



metro transit

Equity Analysis of Proposed Fare Changes

March 2024

Table of Contents

1	- Background.....	3
2	- Title VI Regulatory Requirements.....	4
3	- Current Fare Structure.....	5
4	- Proposed Fare Structure & Fare Capping Policy	6
5	- Fare Equity Analysis	9
6	- Mitigation Measures	14
Appendix A – Current Metro Fare Tariff.....		16
Appendix B – Proposed Metro Fare Tariff.....		20
Appendix C – Public Comments Received		24

1 - Background

In 2021, Metro Transit staff began to evaluate alternatives to its current fare systems with the goals of integrating with Bus Rapid Transit, enhancing customer convenience, and reducing administrative costs. Staff recommended the implementation of a new account-based fare system that utilizes smartcards and fare capping with limited proof-of-payment kiosks located at Bus Rapid Transit stations. Throughout the fare study process, Metro staff received public feedback noting the importance of maintaining an option for cash fares, which was included in following policy principles recommended by Metro and approved by the Transportation Planning and Policy Board (TPPB):

1. Implementation of an account-based smartcard fare system

- New fare system implemented on all routes (BRT & Local Routes)
- Allow customers to “pay-as-they-go” by adding monetary value to their smart card
- All-door boarding with fare validation at each door
- Accept payments via mobile phone or other third party media

2. Implementation of a new fare tariff with fare capping

- Reduced fare program for seniors, youth, and people with disabilities
- Continuation of cash fare option
- Replace paper transfers with timed transfer window

3. Incorporation of multiple methods for obtaining smartcard and loading account

- Contract with retailers to enable reloading accounts with cash
- Equip Bus Rapid Transit stations with kiosks that dispense smartcards and accept cash

Following the approval of this policy direction by the TPPB, Metro staff initiated the procurement process for an account-based fare vendor. Masabi, LLC was selected as the vendor for the fare system transition and Metro staff were authorized to enter a contract with Masabi in September 2022. In January 2024 Metro staff presented the Transportation Commission with a draft of the proposed changes to the fare structure, including the implementation of fare capping. Metro Transit is conducting this Fare Equity Analysis in accordance with FTA Circular 4702.1B to determine whether the proposed fare changes result in a Disparate Impact to minority populations or places a Disproportionate Burden on low-income populations.

Table 1 – Metro Fare Restructuring Policy Timeline

May 3rd, 2021	Transit Fare Study Introduced to the TPPB
June 28th, 2021	Transit Fare Options Analysis Presented to TPPB
July 21st, 2021	Public Information Meeting Held
August 2nd, 2021	Public Hearing Held
August 16th, 2021	Fare Collection Policy Direction Passed by TPPB
September 9th, 2022	City of Madison Common Council Authorizes Metro General Manager to Enter Contract with Masabi LLC
January 31st, 2024	Metro Presents Draft Fare Capping Policy to the Transportation Commission
March 13 th , 2024	Public hearing on proposed fare tariff and fare equity analysis

2 – Title VI Regulatory Requirements

Section 601 of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 states:

“No person in the United States shall, on the grounds of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.”

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) is one of ten operating agencies within the United States Department of Transportation, and provides financial assistance to develop, operate, and maintain transit systems across the country. The FTA requires all recipients of financial assistance to comply with Title VI and has established regulatory guidance in FTA Circular 4702.1B. As a recipient of financial assistance from the FTA, Metro Transit is required to comply with all regulations contained in Circular 4702.1B.

2.1 – Requirement to Conduct Fare Equity Analysis

Chapter IV of FTA Circular 4702.1B establishes requirements and guidelines specific to fixed route transit providers. The requirements in this chapter are scaled based on the size of the transit provider. Transit providers that operate 50 or more fixed route vehicles in peak service, or that operate within an urbanized area with a population greater than 200,000 are required to conduct a fare equity analysis for all proposed fare changes with the following exceptions:¹

- “Spare the air days” or other instances when a local municipality or transit agency has declared that all passengers ride free.
- Temporary fare reductions that are mitigating measures for other actions.
- Promotional fare reductions that are less than 6 months in duration.

