levels of government.

Addressing societal complexities occurring on public transit often extend beyond the purview of transit agencies, CUTA calls on all levels of government to come to the table to address this issue with appropriate funding and other supports.

Recommendation Development

Objectives:

- Acknowledge current working approaches to transit safety
 - Integrate feedback and research from transit agencies on the five focus areas
 - Put forward recommendations on the broader societal considerations impacting public transit and the support transit agencies require from other levels of government to address these considerations
 - Recommendations are national in scope and not agency specific
 - Identify the time scale and accountability for each recommendation (immediate, medium term: 1-2 years, long term: 2+ years)
- Participating agencies in the task force include TransLink, Calgary Transit, Edmonton Transit Service, Toronto Transit Commission, York Region Transit and Société de transport de Montreal

Focus Areas

CUSTOMER & STAFF SAFETY (2)

- Transit Safety Plan
- Resourcing
- Communications & Technology
- Infrastructure
- Training

SUBSTANCE USE

- Substance use in transit facilities
- Connection to the opioid crisis

HOUSING & SUPPORTS

- Using transit as shelter space
- Connection to the housing crisis

MENTAL HEALTH

- Conduct and safety on transit
- Partnership models with service providers

Transit Safety Plan

<p>Timing: Immediate</p> <p>Accountability: Transit Agency</p> <p>In consultation with the municipality and other applicable partners</p>	<p>1) Transit agencies should develop a Multidisciplinary and Integrated Transit System Safety Plan that assesses the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Recent actions taken to improve transit safety B. Desired outcomes and required resourcing (from the transit agency and involved partners) C. Identified accountability for who is responsible for delivering on each program/initiative in the Transit Safety Plan D. Safety bylaws, policies, and practices E. Infrastructure that is currently in place F. Gaps/opportunities/call to action to work with the Province and community service providers to address complex societal considerations including mental health, substance use and housing, which are not the purview of the transit agency G. Develop a protocol for involving equity-deserving groups in the development of transit safety initiatives and programs
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Multidisciplinary Working Group

<p>Timing: Immediate</p> <p>Accountability: Transit Agency with support from the Municipality, Regional Authorities (if applicable) and Province</p>	<p>2) A multidisciplinary working group should be formed. It can be led by the municipality, regional authorities, or the Province and it should be accountable for the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Developing and implementing strategies to support and respond to transit safety challenges B. Developing programs and identifying resources (staff and funding) from the transit system, municipal departments (e.g. shelters and housing), the local health authority, emergency services, local community service providers and the Province C. Identify who is accountable for the delivery of programs documented in the transit safety plan D. Defining roles and responsibilities for partners, with reference to collective outcomes, procedures, rules, supports, enforcement (when applicable), reporting and evaluation measures E. Integrated data reporting from the transit agencies, social service providers and emergency services to inform program design and evaluation. Ensure occurrence reports include demographic information such as age, gender and ethnicity to better understand safety concerns towards vulnerable transit users. F. Quarterly progress reports on the transit safety plan, with adjustments as needed based on lived experience, perspectives from front-line staff and data
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Resourcing

<p>Timing: Immediate</p> <p>Accountability: Transit Agency</p>	3) Explore ways to enhance staff visibility in the transit system
<p>Timing: Immediate</p> <p>Accountability: Transit Agency in consultation with municipal partners</p>	4) Continue to invest in safety, security and enforcement positions
<p>Timing: Immediate</p> <p>Accountability: Transit Agency, Municipality, Community Service Partners, Province</p>	5) Creation of multidisciplinary ad hoc project teams to address issues
<p>Timing: Immediate</p> <p>Accountability: Municipality, Province</p>	6) Ensure regulations (e.g. bylaws) are in place to give special constables and/or the Police the ability to curb dangerous and unlawful behaviour on transit systems
<p>Timing: Immediate</p> <p>Accountability: Transit Agency, Municipality, Community Service Partners, Province</p>	7) Explore partnerships to create multidisciplinary teams for outreach to vulnerable individuals with a harm-reduction, community-safety, and well-being approach. Outreach programs should focus on building relationships with vulnerable users to establish trust and more effectively deliver resources.

