

**CITY OF EL PASO, TEXAS  
AGENDA ITEM  
DEPARTMENT HEAD'S SUMMARY FORM**



**DEPARTMENT:** Internal Audit

**AGENDA DATE:** 4/1/25

**PUBLIC HEARING DATE:**

**CONTACT PERSON NAME:** Edmundo Calderon - Internal Audit

**PHONE NUMBER:** 915-212-1365

**2nd CONTACT PERSON NAME:** Elizabeth De La O

**PHONE NUMBER:** 915-212-1371

**DISTRICT(S) AFFECTED:** All Districts

**STRATEGIC GOAL:**

Goal 6: Set the Standard for Sound Governance and Fiscal Management

**SUBGOAL:**

**SUBJECT:**

Discussion and Action to accept the results of the Sun Metro Money Room – Internal Control Review P2024-01.

**BACKGROUND / DISCUSSION:**

The timeframe for this review was Fiscal Year 2023-2024 and involved analysis of internal controls over cash handling, determination if cash handling procedures were consistent with Departmental and City Policies, if the Department was operating in a control conscious environment, and to document where inefficiencies may exist.

This review involved analyzing the Internal Control Environment at the Sun Metro Money Room. The results documented recommendations made to improve the Internal Control Environment.

**COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDER OUTREACH:**

Not applicable

**PRIOR COUNCIL ACTION:**

Not applicable

**AMOUNT AND SOURCE OF FUNDING:**

Not applicable

**REPORTING OF CONTRIBUTION OR DONATION TO CITY COUNCIL:**

Not applicable

NAME	AMOUNT (\$)

\*\*\*\*\*REQUIRED AUTHORIZATION\*\*\*\*\*

**DEPARTMENT HEAD:**

*Ernesto S. Calderin 3-24-2025*

(If Department Head Summary Form is initiated by Purchasing, client department should sign also)



# **Sun Metro Money Room – Internal Control Review P2024-01**

Issued by the  
Internal Audit Department  
January 09, 2025



# Internal Audit Department

**MAYOR**  
Renard U. Johnson

**DATE:** January 09, 2025

**TO:** Anthony R Dekeyzer – Director of Mass Transit

**FROM:** Edmundo S. Calderon, CIA, CGAP, CRMA, Chief Internal Auditor

**CITY COUNCIL**

**SUBJECT:** Sun Metro Money Room – Internal Control Review P2024-01

**District 1**  
Alejandra Chávez

The Internal Audit Department has completed a review of the internal controls within the Sun Metro Money Room. This engagement was accepted based on the engagement’s potential to support the evaluation and improvement of the organization’s governance, risk management, and control processes (IIA 9.4). The work performed does not constitute an engagement conducted in accordance with Generally Accepted Government Auditing Standards (GAS 1.16). The observations and conclusions that are reported in this Memorandum do not require Management Responses.

**District 2**  
Dr. Josh Acevedo

**District 3**  
Deanna M. Rocha

**District 4**  
Cynthia Boyar Trejo

**Background:**

Sun Metro operates 101 Fixed Route Vehicles, 48 LIFT vehicles, 3 Streetcars and serves more than 6.6 million passengers a year. Fares can be purchased on the bus using the correct change. In addition, Sun Metro sells daily, weekly, and monthly bus passes. A bus pass can be purchased on the Sun Metro App, at any of the 6 ticket offices, at Ticket Vending Machines (TVMs) located throughout the Brio Routes and 8 transit centers, or through U.S. Mail. The main office, Sun Metro Transit Operations Center, is located at 10151 Montana Ave., El Paso, TX 79925. Sun Metro operates a Money Room which counts revenue collected via Bus Fareboxes and TVMs then prepares funds for deposit.

**District 5**  
Ivan Niño

**District 6**  
Art Fierro

**District 7**  
Lily Limón

**District 8**  
Chris Canales

**Objectives:**

The objectives of the Sun Metro Money Room – Internal Control Review Project was to determine if cash handling procedures used in the Money Room are consistent with Department Policies and Procedures and the City of El Paso Cash Management Policy. In addition, to determine if the Sun Metro Money Room is operating in a control conscious environment as it relates to Cash Handling Procedures. We have characterized a control conscious environment as having the following:

- An adequate level of internal control awareness.
- Proper separation of duties.
- Existence of a proper monitoring system.
- Appropriate authorization/approval of expenditures.
- Adequate safeguarding of financial, physical, and information assets.

**Scope:**

Fiscal Year 2023 - 2024.