As a transit provider that operates in an urbanized area with a population greater than 200,000 and has more than 50 buses operational during peak service, Metro Transit is required to conduct a fare equity analysis for any fare changes. Fare equity analyses utilize ridership demographic data to determine whether proposed fare changes are likely to result in a Disparate Impact on minority populations or Disproportionate Burden on low-income populations. Disparate Impacts and Disproportionate Burdens are defined by the FTA as the following:²

Disparate Impact: A Disparate Impact refers to facially neutral policy or practice that disproportionately affects members of a group identified by race, color, or national origin, where the recipient’s policy or practice lacks a substantial legitimate justification and where there exists one or more alternatives that would serve the same legitimate objectives but with less disproportionate effect on the basis of race, color, or national origin.

¹ FTA Circular 4702.1B Chapter IV-19.

² FTA Circular 4702.1B Chapter I-2.

Disproportionate Burden: A Disproportionate Burden refers to a neutral policy or practice that disproportionately affects low-income populations more than non-low-income populations.

Furthermore, the FTA requires that transit providers establish policy thresholds to determine whether a potential Disparate Impact or Disproportionate Burden has occurred (see section 2.2). If a potential Disparate Impact or Disproportionate Burden is identified, then the transit provider is required to assess alternatives to “avoid, minimize, or mitigate” the potential impact. A transit provider may implement a proposed fare change that results in a Disparate Impact or Disproportionate Burden only if the following conditions are met:³

- The transit provider has a substantial legitimate justification for the proposed fare change, and
- The transit provider can show that there are no alternatives that would have a less disparate impact on minority riders but would still accomplish the transit provider’s legitimate program goals.

2.2 – Disparate Impact & Disproportionate Burden Policies

FTA Circular 4702.1B requires transit providers to establish Disparate Impact and Disproportionate Burden policies that establish thresholds to determine whether the adverse effects of a proposed service or fare change are excessively borne by minority or low-income populations. Metro Transit’s Disparate Impact and Disproportionate Burden policy thresholds were approved by the City of Madison Transportation Commission on September 13th, 2023 as part of its Title VI program update. No changes were made to Metro Transit’s policy thresholds since its previously adopted Title VI program in 2019. Metro Transit’s Disparate Impact Policy states the following:⁴

“The Disparate Impact threshold is described as follows for Metro Transit: Should the burden of any major service change require a minority population/ridership (33% threshold) to bear adverse effects greater or less than 2% than those borne by the non-minority population/ridership, that impact will be considered a disparate impact.”

3 - Current Fare Structure

Metro Transit’s current fare structure is enumerated in its Fare Tariff, which was last updated in 2016 (see Appendix A). In general, Metro utilizes a traditional farebox system that is designed to accept cash and a variety of pre-purchased passes (see Table 2). Fare and pass costs are segmented into Adult, Youth, and Senior/Disabled categories with each category having different rates. Additionally, Metro contracts with multiple organizations to offer unlimited ride passes.

³ FTA Circular 4702.1B Chapter IV-20

⁴ While this policy doesn’t explicitly reference disproportionate burden, Metro Transit applies the same 2% standard to its disproportionate burden analysis.

Table 2 - Metro Transit's Current Fare Structure

Adult Fares	
Cash Fare	\$ 2.00
One-Day Pass	\$ 5.00
10-Ride Card	\$ 17.25
31-Day Pass	\$ 65.00
Low-Income 31-Day Pass	\$ 28.00
Youth Fares	
Youth Cash Fare	\$ 1.25
Youth 10-Ride Card	\$ 11.25
EZ Rider Pass (Semester Pass)	\$ 165.00
EZ Rider Pass (School Year)	\$ 315.00
Summer Youth Pass	\$ 35.00
Day Tripper (Group Field Trip Pass)	\$ 52.00
Senior/Disabled Fares	
Senior Cash Fare	\$ 1.00
Senior 31-Day Pass	\$ 32.50
10-Ride Card	\$ 10.00
Unlimited Ride Passes & Commute Cards	
Unlimited Ride Pass	\$ 1.35
Commute Card	\$ 1.40
Specialized Commute Card	\$ 1.00

4 - Proposed Fare Structure & Fare Capping Policy

In 2021, Metro Transit staff began to evaluate alternatives to its current fare system with the goals of integrating with Bus Rapid Transit, enhancing customer convenience while reducing administrative costs. Following a detailed study of various fare system types and a public engagement process, the City of Madison Transportation Planning and Policy Board approved Metro Transit's proposed policy direction for future fare collection. This policy direction was based on the following principles:

