

# Transportation Committee

**Meeting date: July 13, 2009**

**Council meeting July 22, 2009**

## **ADVISORY INFORMATION**

<b>Date:</b>	July 7, 2009
<b>Subject:</b>	Authorization for Public Hearings and Approval of Public Hearing Content for Regional Dial-a-Ride Fares
<b>District(s), Member(s):</b>	All
<b>Policy/Legal Reference:</b>	Public Accountability Policy 2-1, Public Hearing Procedure 2-1b; Transit Fare Policy Changes 3-2-6; Implementing Procedure 3-2-6a
<b>Staff Prepared/Presented:</b>	Arlene McCarthy, Director – MTS, (651-602-1754) Gerri Sutton, Assistant Director – MTS, (651-602-1672) Michelle Fure, Outreach Coordinator, (651-602-1545)
<b>Division/Department:</b>	Metropolitan Transportation Services (MTS)

### **Proposed Action**

That the Metropolitan Council:

1. authorize a series of public hearings on potential fare adjustments for regional dial-a-ride services funded by the Council as shown in Attachment A, and;
2. approve information to be presented at public hearings, as shown in Attachment B, for the purpose of public comment and input prior to adoption of any regional fare adjustments.

### **Background**

On August 13, 2008, the Metropolitan Council approved a minimum fare of \$2.25 for all general public dial-a-ride programs funded in whole or in part with MVST or state general fund appropriations to be implemented no later than January 1, 2009.

On February 25, 2009, the Council directed staff to form a Coordination Advisory Committee (CAC), made up of county and Council staff, to develop and implement a new regional dial-a-ride program. Per this action, MTS is leading the effort to restructure Council-funded dial-a-ride that is focused on providing a transit option equally available to all members of the general public where fixed route is not available and that functions under a consistent set of operating rules.

In May 2009 the CAC formed a fare subcommittee to analyze the current fare structure, consider adding a distance-based component as well as a discount for customer coordinated group trips. The CAC recommends a regional dial-a-ride fare structure as presented in Attachment B.

FTA guidelines and Metropolitan Council policy require that the fare adjustments be reviewed through a public hearing process prior to adoption. This authorization will set in motion the process to accomplish these hearings in a timely manner and allow sufficient time for public input, Council consideration of options and actual implementation beginning January 1, 2010.

The following are additional guidelines for Public Hearing Process on Fare Adjustments:

- Public hearings are required by Federal Transit Administration guidelines and Metropolitan Council policy, prior to taking action on potential fare adjustments.
- Public hearings can begin 45 days after Council authorization.

- Public notice of the hearings will be published in the State Register and other media outlets no later than 30 days before the first public hearing.
- Comment period will remain open for 10 days following the last scheduled public hearing.
- Fare adjustment proposals will be presented to the Transportation Committee and the Council for endorsement prior to public hearing.
- Staff recommendation for final action will be presented following consideration of public input.
- Target date for implementation of a potential fare adjustment is January 1, 2010.

## **Rationale**

The recommended fare structure recognizes that dial-a-ride trips have a higher average subsidy per trip than fixed route trips. A higher fare is recommended for longer trips given the incrementally higher cost of those trips. A group trip discount is recommended to share with the riders the operating efficiencies gained by providing group trips. While the public hearings are required as part of the fare change process, they also provide an opportunity to educate the public on the new dial-a-ride program.

## **Funding**

All fares collected on the new regional dial-a-ride service will be reinvested in the program. The financial impact of this fare structure is not known because current programs employ widely varying fare policies and the demand for service under the restructured program is not fully known.

## **Known Support / Opposition**

None known.

## Public Hearings for Regional Dial-A-Ride Proposed Fares

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**Tuesday, Sept. 8 – 1:30 to 2:30 p.m.**  
Brooklyn Park Library, Meeting Room  
8600 Zane Ave. N., Brooklyn Park  
Served by Regional Transit Route 723

**Wednesday, Sept. 9 – 1:30 to 2:30 p.m.**  
Maplewood Library, Large Meeting Room  
3025 Southlawn Drive, Maplewood  
Served by Regional Transit Routes 64, 80, 219, 223

**Thursday, Sept. 10 – 1:30 to 2:30 p.m.**  
Dakota County Northern Service Center  
Conference Rooms 110A & 110B  
1 Mendota Road West, West St. Paul  
Served by Regional Transit Route 75

**Friday, Sept. 11 – 10:30 to 11:30 a.m.**  
Anoka County Government Center  
County Board Room, Room 705  
2100 Third Avenue, Anoka  
Served by Regional Transit Routes 766, 805, 852

**Thursday, Sept. 17 – 10:30 to 11:30 a.m.**  
Scott County Government Center  
County Board Room, Room 209  
200 Fourth Avenue West, Shakopee  
Served by Regional Transit Route 496

**Thursday, Sept. 17 – 1:30 to 2:30 p.m.**  
Ridgedale Library, Robert H. Rohlf meeting room  
12601 Ridgedale Drive, Minnetonka  
Served by Regional Transit Routes 615 and 675

**Friday, Sept. 18 – 10:30 to 11:30 a.m.**  
Washington County Government Center  
County Board Room, Room 100  
14949 62nd Street North, Stillwater

*Dial-a-Ride Services are also available for each of these locations.*

### Public comment period July 23 – Sept. 28, 2009

Members of the public can comment by contacting the Regional Data Center at 390 N. Robert Street, St. Paul 55101 or

- [data.center@metro council.org](mailto:data.center@metro council.org)
- Comment Line **651.602.1500**
- Telephone 651.602.1140
- TTY **651.291.0904**
- Fax 651.602.1464

**Regional Dial-a-Ride  
Proposed Fare Structure for Public Hearing Purposes**

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	<u>**Trip Distance</u>	<u>General Public Riders*</u>	<u>Group Discounts</u>	
			<u>Paid Fares Threshold</u>	<u>Fare</u>
Tier 1	Up to 10 miles	\$2.25	4+	Free return ride
Tier 2	>10 – 20 miles	\$4.50	3+	\$2.25/each
Tier 3	>20 miles	\$6.75	3+	\$4.50/each

\* ADA certified riders capped at \$4.50 per one-way trip

\*\* Trip distance is calculated on a point to point or straight line basis.

Counties can establish “Routine Runs” between specific cities on specified days and at specified times and charge \$2.25 per passenger.

- Transfers: dial-a-ride to dial-a-ride – fare is based on full trip distance. Originating provider collects fee and transfer is free.
- Sponsored trips (third party payment) may be booked in advance of the reservation window and fares are not restricted to the regional fare policy rates.
- Children 5 years old and under ride free with paying adult (up to 4 children per adult).