**CITY MANAGER**  
Dionne Mack

**Edmundo S. Calderón, CIA, CGAP, CRMA – Chief Internal Auditor**

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# Internal Audit Department

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### Methodology:

To achieve our audit objectives, we:

- Obtained an understanding of the *Sun Metro – Mass Transit Accounting Manual* and the *City of El Paso Cash Management Policy*.
- Observed and interviewed Sun Metro Money Room staff, supervisors, and managers to get an understanding of their operations.
- Conducted a site visit to the Sun Metro Money Room to observe the daily operations.
- Conducted a review of applicable Sun Metro Money Room internal procedures and City of El Paso City-wide Cash Handling Procedures.
- Conducted an assessment of the daily balancing and deposit documentation to determine if revenues were accurately reported and deposited in a timely manner per Policy.
- Identified potential internal control weaknesses in the safeguarding and transfer of cash.
- Documented areas where inefficiencies exist and where internal controls need to be strengthened.

### Results and Conclusion:

Based on our review, we have identified two Observations regarding current Policies/Procedures Associated and internal controls at the Sun Metro Money Room. The following is a description of the Observations.

### OBSERVATION 1

#### Sun Metro Policies and Procedures Manual

City of El Paso Strategic Plan:

- Goal 6.3 *Implement programs to reduce organizational risk.*
- Goal 6.12 *Maintain systems integrity, compliance, and business continuity.*

*Sun Metro – Mass Transit Accounting Manual* updated January 2023 states:

- Section 11.23 - *Money Room Employees Uniforms and Lockers 1. Money room employees are required to wear pocketless uniforms provided by Sun Metro.*

A review of the *Sun Metro – Mass Transit Accounting Manual* updated January 2023, identified the following:

- The *Manual* requires personnel to use a pocketless uniform provided by Sun Metro. However, Sun Metro has not provided the uniforms to the Money Room staff.
- There are no documented procedures for when Farebox Revenues do not balance with the amounts counted and deposited by Money Room and Accounting staff.

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DELIVERING EXCEPTIONAL SERVICES



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### RECOMMENDATION

The Sun Metro Management should:

- Provide pocketless uniforms to Money Room personnel as required by the *Manual*.
- Document procedures for when Farebox Revenues do not balance with the amounts counted and deposited by Money Room and Accounting staff.

### OBSERVATION 2

#### Revenue Accuracy and Deposits

City of El Paso Strategic Plan:

- Goal 6.3 *Implement program to reduce organizational risk.*
- Goal 6.12 *Maintain systems integrity, compliance, and business continuity.*

*City of El Paso Cash Management Policy* dated September 1, 2021:

- Section 5.1 - *In accordance with City Charter, Section 7.7 – Depositories, all monies received by any person in any department, in connection with the business of the City, shall be deposited promptly into a City depository account within one business day after its receipt.*
- Section 5.5 - *Under no circumstances are employees authorized to take from collected receipts to pay for expenses for any purpose.*
- Section 11.0 - *Change funds shall only be used to fund cashier's drawers and provide change after a transaction.*

*Sun Metro – Mass Transit Accounting Manual* updated January 2023 states:

- Section 11.27 - *Deposit Reconciliation and Revenue Reporting. The Summary of Farebox Revenue (Daily Summary Report) will show the following information necessary to balance and verify the total deposit: a. Total fare box revenue b. Total dollar bill count c. The balance in each mobile bin...*

#### Ticket Vending Machines (TVM)

During a review of a sample of 27 deposits of Ticket Vending Machine (TVM) Revenue from February 19 to March 01, 2024, the following was identified:

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**CITY MANAGER**  
Dionne Mack

**Ticket Vending Machine Balancing**

- 21 out of 27 (78%) deposits of TVM Revenue reviewed did not balance against the TVM Revenue Report provided by the Sun Metro Accounting staff. An overall shortage of \$2,513.80 was identified.

Further analysis identified the following:

- Items #4 for (\$276.05) and #6 for \$276.75 were due to a clerical error.
- Item #8 for (\$1,291.10), #12 for (\$1,487.00), and #22 for \$104.00 were due to mechanical errors with the TVM equipment.
- The remaining 22 items are considered immaterial because the overage/shortage is less than \$100.00. Due to the nature of Sun Metro’s business, we believe that a \$100.00 materiality level is appropriate.