1. **Implementation of an account-based smartcard fare system**
 - New fare system implemented on all routes (BRT & Local Routes)
 - Allow customers to “pay-as-they-go” by adding monetary value to their smart card
 - All-door boarding with fare validation at each door
 - Accept payments via mobile phone or other third party media
2. **Implementation of a new fare tariff with fare capping**
 - Reduced fare program for seniors, youth, and people with disabilities
 - Continuation of cash fare option
 - Replace paper transfers with timed transfer window
3. **Incorporation of multiple methods for obtaining smartcard and loading account**

- Contract with retailers to enable reloading accounts with cash
- Equip Bus Rapid Transit stations with kiosks that dispense smartcards and accept cash

In accordance with these principles, Metro Transit staff are proposing a revised fare tariff to implement fare capping. Metro Transit strove to keep these changes cost-neutral to customers, resulting in a revised fare tariff with no fare increases. In general, Metro Transit’s revised fare tariff is divided into five main categories: (1) Adult Fares, (2) Half-Price Fares, (3) School Program Fares, (4) Transitional Fares, (5) Paratransit Fares. While Metro Transit intends to continue its contracted fare media, these fares were not included in the tariff as they are subject to individual partner agreements.

4.1 - Adult Fares

Metro Transit’s proposed Adult fare structure represents a transition from pre-paid passes and cash fares to a stored value, account-based system, with fares capped at daily, weekly, and monthly intervals. Customers will have a single smart card that is linked to a personal account where they can add value to their smartcard. Stored value can be added at the Metro Transit headquarters, at BRT fare kiosks, or at any one of Metro Transit’s retail partners. The proposed adult fare rates correspond to Metro Transit’s current fare structure for pre-paid passes of the same type. While customers who use cash will not have access to the benefits of fare capping or free transfers, all customers are able to load their smartcard with cash at any of the previously mentioned outlets.

Table 3 - Proposed Standard Fare Structure

Fare Type	Price
Cash	\$2.00
Single Ride	\$2.00
Daily Fare Cap	\$5.00
Weekly Fare Cap	\$16.25
Monthly Fare Cap	\$65.00

4.2 – Half-Price Fares

In addition to the standard adult fares, Metro Transit is proposing a half-priced fare structure for eligible youth, senior, disabled, and low-income riders. This fare structure approximately matches Metro’s current reduced-price fares. However, there are several notable differences. First, single ride and cash fares will decrease from \$1.25 to \$1.00 for eligible youth customers. Additionally, the monthly fare cap of \$28.00 for eligible Senior riders represent a \$4.50 decrease from the current cost of \$32.50 for a senior 31-day pass. The half-price fares follow the same stored value, account-based, fare collection system described above for standard adult fares. For more information on eligibility requirements see Appendix B.

Table 4 - Proposed Half-Price Fare Structure

Fare Type	Price
Cash	\$1.00
Single Ride	\$1.00
Daily Fare Cap	\$2.50
Weekly Fare Cap	\$7.00
Monthly Fare Cap	\$28.00

4.3 – School Program Fares

Metro Transit has a long history of partnership with the Madison Metropolitan School District and has historically provided several student pass types. Metro is proposing no changes to its semester, school year, and summer pass programs for MMSD students. The “Day Tripper” pass, which was intended as a group pass for field trips, is being discontinued due to low usage rates.

Table 5 - Proposed School Program Fare Structure

Fare Type	Price
Youth Pass (Semester)	\$165.00
Youth Pass (School Year)	\$315.00
Summer Youth Pass	\$35.00

4.4 – Transitional Fare Products

Metro Transit is proposing the continuation of several types of legacy fare media as customers transition to proposed account-based smartcard fare collection system. The legacy fare media that will remain during Metro’s fare system transition are listed below in Table 6. and are intended to be in effect until the end of 2025.

Table 6 - Proposed Transitional Fare Media

Fare Type	Price
31-Day Pass (Adult)	\$65
31-Day Pass (Senior/Disabled)	\$28
10-Ride Card (Adult)	\$17.25
10-Ride Card (Half-Price)	\$10.00

4.5 – Paratransit Fares

While paratransit users will be able to take advantage of the new smartcard system, Metro is not proposing any changes to the paratransit fare structure.

