

Transportation Committee

For the Metropolitan Council meeting of January 9,
2008

Committee Report

Item: 2007-413

Consent

ADVISORY INFORMATION

Date Prepared: December 31, 2008

Subject: Metro Mobility Peak Demand Service Demonstration Program

Proposed Action:

That the Metropolitan Council authorize implementation of a demonstration Metro Mobility “peak demand” taxi program.

Summary of Committee Discussion / Questions:

A question was raised on how the program would be paid for given the current budget deficit. Staff indicated that it could be paid through unspent funds from the Premium Same Day Taxi program.

Motion by Scherer, seconded by Meeks and motion passed. Hearing no objection, Chair Mary Hill Smith stated that this item could move to the full Council as a Consent Item.

Transportation Committee

Business Item

Item: 2007-413

Meeting date: December 10, 2007

Council meeting January 9, 2008

ADVISORY INFORMATION

Date:	December 4, 2007
Subject:	Metro Mobility Peak Demand Service Demonstration Program
District(s), Member(s):	All
Policy/Legal Reference:	49CFR37, Subpart F
Staff Prepared/Presented:	Arlene McCarthy, Director MTS (651)602-1754 Gerri Sutton, Ass't Dir. Contracted Transit Services (651)602-1672 Paul Colton, Senior Manager – Metro Mobility (651)602-1668
Division/Department:	Metropolitan Transportation Services (MTS)/Metro Mobility

Proposed Action

That the Metropolitan Council authorize implementation of a demonstration Metro Mobility “peak demand” taxi program.

Background

The demand for Metro Mobility ridership continues to grow and fluctuations or spikes in demand are occurring. Staff is recommending that a demonstration “peak demand” program be established to accommodate the fluctuations in demand and to assure zero American’s with Disabilities Act (ADA) capacity denials.

In 2006, the Council issued, to all licensed taxi companies in Bloomington, Minneapolis, St. Paul and MAC, an Invitation to Do Business to provide Premium Same Day (PSD) taxi service. Staff is proposing to amend the existing PSD contract with Airport Taxi to include a Peak Demand program.

The Peak Demand program will be used only when trip requests would otherwise need to be denied. Riders will have the right to refuse transport by a taxicab and would then be scheduled on a Metro Mobility vehicle instead. Peak Demand customers will pay Metro Mobility’s off-peak fare of \$2.50 to the taxicab driver and the balance of the trip cost would be paid directly to the taxicab company by the Council. The trip costs will be predetermined by the Council using the Trapeze scheduling software to calculate the trip length multiplied by the licensing city’s established rate structure.

If the Peak Demand program is successful, Metro Mobility staff will work with Procurement to re-issue the Invitation to Do Business to all qualified cab companies in the cities of Bloomington, St. Paul, Minneapolis and MAC.

Rationale

The Peak Demand program is intended to supplement existing Metro Mobility service by offering a taxi ride to certified riders when the demand for rides exceeds the availability of resources under the primary service contracts with First Transit, Inc. (d.b.a. Laidlaw Transit Services) and Transit Team, Inc.

Metro Mobility demand ridership for October 2007 was up by 10.9 % over that same month one year ago. The U.S. Department of Transportation has taken the position that transit agencies must plan, schedule, and provide for 100 percent of all complimentary ADA paratransit trip requests. Because the demand for Metro Mobility service continues to increase and is somewhat unpredictable on a day-to-day basis, the Council needs to employ a safety-net program to assure that all ADA trip requests are satisfied. Staff believe that the PSD program and associated service contract provide an existing channel and excellent framework to implement the Peak Demand Program on a demonstration basis.

The PSD program provides a same-day service option for certified Metro Mobility riders using taxicabs. Because ADA regulations do not require same-day service availability, this is considered a premium service initiated by the customer and priced accordingly. Under PSD service, the rider pays the first \$7.00 fare directly to the taxicab driver. The Council pays the taxicab company up to the next \$13.00 and the rider again pays for any costs in excess of \$20.00.

Funding

Metro Mobility's draft 2008 budget does not include funding specifically for the Peak Demand program. However, it does include a contingency budget of about \$250,000 that can be used for this purpose. Staff will monitor this demonstration project and implement on a permanent basis if successful.

Known Support / Opposition

None.