#	Date	TVM #	Revenue per TVM Report	Amount Deposited	Difference
1	2/19/2024	TVM 101	\$2,176.55	\$2,175.20	\$(1.35)
2	2/19/2024	TVM 318	\$1,665.85	\$1,702.25	\$36.40
3	2/19/2024	TVM 316	\$1,613.05	\$1,612.85	\$(0.20)
4	2/20/2024	TVM 100	\$1,744.75	\$1,468.70	\$(276.05)
5	2/20/2024	TVM 102	\$1,655.10	\$1,654.25	\$(0.85)
6	2/20/2024	TVM 108	\$2,468.25	\$2,745.00	\$276.75
7	2/21/2024	TVM 213	\$1,947.55	\$1,948.10	\$0.55
8	2/21/2024	TVM 220	\$3,017.50	\$1,726.40	\$(1,291.10)
9	2/21/2024	TVM 301	\$1,548.60	\$1,548.60	\$0.00
10	2/22/2024	TVM 216	\$1,614.55	\$1,617.85	\$3.30
11	2/22/2024	TVM 324	\$1,836.40	\$1,882.10	\$45.70
12	2/22/2024	TVM 305	\$2,635.65	\$1,148.65	\$(1,487.00)
13	2/23/2024	DTC Bill	\$3,000.00	\$3,000.00	\$0.00
14	2/23/2024	TVM 101	\$2,117.40	\$2,117.40	\$0.00
15	2/23/2024	TVM 108	\$1,812.05	\$1,868.05	\$56.00
16	2/23/2024	TVM 415	\$1,722.00	\$1,727.00	\$5.00
17	2/26/2024	TVM 100	\$2,502.70	\$2,502.60	\$(0.10)
18	2/26/2024	TVM 307	\$1,284.65	\$1,285.75	\$1.10
19	2/26/2024	TVM 405	\$1,618.80	\$1,618.80	\$0.00
20	2/27/2024	TVM 101	\$2,338.15	\$2,335.05	\$(3.10)
21	2/27/2024	TVM 108	\$2,187.15	\$2,195.15	\$8.00
22	2/27/2024	TVM 323	\$1,970.30	\$2,074.30	\$104.00
23	2/28/2024	TVM 215	\$1,742.20	\$1,750.00	\$7.80
24	2/28/2024	TVM 311	\$1,727.70	\$1,727.70	\$0.00
25	3/1/2024	TVM 100	\$1,725.75	\$1,727.40	\$1.65
26	3/1/2024	TVM 102	\$1,521.75	\$1,521.45	\$(0.30)
27	3/1/2024	TVM 322	\$3,034.25	\$3,034.25	\$0.00
<b>Totals:</b>			<b>\$54,228.65</b>	<b>\$51,714.85</b>	<b>\$(2,513.80)</b>

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Timely Deposits

- 3 out of 27 (11%) deposits of TVM Revenue reviewed were not deposited within 1 business day as required by the *Policy*.
  - Revenues totaling \$436.00 from 1/11/24 were deposited on 2/19/2024. The deposit was made 26 business days late.
  - Revenues totaling \$189.25 from 2/06/24 were deposited on 3/1/24. The deposit was made 19 business days late.
  - Revenues totaling \$55.10 from 2/14/24 were deposited on 2/27/24. The deposit was made 9 business days late.

Bus Farebox

During a review of a sample of 20 deposits of Bus Farebox Revenues from February 19 to March 01, 2024, the following discrepancies were identified:

Change Fund

- 3 out of 20 (15%) Bus Farebox Deposits reviewed were underreported. For each deposit, \$40.00 of quarters were removed to replenish a Ticket Vending Machine.

Date	Amount of Coins Counted	Revised Amount of Coins Deposited	Difference
2/20/2024	\$3,199.92	\$3,159.92	(\$40.00)
2/22/2024	\$4,706.90	\$4,666.90	(\$40.00)
3/01/2024	\$6,251.07	\$6,211.07	(\$40.00)
<b>Totals:</b>	<b>\$14,157.89</b>	<b>\$14,037.89</b>	<b>(\$120.00)</b>

Timing Issue

- Farebox Revenue collected daily from each bus does not match to the revenues listed on the Daily Summary Report (the Report). The Report captures fare revenues for the current day's operation (from 12:00AM to 11:59PM). The current process is to remove the Farebox Revenue from each bus and a report is captured from the Farebox indicating the amount of fares collected for the shift. The fares are safeguarded in a locked bin along with the fares collected from other buses. This process usually is extended to the early hours of the next day. Any fares removed from buses after midnight are captured in the next day's Report. This causes the total fares reported on the current day Report to not equal the fares counted in the locked bin.