Table 7 - Proposed Paratransit Fares

Fare Type	Price
Single Ride	\$3.25
Convenience Tickets	\$19.50
Agency Fare	Previous year’s audited cost per ride adjusted to reflect current year variables in service expenses.

5 – Fare Equity Analysis

FTA Circular 4702.1B requires transit providers to analyze ridership data in order to determine whether a potential Disparate Impact or Disproportionate Burden is likely to occur as a result of the provider's proposed fare changes. Specifically, Circular 4702.1B states that transit provider shall conduct the analysis in the following manner:⁵

1. Determine the number and percent of users of each fare media being changed;
2. Review fares before the change and after the change;
3. Compare the differences for each particular fare media between minority users and overall users; and
4. Compare the differences for each particular fare media between low-income users and overall users.

Per Metro Transit's Disparate Impact and Disproportionate Burden Policy and FTA Circular 4702.1B guidance, if the adverse effects of a proposed fare change for a particular fare media are greater than 2% for minority or low-income populations, then there is evidence of a potential Disparate Impact or Disproportionate Burden.

5.1 – Methodology

For the purposes of this analysis, Metro Transit determined that on-board survey data was the most appropriate data source as it contains the demographic data necessary to perform the type of quantitative analysis described above. The most recent on-board survey conducted by Metro Transit was in 2015. While this dataset is nearly a decade old, it is the only available source of demographic data by fare type for this analysis as the FTA does not allow for the use of Census data in fare equity analyses. Metro Transit staff performed the following steps in performing this analysis in accordance with the guidance found in FTA Circular 4702.1B:

1. Determine the number and percent of users of each fare media being changed

The 2015 on-board survey data was parsed and cross-tabulations were created for race/fare-type and income/fare type data. While the 2015 on-board survey was comprehensive and yielded approximately 6,000 survey responses, the dataset is limited in several ways. Most notably, not every type of fare media Metro offers had demographic data collected in the survey. This limited the analysis to the following fare types that were included in the survey:

- Cash
- Unlimited Ride Pass (Commuter Card/Specialized Commuter Card)
- 10-Ride Card
- 31-Day Pass
- 31-Day Pass (low-income)
- EZ Rider Youth Pass (Semester/ School Year/ or Summer)

⁵ FTA Circular 4702.1B Chapter IV-19

Additionally, the 2015 on-board survey allowed respondents to either omit an answer for these questions or respond with the answer of “other” if no category applied to them. For the purposes of this analysis, all responses coded as “no answer” or “other” were removed from the dataset.

2. Review fares before and after the change

Metro Transit’s proposed fare media changes represent a significant shift from its current paper fare media. While price increases and/or decreases are minimal, some legacy fare media categories, such as senior and youth fares, are consolidated into a single half-priced fare category. Table 8 outlines how Metro Transit’s proposed fare media correlate to its legacy fare media. The absolute and percentage change in fares are also presented.

Table 8 - Legacy and Proposed Fare Media Comparison

Adult Fares					
Legacy Fare Media	Current Fare	Proposed Fare Media	Proposed Fare	Absolute Change	Percent Change
Cash Fare	\$2.00	Single Ride (Cash/Smartcard)	\$2.00	\$0.00	0%
One-Day Pass	\$5.00	One-Day Fare Cap	\$5.00	\$0.00	0%
-	-	Weekly Fare Cap	\$16.25	-	-
31-Day Pass	\$65.00	Monthly Fare Cap	\$65.00	\$0.00	0%
10-Ride Card	\$17.25	10-Ride Pass	\$17.25	\$0.00	0%
2-Hour Transfer	\$0.00	2-Hour Transfer	\$0.00	\$0.00	0%
Low-Income Fares*					
-	-	Half Price Single Ride	\$1.00	-	-
-	-	Half-Price Daily Fare Cap	\$2.50	-	-
-	-	Half-Price Weekly Fare Cap	\$7.00	-	-
Low-Income 31-Day Pass	\$28.00	Half-Price Monthly Fare Cap	\$28.00	\$0.00	0%
Youth Fares					
Youth Cash Fare	\$1.25	Half-Price Single Ride	\$1.00	-\$0.25	-20%
Youth 10-Ride Card	\$11.25	Half-Price 10-Ride Pass	\$10.00	-\$1.25	-11%
EZ Rider Pass (Semester Pass)	\$165.00	Youth Pass (Semester)	\$165.00	\$0.00	0%
EZ Rider Pass (School Year)	\$315.00	Youth Pass (School Year)	\$315.00	\$0.00	0%
Summer Youth Pass	\$35.00	Summer Youth Pass	\$35.00	\$0.00	0%
Day Tripper (Group Field Trip Pass)	\$52.00	Eliminated		-	-

