

Meeting Date: January 20, 2026

Consent Agenda: Driver Barriers Retrofit Project, Phase 2

BACKGROUND:

In March 2025, the GRTC Board of Directors authorized the procurement and installation of enhanced operator protective barriers on 79 fixed-route buses to mitigate the growing risk of physical assaults against transit operators. This action aligned with Federal Transit Administration (FTA) General Directive 24-1 (2024), which reported a 120% increase in operator assaults nationwide between 2013 and 2021, and reflected GRTC's experience of more than 50 physical assaults against operators since 2020.

As part of GRTC's continued commitment to operator safety, staff evaluated the remaining fixed-route fleet eligible for additional protective enhancements. Sixty-five (65) buses are currently equipped with original manufacturer-installed operator barriers provided by Arow Global. While these barriers offered initial protection, they do not fully enclose the operator compartment and no longer adequately mitigate evolving safety risks, including attempts by members of the public to access the operator around the glass or to throw objects over the existing barrier opening.

To address these vulnerabilities, GRTC proposes upgrading the existing barriers by extending the glass closer to the windshield to create a semi-full enclosure of the operator compartment. The upgrade will also include glass enclosure above the door opening to prevent objects from being thrown into the operator area. These enhancements are consistent with recommendations from the joint management-labor safety committee established in compliance with FTA requirements and GRTC's collective bargaining agreement with ATU Local 1220.

Following a competitive bid for proposals, Gillig, a certified distributor of Arow Global products, was selected as the lowest, responsive, and responsible proposer to provide the barrier upgrades for the eligible buses.

HIGHLIGHTS:

- **Vendor Selection:** Gillig was selected through a competitive bid for proposals process as the lowest, responsive, and responsible proposer.
- **Scope of Work:** Upgrade of existing operator barriers on 65 fixed-route buses, including extended glass enclosure toward the windshield and above the door opening.
- **Unit Cost:** \$3,038.07 per barrier with \$249.31 per bus for installation labor.
- **Total Project Cost:** \$213,679.70.
- **Funding Source:** 100% ARPA funded.
- **Project Timeline:** The project is expected to be completed within one (1) year of contract award.

RECOMMENDATION:

GRTC staff recommends that the Board of Directors authorize the Chief Executive Officer to approve the procurement and installation of upgraded operator compartment protective barriers on 65 fixed-route buses with Gillig for a total project value of \$213,679.70, utilizing federal funds.

Ellen Robertson, Secretary
GRTC Board of Directors

Date