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## CITY MANAGER

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### **RECOMMENDATION**

The Sun Metro Management overseeing the Money Room should:

- Deposit Ticket Vending Machine Revenues within one business day after its receipt.
- Have a change fund dedicated to replenish TVMs and avoid taking monies out of the Bus Farebox deposit.
- Accurately reconcile Farebox Revenue utilizing the Daily Summary Report. The Report should be adjusted to include the total revenue inside the locked bin to include Farebox Revenue received after midnight.

### **Conclusion:**

Based on our review of the Sun Metro Money Room we were able to determine that:

- The Sun Metro Money Room is operating in a control conscious environment as it relates to cash handling.
- The Sun Metro Department has proper segregation of duties between persons receiving cash, preparing the bank deposits, and posting to the general ledger.

We identified the following areas where internal controls can be strengthened:

- The Sun Metro Department should provide pocketless uniforms to Money Room personnel as required by the *Sun Metro – Mass Transit Accounting Manual*, Section 11.23.
- The *Sun Metro – Mass Transit Accounting Manual* should document procedures in the event that Farebox Daily Revenue Reports do not reconcile with amounts counted and deposited by staff.
- The Sun Metro Department should ensure that Ticket Vending Machine (TVM) Revenue is deposited within one business day after its receipt.
- The Sun Metro Department should have a change fund dedicated to replenish TVMs and avoid taking monies out of the Bus Farebox deposit.
- Sun Metro should ensure that the Farebox Revenue is accurately reconciled to revenue reports.

If you have any questions please feel free to contact me at extension 21365.

cc: Financial Oversight Audit Committee  
Dionne Mack, City Manager  
Ellen Smyth, Chief Transit and Field Operations Officer  
Jerry DeMuro, Deputy Transit Office

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**Sun Metro Money Room –  
Internal Control Review P2024-01  
Management Response**

**City of El Paso Mass Transit Department - Sun Metro  
Management Response to  
Sun Metro Money Room Internal Control Review P2024-01 dated January 09, 2025**

**Observation 1: Sun Metro Policies and Procedures Manual**

Observation Area	Observation	Recommendation	Sun Metro Comment	Sun Metro Action
<b>Sun Metro Policies and Procedures Manual</b>	1 The Manual requires personnel to use a pocketless uniform provided by Sun Metro. However, Sun Metro has not provided the uniforms to the Money Room staff.	Provide pocketless uniforms to Money Room Personnel as required by the Manual.	Sun Metro provides pocketless shirts to Money Room staff. Pants can be casual wear either pocketless or pockets must be sewn closed. Sun Metro Accounts Receivable (Senior Accounting Specialist) conducts regular weekly audits (at least two) to confirm whether Money Room personnel comply with the requirement.	Sun Metro Accounting Manual section 11.23 article 1 has been revised to state:  <i>"Money room employees are required to wear pocketless shirts provided by Sun Metro. Pants can be casual wear either pocketless or pockets must be sewed closed."</i>
	2 There are no documented procedures for when Farebox Revenues do not balance with the amounts counted and deposited by Money Room and Accounting staff	Document procedures for when Farebox Revenues do not balance with the amounts counted and deposited by Money Room and Accounting staff.	We currently have a Weekly Farebox Reconciliation log to track all farebox variances which is located on SharePoint. This log shows all daily variances between the Money Room count and the Genfare Daily Summary Report and it goes back to 2006.  In addition, Sun Metro is in process of upgrading aged Genfare TVMs and Fareboxes with Flowbird TVMs and Validators equipped with contactless payment features and most of them will be operating with no cash. This will significantly reduce amount of cash being handled through TVMs.	Sun Metro is in process of developing an SOP to handle and investigate variances between the Money Room count and the Genfare / Flowbird Daily Summary Report. - Based on FY2024 analysis (of all the Farebox variances - positive and negative) we have found that on average, the yearly positive variance is \$400 and negative \$(300). - These averages will be used as a threshold that will trigger more research into any particular variance that goes above or below the threshold.