Senior/Disabled Fares					
Senior Cash Fare	\$1.00	Half-Price Single Ride	\$1.00	\$0.00	0%
Senior 31-Day Pass	\$32.50	Half-Price Monthly Fare Cap	\$28.00	-\$4.50	-14%
10-Ride Card	\$10.00	10-Ride Pass	\$10.00	\$0.00	0%
Unlimited Ride Passes & Commute Cards					
Unlimited Ride Pass	\$1.35	Contracted fare media - no changes at this time.			
Commuter Card	\$1.40				
Specialized Commuter Card	\$1.00				
Transfers					
Transfer	Free for 2 Hours		Transfer	Free for 2 Hours (no cash transfers)	

* Eligibility for Low-Income Fares based on 150% of the US Department of Health and Human Services poverty guidelines.

3. Compare the differences for each particular fare media between minority users and overall users

Metro Transit staff analyzed the usage rates for each type of fare media and compared the usage rate of minority populations to the system-wide population. As mentioned above, this analysis was limited by the fare media types included in the 2015 on-board survey. The results of this analysis, located in Table 9, show that three types of fare media exceed Metro Transit's 2% threshold for determining a potential Disparate Impact (discussed below). However, since the proposed changes to these fare media types do not impose adverse effects on minority populations, they do not constitute evidence of a potential Disparate Impact.

Unlimited/Commuter Card Pass

The "pass" option includes Metro's unlimited ride pass, commuter card pass, and specialized commuter card pass. Metro Transit contracts with partners in the community to provide these passes to their employees/members. Partners are charged per ride based on the rate listed in Table 9. The proportion of minority riders that utilize Metro's "pass" option is 7% less than the system-wide usage of the "pass" option. Since no changes are proposed to the unlimited ride pass/ commuter card pricing, and minority riders utilize this fare media less than the system average, there are no adverse effects imposed. Therefore, based on this assessment, there is no evidence of a potential Disparate Impact.

10-Ride Pass

Metro Transit's proposed fare changes will create a transitional period for its 10-Ride Pass, which is expected to be eliminated by the end of 2025. While the eventual elimination of this fare media type will impose adverse effects, it is not expected to cause a Disparate Impact since this fare media type is not used by minority populations at rate greater than 2% of the system-wide usage (see Table 9).

EZ Rider Pass

The “EZ Rider” pass is a fare media type offered to MMSD students. This fare media is being renamed as “Youth Pass” for MMSD students. The proportion of minority riders that utilize this pass is 4% greater than the proportion of system-wide riders. Since this is above Metro Transit’s 2% Disparate Impact threshold, it can be considered evidence of a potential Disparate Impact if adverse effects are imposed. However, since the pricing for the youth fares is not changing, there are no adverse effects imposed by the proposed fare change. Therefore, this should not be considered evidence of a potential Disparate Impact.

Table 9 - Disparate Impact Quantitative Analysis

Fare Type	Absolute Value		Percent		Delta (Minority-System Wide)
	Minority	System-Wide	Minority	System-Wide	
Cash	180	494	11%	9%	2%
Pass (Unlimited Ride/Commute Card)	947	3,751	60%	67%	-7%
10-Ride	84	438	5%	8%	-3%
31-Day	200	640	13%	11%	2%
31-Day Low Income	72	178	5%	3%	2%
EZ Rider	98	135	6%	2%	4%
Total	1,581	5,636	100%	100%	-

4. Compare the differences for each particular fare media between low-income users and overall users.

Metro Transit staff analyzed the usage rates for each type of fare media and compared the usage rate of minority populations to the system-wide population. As mentioned above, this analysis was limited by the fare media included in the 2015 on-board survey. The results of this analysis, located in Table 10, show that one type of fare media (10-Ride Pass) exceeds Metro Transit’s 2% threshold for determining a potential Disproportionate Burden (discussed below). However, since the proposed changes to this fare media type do not impose adverse effects on low-income populations, they do not constitute evidence of a potential Disproportionate Burden.

