

T Transportation Committee

Meeting date: April 25, 2011

Metropolitan Council Meeting: April 27, 2011

ADVISORY INFORMATION

	Date: April 21, 2011
	Subject: Authorization for Public Hearings on Potential Service and Fare Adjustments
District(s), Member(s):	All
Policy/Legal Reference:	Public Accountability Policy 2-1, Public Hearings Procedure 2-1b; Transportation Service Changes and Restructuring 1-3a; Transit Fare Policy Changes 3-2-6, Implementing Procedure 3-2-6a
Staff Prepared/Presented:	Brian Lamb, General Manager 612-349-7510 Arlene McCarthy, Director MTS, 651-602-1754 John Levin, Director Service Development, 612-349-7789 Ed Petrie, Director Finance, 612-349-7624 Gerri Sutton, Asst. Director Contracted Services, 651-602-1672
Division/Department:	Metro Transit, Metropolitan Transportation Services

Proposed Action

That the Metropolitan Council authorize a series of public hearings on potential fare and service adjustments for transit and paratransit services operated and/or funded by the Metropolitan Council.

Background

Current budget discussions in the Legislature combined with rising cost for fuel and variability in Motor Vehicle Sales Tax (MVST) receipts raises the prospect of a significant budget shortfall in the 2012-2013 biennium. It may be necessary to adjust transit fares and or service to address this shortfall. Public hearings are required to present the proposed fare and service adjustments to the public and receive comments.

Rationale

Public hearings are required by Federal Transit Administration guidelines and Metropolitan Council policy prior to taking action on potential fare adjustments or major service changes. Council policy requires authorization for public hearings 45 days before the hearings begin. State law requires public notice of the public hearings in the State Register 30 days before the hearings begin.

In order to maximize access to the public hearings, staff recommend that seven hearings be held, distributed geographically across the region, with both midday and evening times. The proposed public hearings locations, dates and times are shown on the attachment. In addition to providing comments at the hearings, the public will be invited to submit comments via telephone, fax, mail, e-mail and the Council website. The comment period will extend 10 days after the last public hearing.

Staff will bring forward a separate business item to approve the details of the proposal for fare and service adjustments. Once approved, this proposal will be published no less than 10 days before the first public hearing.

After the comment period closes, staff will share the comments with the Council and consider changes to the proposal for fare and service adjustments to address the comments. A recommendation for final action will then be brought to the Council.

Funding

The service adjustment proposal for the public hearings will include service adjustments for service operated by Metro Transit or contracted by the Metropolitan Council. The fare adjustment proposal for the public hearings will include fare adjustments for services operated by all regional transit providers participating in the regional fare structure. Funding to conduct public hearings will come from the Metropolitan Council transit operating budgets.

Known Support / Opposition

There is no known opposition to scheduling public hearings.