**Observation 2: Revenue Accuracy and Deposits**

Observation Area	Observation	Recommendation	Sun Metro Comment	Sun Metro Action
Revenue Accuracy and Deposits	<p>1 <u>Ticket Vending Machine Balancing</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 21 out of 27 (78%) deposits of TVM Revenue reviewed did not balance against the TVM Revenue Report provided by the Sun Metro Accounting staff. An overall shortage of \$2,513.80 was identified.</li> </ul>	<p><u>Further analysis identified the following:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Items #4 for (\$276.05) and #6 for \$276.75 were due to a clerical error.</li> <li>• Item #8 for (\$1,291.10), #12 for (\$1,487.00), and #22 for \$104.00 were due to mechanical errors with the TVM equipment.</li> <li>• The remaining 22 items are considered immaterial because the overage/shortage is less than \$100.00. Due to the nature of Sun Metro's business, we believe that a \$100.00 materiality level is appropriate.</li> </ul>	<p>Most of the larger discrepancies are due to mechanical errors of the aged Genfare TVMs. Sun Metro investigates all larger overages /shortages.</p>	<p>Sun Metro will continue to investigate TVM shortages/overages. New \$100, threshold was recommended by Internal Audit.</p>
	<p>2 <u>Timely Deposits</u></p> <p>3 out of 27 (11%) deposits of TVM Revenue reviewed were not deposited within 1 business day as required by the Policy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Revenues totaling \$436.00 from 1/11/24 were deposited on 2/19/24. The deposit was made 26 business days late.</li> <li>- Revenues totaling \$189.25 from 2/6/24 were deposited on 3/1/24. The deposit was made 19 business days late.</li> <li>- Revenues totaling \$55.10 from 2/14/24 were deposited on 2/27/24. The deposit was made 9 business days late.</li> </ul>	<p>Deposit Ticket Vending Machine Revenue within one business day after its receipt.</p>	<p>Revenues being held in vault are due to TVM malfunction. Changing procedure may not be feasible to Sun Metro and Treasury.</p> <p>Current City of El Paso Cash Management Policy does not address the specifics for TVMs.</p> <p>Sun Metro contacted Treasury regarding this observation. Assistant Treasury Coordinator will review pros and cons of changing current cash policy for Ticket Vending Machines.</p>	<p>Upon OTC review and their decision Sun Metro will adjust its procedures to be in accordance with the decision / changes to Cash Management Policy</p>

<b>Bus Fareboxes</b>	1	<p><u>Change Fund</u> 3 out of 20 (15%) Bus Farebox deposits reviewed were underreported. For each deposit, \$40.00 of quarters were removed to replenish a Ticket Vending Machine</p>	<p>Have a change fund dedicated to replenish TVMs and avoid taking monies out of the Bus Farebox deposit.</p>	<p>Sun Metro concurs with the observation and immediately changed the procedure.</p>	<p>Procedure was revised to: overages/shortages and replenishment of TVM's coin tekpak will be taken from Change Fund.</p>
	2	<p><u>Timing Issue</u> Farebox Revenue collected daily from each bus does not match to the revenues listed on the Daily Summary Report (the Report). The Report captures fare revenues for the current day's operation (from 12:00AM to 11:59PM). The current process is to remove the Farebox Revenue from each bus and a report is captured from the Farebox indicating the amount of fares collected for the shift. The fares are safeguarded in a locked bin along with the fares collected from other buses. This process usually is extended to the early hours of the next day. Any fares removed from buses after midnight are captured in the next day's Report. This causes the total fares reported on the current day Report to not equal the fares counted in the locked bin.</p>	<p>Accurately reconcile Farebox Revenue Utilizing the Daily Summary Report. The report should be adjusted to include the total revenue inside the locked bin to include Farebox Revenue received after midnight.</p>	<p>Due to the nature of Sun Metro's process of collecting, processing and counting farebox revenues there will be an inherent variance that will be present due to the timing of how busses are probed as they arrive after completing their routes. Genfare system is operating on a 24-hour clock which defines the day as 12am to 11:59pm. Currently the probing of the arriving busses often extends well beyond the 11:59pm cutoff which pushes the reporting into the following day. This timing issue is suspected of being the major cause of the farebox variances Sun Metro is experiencing.</p>	<p>Sun Metro will work more closely with Operations and Maintenance section to see if the probing timing issue can be lessened thus improving our variances.</p> <p>We are also working with Sun Metro IT department and Genfare to see if the Daily Summary Report can be modified so we can select modified time frame other than the midnight to midnight currently available in order to capture those instances when the probing goes beyond the midnight cutoff.</p> <p>Sun Metro is in process of developing an SOP to handle and investigate variances between the Money Room count and the Genfare / Flowbird Daily Summary Report.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Based on FY2024 analysis (of all the Farebox variances - positive and negative) we have found that on average, the yearly positive variance is \$400 and negative \$(300).</li> <li>- These averages will be used as a threshold that will trigger more research into any particular variance that goes above or below the threshold.</li> </ul>