10-Ride Pass

Metro Transit’s proposed fare changes will create a transitional period for its 10-Ride Pass, which is expected to be eliminated by the end of 2025. While the eventual elimination of this fare media type will impose adverse effects, there is not evidence of a potential Disproportionate Burden since the proportion of low-income riders who use this type of fare media is more than 2% greater than the system-wide proportion of riders who use this type of fare media (see Table 10).

Table 10 - Disproportionate Burden Quantitative Analysis

Fare type	Absolute Value		Percent Value		Delta (Low Income-System Wide)
	Low-Income	System-Wide	Low-Income	System-Wide	
Cash	240	494	11%	9%	2%
Pass	1,518	3,751	67%	67%	1%
10-Ride	103	438	5%	8%	-3%
31-Day	230	640	10%	11%	-1%
31-Day Low Income	111	178	5%	3%	2%
EZ Rider	50	135	2%	2%	0%
Total	2,252	5,636	100%	100%	-

5.2 – Transfer Analysis

Metro Transit also analyzed the equity impacts of its proposed transfer policy, which will maintain free 2-hour transfers for smartcard users while eliminating paper transfers for cash users. Metro again utilized its 2015 on-board survey data to determine if the proposed transfer policy would result in a potential Disparate Impact or Disproportionate Burden. Staff queried the dataset to find all responses that showed a customer both paid in cash and had at least one transfer in their trip. Since this analysis only considered the impacted fare media (cash), the proportion of minority and low-income respondents in this dataset was compared to the proportion of non-minority/non-low-income respondents instead of to the system-wide proportion.

The results of this analysis are in Tables 11 & 12 and show that there is no evidence of a potential Disparate Impact since the difference in the proportion of minority and non-minority populations who use cash transfers was 0%, which is below Metro Transit’s 2% Disparate Impact threshold. However, Metro Transit staff did find that there is evidence of a potential Disproportionate Burden as the difference in the proportion of low-income and non-low-income populations was greater than Metro Transit’s 2% threshold. As such, Metro Transit staff will take steps to “avoid, minimize, or mitigate impacts where practicable”.⁶ A description of these efforts can be found in Section 6 – Mitigation Measures.

Table 11 - Minority Population Cash Transfer Analysis

Category	Absolute Value	Percent
Minority	122	50%
Non-Minority	123	50%
Delta	1	0%
Total	245	100%

⁶ FTA Circular 4702.1B Chapter IV-21

Table 12 - Low-Income Cash Transfer Analysis

Category	Absolute Value	Percent
Low-Income	131	64%
Non-Low-Income	75	36%
Delta	56	27%
<i>Total</i>	<i>206</i>	<i>100%</i>

5.3 – Results of Fare Equity Analysis

Metro Transit is proposing an overhaul of its fare collection system that will transition customers from pre-paid passes and cash fares to a stored value, account-based system, with fares capped at daily, weekly, and monthly intervals. This transition will impose minimal changes to fare pricing and no fare increases (see Table 8). Metro Transit staff analyzed the potential impacts of its proposed fare changes in accordance with FTA Circular 4702.1B. While there are several fare media types that exceed Metro Transit’s 2% threshold for identifying potential Disparate Impacts or Disproportionate Burdens, the proposed changes either do not impose adverse effects or the effects are expected to be borne at a greater rate system wide. The lone exception is the elimination of cash transfers, which was identified as having the potential to cause a Disproportionate Burden if implemented without mitigation measures. As such, Metro Transit staff are proposing multiple mitigation measures that can be found in Section 6.

6 – Mitigation Measures

Metro Transit’s proposed fare system includes multiple measures to address the potential Disproportionate Burden identified in the transfer analysis and ease the transition to the new fare system. These measures include the expansion of Metro’s low-income fare option, implementing limited fare kiosks at BRT platforms, expanding Metro’s retail network partnerships, and providing a promotional period where smart cards are free. The following sections describe each of these measures in greater detail.

6.1 – Free Smartcard Promotional

As part of the transition process, Metro Transit plans on having a promotional period where they will offer customers free smartcards through 2024. This removes the primary barrier for low-income customers to access the benefits of Metro’s half-priced fare program, fare capping, and free 2-hour transfer window. Once a customer has their smartcard, they will be able to load it with value through an online account or with cash at any Metro fare kiosk or retail partner. Removing the barrier of obtaining a smart card significantly mitigates the impact of eliminating cash transfers for low-income individuals.

