

# Business Item

Transportation Committee



Committee Meeting Date: October 28, 2024

For the Metropolitan Council: November 13, 2024

## Business Item: 2024-305

Fare Policy Changes Title VI Analysis

<b>District(s), Member(s):</b>	All
<b>Policy/Legal Reference:</b>	OEE0 6-1 Title VI Major Service Change Policy; OEE0 6-2 Title VI Disparate Impact and Disproportionate Burden Policy; FTA Circular 4702.1B
<b>Staff Prepared/Presented:</b>	Lesley Kandaras, General Manager, 612-349-7513 Jillian Linnell, Chief of Staff, 612-349-7510 Zecharias Hailu, Assistant Director OEE0, 651-602-1778 Edwin Petrie, Director Finance 612-349-7624 Dennis Dworshak Sr Manager, Revenue Operations (612) 349-7364 Andrea Kiepe, Community Outreach Coordinator 612-349-7747
<b>Division/Department:</b>	Transportation, Metro Transit and Metropolitan Transportation Services

### Proposed Action

That the Metropolitan Council approve the results of the Title VI Service Equity Analysis for the removal of local peak fares (which subsequently impacts the peak fare offered by Metro Mobility), reduced peak fares and the end of the pilot on routes 32 & 62.

### Background

1. On February 28, 2024, The Metropolitan Council approved a major upgrade of the technology and hardware devices of the regional fare collection system. This upgrade provides an opportunity for significant fare simplification of the regional system.
2. Over the past 10 months, Metropolitan Council staff, along with regional stakeholders and a fare collection consultant, determined a two-phased fare simplification plan would benefit the regional transit agencies and the transit customers.
3. Phase I of fare policy changes will include the following modifications:
  - a. Removal of local peak (rush hour) fares reducing the fare from \$2.50 to \$2.00 and peak reduced fares from \$2.50 to \$1.00 for all regional transit providers participating in the regional fare structure and adjust the following fare products:
    - i. All Day Pass from \$5.00 to \$4.00
    - ii. Reduced Fare All Day Pass from \$5.00 to \$2.00
    - iii. 10 Ride Pass Full Fare from \$20.50 to \$20.00
    - iv. Seven Day Pass from \$24 - \$20
    - v. Eliminate \$90.00 (31 Day) local peak and the \$5.00 visitor pass
  - b. Modify the Metro Mobility peak fare, from \$4.50 to \$4.00

- c. Modify Metro Mobility peak fare hours to 6:30AM-9:30AM and 2:00PM to 5:30PM
  - d. Expand Transit Assistance Program (TAP) eligibility from one to two years, to be implemented in 2025, once the fare technology is available.
  - e. Approve a 6-month deeply discounted fare pilot for Metro Mobility customers to ride on regional fixed routes for \$.01, effective 1/1/2025 – 6/30/2025.
  - f. Provide a new fare of \$1.00 for Transit Link Circulator Service.
  - g. Unless otherwise noted, the fare change will be implemented in January 2025.
4. Metro Transit is required by the Federal Transit Administration (“FTA”) to conduct a Title VI Service Equity Analysis for all permanent fare changes. FTA Circular 4702.1B states a Title VI fare equity analysis requirement applies to all fare changes regardless of the amount of increase or decrease. As with the service equity analysis, FTA requires transit providers to evaluate the effects of fare changes on low-income populations in addition to Title VI-protected populations to determine whether planned changes will have a disparate impact and disproportionate burden.
  5. In line with Federal guidance, a Title VI analysis was conducted to evaluate:
    - a. Removal of local peak (rush hour) fares reducing the fare from \$2.50 to \$2.00 and peak reduced fares from \$2.50 to \$1.00 for all regional transit providers participating in the regional fare structure
    - b. End of the Free Fare Pilot on Routes 32 and 62 (Transit Fare Elimination Pilot Program)
  6. Upon conducting the technical analysis and applying Metro Transit’s Title VI policies in accordance with Metro Transit and the Metropolitan Council’s Title VI Program, this review finds that the proposed service changes would not result in disparate impact on Black Indigenous and Persons of Color (“BIPOC”) populations nor disproportionate burden on low-income populations.

### Rationale

FTA Circular 4702.1B requires FTA transit providers to evaluate the effects of any fare change based on income, race, color, and national origin. A fare equity analysis is needed in these cases and is a requirement regardless of a fare increase or decrease.

### Thrive Lens Analysis

Transit fare simplification advances *Thrive MSP 2040* regional outcomes by providing riders with transit rides on local routes for the same fares throughout the day without morning and afternoon surcharges. It removes cost barriers for seniors and youth transit customers by eliminating the significant fare increases during the morning and evening peak times resulting in projected increased ridership. Increasing transit ridership and reducing barriers for people to ride transit would help contribute to regional stewardship, prosperity, livability, equity, and sustainability using a data driven approach to measure the effectiveness of the Council’s efforts.

### Funding

The Service Equity Analysis costs are included in the annual operating budget.

### Small Business Inclusion

This request is for Council Approval of completed Title VI Analysis and will not require small business inclusion.