Communications & Technology

<p>Timing: Immediate</p> <p>Accountability: Transit Agency</p>	<p>8) Implement a continuous customer safety marketing campaign highlighting safety measures, informing customers how to report incidents, and communicating behaviours that are not tolerated in public spaces</p>
<p>Timing: Immediate</p> <p>Accountability: Transit Agency</p>	<p>9) Reduce barriers for customers to receive help with customer safety text messaging services and/or apps</p>
<p>Timing: Medium Term</p> <p>Accountability: Transit Agency, Telecom Providers</p>	<p>10) Introduce cell service throughout transit facilities including tunnels and underground stations</p>

Infrastructure

<p>Timing: Immediate</p> <p>Accountability: Transit Agency</p>	<p>11) Enhance station cleaning and explore introducing in-service cleaning during the day for areas with continuous cleanliness issues</p>
<p>Timing: Immediate</p> <p>Accountability: Transit Agency</p>	<p>12) Conduct Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) reviews of transit stations and facilities that are experiencing a heightened level of customer and employee safety concerns</p>

Staff Safety

<p>Timing: Immediate</p> <p>Accountability: Transit Agency</p>	<p>13) Explore opportunities to introduce de-escalation training for front-line transit staff (e.g. operators, customer service, station maintenance, cleaners, etc.)</p>
<p>Timing: Immediate</p> <p>Accountability: Transit Agency</p>	<p>14) Ensure that staff are aware of current transit safety initiatives provided by the transit system and community service partners (e.g. mental health outreach workers – if applicable). Ensure staff are up to date on Standard Operating Procedures related to customer and staff safety.</p>
<p>Timing: Immediate</p> <p>Accountability: Transit Agency, Municipality, Province</p>	<p>15) Leverage Occupation Health & Safety committees, programs, hazard assessments and control measures to increase staff safety and address current and evolving trends</p>
<p>Timing: Medium</p> <p>Accountability: Federal Government</p>	<p>16) The Government of Canada should strengthen penalties for assault of all transit workers by amending subsection 269.01 of the Criminal Code to include all transit workers, not just transit operators.</p>

Housing and Supports

<p>Timing: Immediate</p> <p>Accountability: Provincial/Federal Government</p>	<p>17) Provincial and federal governments should develop a housing-first approach for individuals experiencing homelessness and related issues on transit systems</p>
<p>Timing: Medium Term</p> <p>Accountability: Provincial/Federal Government</p>	<p>18) Provincial and federal governments should ensure the sustainability of new permanent supportive housing, including units developed through the federal government’s rapid housing initiative, by working together to fund associated wraparound services.</p>

Housing and Supports

<p>Timing: Immediate</p> <p>Accountability: Province</p>	<p>19) Provincial governments should fund overnight access and intake to social service providers so that complex individuals requiring support can have 24-hours access to services</p>
<p>Timing: Immediate</p> <p>Accountability: Province</p>	<p>20) Provincial governments should fund an extreme cold weather shuttle service from transit stations and terminals to local area shelters during non-revenue hours. Explore providing shuttle services to cooling centres during times of extreme heat.</p>
<p>Timing: Immediate</p> <p>Accountability: Municipality, Province, Federal Government</p>	<p>21) All levels of government should work together to fund daytime warming and cooling centres to reduce sheltering in place on transit systems</p>
<p>Timing: Immediate</p> <p>Accountability: Transit Agency</p>	<p>22) Have transit agencies post crisis hotline and community outreach numbers and emergency shelter locations at key transit locations</p>

Substance Use

Timing: Immediate Accountability: Province	23) Depending on the jurisdiction, leverage established legal, enforcement and/or social support tools to prevent illicit drug use in transit stations, including diverting activity to alternate sites, if/where sanctioned
Timing: Medium Term Accountability: Province	24) Collaborate with provincial governments to create drug treatment programs

Mental Health

<p>Timing: Immediate</p> <p>Accountability: Transit Agency, Mental Health Providers</p>	<p>25) Explore partnerships with mental health service providers with outreach workers positioned within the transit system to assist transit staff</p>
<p>Timing: Immediate</p> <p>Accountability: Province</p>	<p>26) Request provincial governments develop an accelerated handoff initiative between police officers/special constables and health professionals for individuals apprehended with mental health concerns</p>
<p>Timing: Medium Term</p> <p>Accountability: Province</p>	<p>27) Provincial governments should provide transit agencies with dedicated mental health outreach case management services for individuals with repeated mental health concerns</p>

Next Steps

- Consult with ATU/Unifor/CUPE to identify areas of shared interest
- Media release and backgrounder

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