6.2 – Expanded Low-Income Fare Program

Metro Transit’s current low-income fare program only applies to its 31-day pass. Furthermore, Metro purchases a limited number of these passes annually and operates the program on a first-come, first-served basis. The proposed fare tariff establishes a half-priced fare program for low-income individuals, seniors, and youth. Fare capping is also extended to the half-priced fare program. Eligible customers will have their fares capped at the same daily, weekly, and

monthly intervals, but at a half-priced rate. This ensures that all eligible customers always receive a reduced fare.

6.3 – Fare Kiosks at BRT Stations

As part of Metro Transit's BRT project, off-board fare payment kiosks will be installed at select BRT stations. Customers will be able to either purchase a single ride ticket or load their smartcard with stored value at the kiosk. Smartcards can be loaded with cash at these kiosks, allowing low-income customers who would otherwise pay in cash to receive the benefits half-priced fares, fare capping, and the free 2-hour transfer window.

6.4 – Expanded Retail Network

Metro Transit currently has a network of retail partners that sell its fare media at their outlets. These outlets are dispersed throughout Metro's service area, allowing customers to purchase fare media without having to travel to the Metro Headquarters. When customers transition to smartcards, they will be able to load their cards with stored value in cash at any of these retail outlets. In anticipation of this transition, Metro has worked to expand its retail network to include 66 partners and continues to explore options to expand its network further. Combined with the fare kiosks at BRT stations, this further mitigates the impact of eliminating cash transfers by providing cash users an expansive network that they can use to add stored value to their smartcard, thereby allowing low-income customers who would otherwise pay in cash to receive the benefits of half-price fares, fare capping, and the free 2-hour transfer window.

Appendix A – Current Metro Fare Tariff

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METRO TRANSIT FARE TARIFF



UPDATED:
August 28, 2016

SERVICE CATEGORY: Metro Fixed Route Service

ADULT FARES (18-64):

Cash Fare	\$2.00
10-Ride Card	\$17.25 for 10 rides
31-Day Pass	\$65.00
Low Income 31-Day Pass	\$28.00
One Day Pass	\$5.00
Transfer Fee	Free

NOTES:

1. The 31-Day Pass will entitle the person to whom it is issued an unlimited number of rides during the 31-day period for after initial activation.
2. To receive low income pass, customers must fill out and sign a self-declaration form that income is at/below 150% of poverty level. Only 300 available for sale at 3 outlets per month.
3. The One Day Pass allows unlimited rides on any calendar day.
4. All transfers are valid for two (2) hours from the time of boarding.
5. On Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays, up to two (2) adults and four (4) children may ride for one cash fare of \$6.00 for an unlimited number of trips on that day.

YOUTH FARES (5-17):

Cash Fare	\$1.25
10-ride Card	\$11.25 for 10 rides
EZ Rider Pass (semester)	\$165.00
EZ Rider Pass (school year)	\$315.00
EZ Rider Limited Pass	No charge. Valid during MMSD school hours. Issued in lieu of EZ Rider Pass in case of ride behavior violation.
Summer Youth Pass	\$35.00
Day Tripper (Group) Pass	\$52.00
Transfer Fee	Free

NOTES:

1. All children under the age of 5, when accompanied by an adult, ride free.
2. In order to be eligible to ride for the youth fare, a valid and current middle or high school identification card must be presented. Elementary school students are exempt from the identification requirement. Those high school students over the age of 17, enrolled in school, and possessing a valid and current identification card may ride for the youth fare. If identification is not presented, the adult fare applies.
3. The EZ-Rider Pass will be good during all days and hours of Metro operation during a Madison Metropolitan School District semester (including Saturdays, Sundays, holidays, and weekday non-school days). Passes are available only at Metro Transit, Metro-by-Mail, on the web at mymetrobus.com and at MMSD schools.
4. The Summer Youth Pass is good on all days from the end of a Madison Metropolitan School District year in June until the start of a Madison Metropolitan School District year in August.
5. The Day Tripper Pass is good for a round trip to accommodate a class up to approximately 30 students. This pass requires at least a 5-day advance notice and a chaperone to student ratio of 1:10 and is sold only at Metro Transit.
6. All transfers are valid for two hours from the time of boarding.

