



Drone Security Monitoring Services Contract Modification

Operations, Safety, & Customer Experience Committee

May 21, 2026

File ID 2026-0246



Staff Recommendation

AUTHORIZE the Chief Executive Officer to execute Modification No. 2 to Contract No. PS118995000 with Flying Lion, Inc. to continue to support security monitoring, emergency response, infrastructure inspections, and aerial situational awareness across the Metro transit system, in the amount of \$497,764, increasing the total contract value from \$497,780 to \$995,544, and extending the period of performance from July 22, 2027, through July 21, 2029.

Background

- In 2019, Metro’s “New Blue” (A Line South Refurbishment) project experienced reopening delays due to ongoing copper cable thefts along the rail corridor, impacting project timelines.
- As theft activity continued across the rail system, Metro began evaluating enhanced monitoring and detection solutions in August 2023 to improve security coverage along vulnerable right-of-way areas.
 - After evaluating options, drone operations emerged as the most effective and efficient solution due to their ability to provide rapid, real-time monitoring of large and difficult-to-access areas where traditional patrols and fixed cameras have limited visibility.



Stolen copper wire from tracks (left) and a drone’s thermal detection capturing footage of suspects on the I-105 stealing copper wire during a pilot (right).

Background (cont.)

- In July 2024, in response to the rise in copper cable thefts and vandalism along the rail right-of-way, Metro awarded a three-year contract with Flying Lion Inc. in the amount of \$497,780 for drone security monitoring services.
- With a rise in high-risk areas along the rail right-of-way due to the increased value of copper wire, there was an increased need from Metro Operations for continuous observation and frequent drone deployments – averaging five times per week – at the start of the contract in 2024.



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A drone's thermal detection captures footage of a suspect at the Florence interlocking (left) and a drone-captured image of a suspect at Firestone Station (right).

Discussion

- Enhanced monitoring has contributed to an **estimated 25–35% reduction in copper theft activity** in targeted corridors, while also expanding operational demand across safety, maintenance, and systemwide monitoring functions.
- DPS is now regularly utilizing drone services to do the following: real-time incident monitoring, post-incident assessment, and proactive patrols, including operations in low-visibility environments where traditional resources are limited.
- Although drone deployments have currently been reduced from five to twice per week due to an accelerated use of funds nearing the contract authority limit (10% remaining), **a contract modification is required to continue the core services**, including infrastructure protection, incident response, and systemwide situational awareness, which are driven by current field conditions and to account for upcoming large-scale events.

Next Steps

- Upon Board approval, staff will execute Modification No. 2 to Contract No. PS118995000 with Flying Lion, Inc.