

## Transportation Committee

Meeting date: January 27, 2014

For the Metropolitan Council meeting of February 12, 2014

**Subject:** Approval of Permanent Change to Premium Same Day Taxi Service

**District(s), Member(s):** All

**Policy/Legal Reference:** None

**Staff Prepared/Presented:** Arlene McCarthy, Director MTS 651-602-1754

Gerri Sutton, Asst. Director Contracted Transit Services 651-602-1672

Andrew Krueger, Senior Manager Metro Mobility 651-602-1689

**Division/Department:** Transportation/Metropolitan Transportation Services (MTS) – Metro Mobility

### Proposed Action

That the Metropolitan Council approve the following permanent changes to the Premium Same Day (PSD) Ride program:

1. Expand the scope of the PSD contract to include all same-day trip requests between 5:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m., and;
2. Reduce the customer's share of the initial cost of the PSD service from \$7 to \$5 and increase the Council's maximum payment per trip from \$13 to \$15. The customer continues to pay for costs in excess of \$20 per trip.

### Background

PSD taxi service provides customers with a subsidized same-day ride option to meet unanticipated needs. The program was originally implemented as a way to involve taxi providers in providing alternative service at rate that is less costly than the federally ADA compliant Metro Mobility service. The average cost per ride on Metro Mobility is \$23. Because of the costing structure, the Council's average cost per passenger for PSD service since the program started is just under \$10.

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) does not require that rides which are requested on the day of service be provided. The Council has historically tried to accommodate as many same-day ride requests as possible. Over the past several years Metro Mobility ridership growth has been over 8% each year. The increasing demand for service has made it difficult to place same-day ride requests without negatively impacting rides which were placed in advance.

Staff recommended adjusting the pricing structure to minimize the impact on customers no longer able to book same-day rides on Metro Mobility at a maximum cost of \$4 per trip.

On June 26, 2013 the Council approved a six month demonstration project with the changes now being requested for permanent implementation (see attached Business Item 2013-169).

### **Rationale**

Service providers report that the overall impact of the demonstration has been positive. There were only a small number of customer complaints initially while contractors report reduced time spent by both reservationists and dispatchers attempting to place same-day ride requests. This allows dispatchers to concentrate their efforts on improving performance and maximizing the efficiency in delivery of rides already in the system.

In 2013, prior to the implementation of the demonstration project, PSD rides averaged 28 per day. The two months following the implementation of the demonstration program PSD rides increased to 40 per day - an increase of 43%. This increase is a combination of overall ridership increases and some customers choosing to shift rides to the taxi service. Metro Mobility provides more than 6,000 rides per average weekday.

### **Funding**

Funding for this program is in the Council's adopted 2014 Operating Budget for Metro Mobility. The increased PSD Taxi Service ridership may require a contract amendment prior to the term date of June 30, 2015, if ridership continues at the current pace.

### **Known Support / Opposition**

No known opposition.