SENIOR (65+)/DISABLED FARES:

31-Day Pass	\$32.50
Cash Fare	\$1.00
10-Ride Card	\$10.00 for 10 rides
Transfer Fee	Free

NOTES:

1. In order to be eligible to ride for the senior and disabled fare, valid identification must be presented. The Medicare card is an acceptable form of identification for seniors. Without identification, the adult fare applies.
2. All transfers are valid for two (2) hours from the time of boarding.

SERVICE CATEGORY: Paratransit Service

ALL PASSENGERS:

Cash Fare	\$3.25
Convenience Tickets	\$19.50 for booklet of 6 tickets. Each ticket is equal to \$3.25 fare.
Transfer Fee	Free
Agency Fare ²	Previous year’s audited cost per ride adjusted to reflect current year variables in service expenses.

NOTES:

1. Paratransit Convenience Tickets are sold Metro Transit, through Metro-by-Mail, on the web at mymetrobus.com and at a limited number of outlets.
2. An agency is defined as an organization that serves persons who qualify for human service or transportation-related programs or services due to disability, income, or advanced age consistent with President’s Executive Order on Human Service Transportation Coordination (February 24, 2004).

SERVICE CATEGORY: Unlimited Ride Pass and Commute Card

ALL PASSENGERS:

Unlimited Ride Pass	\$1.35
Commute Card	\$1.40
Specialized Commute Card	\$1.00

NOTES:

1. The Specialized Commute Card is for groups in which all participants meet the criteria of senior/disabled riders.
2. Paratransit rides taken with an Unlimited Ride Pass or Commute Card will be billed at the applicable ADA paratransit fare in the fare tariff on the date the ride is taken.

Appendix B – Proposed Metro Fare Tariff

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2024 GENERAL PRICING

FIXED ROUTE SERVICE

ADULT (18-64)

Single Ride	\$2.00
One Day Cap	\$5.00
Weekly Cap	\$16.25
Monthly Cap	\$65.00
Transfers	Free

Notes:

1. Rider taps fare card every time they ride. When rider reaches fare cap price, rides are free for rest of the day, week or month.
2. Transfers are valid for two (2) hours from the time of boarding.

HALF-PRICE

Single Ride	\$1.00
One Day Cap	\$2.50
Weekly Cap	\$7.00
Monthly Cap	\$28.00
Transfers	Free

Notes:

1. Pricing applies to youth, seniors (65+), those with disabilities, and low-income riders.
2. All children 4 and under, when accompanied by an adult, ride free.
3. To be eligible for reduced fare, an eligibility form must be submitted to Metro Transit with valid identification. Middle and high school ID's, Medicare Cards, and Quest cards are acceptable forms of identification. Low-income guidelines are included in the appendix of this document.
4. Rider taps fare card every time they ride. When rider reaches fare cap price, rides are free for rest of the day, week or month.
5. All transfers are valid for two (2) hours from the time of boarding.



SCHOOL PROGRAM PRICING

Youth Pass (semester)	\$165.00
Youth Pass (school year)	\$315.00
Summer Youth Pass	\$35.00

Notes:

1. To be eligible for the youth fare, a valid middle or high school ID must be presented upon request. Elementary school students are exempt from the ID requirement. High school students over 17, enrolled in school, and possessing a valid ID may ride using the youth pass.
2. Passes are available at Metro Transit, through the mail at mymetrobus.com, or at MMSD schools.

TRANSITION PRODUCTS

To transition riders, social service agencies, and schools to new fare programs, these options will be available for a limited time. Products will be phased out by the end of 2025.

31-Day Pass - Adult	\$65
31-Day Pass - Senior/Disabled	\$28
10-Ride Card - Adult	\$17.25
10-ride Card - Youth	\$10.00

PARATRANSIT

Single Ride	\$3.25
Convenience Tickets	\$19.50 for booklet of 6 tickets.
Agency Fare	Previous year's audited cost per ride adjusted to reflect current year service expenses.

Notes:

1. New account-based system for single ride paratransit fares is expected to be available in 2025.
2. Paratransit Convenience Tickets can be purchased at Metro Transit, through the mail at mymetrobus.com, or at a limited number of outlets.
3. An agency is defined as an organization that serves persons who qualify for human service or transportation-related programs or services due to disability, income, or advanced age consistent with President's Executive Order on Human Service Transportation Coordination (February 24, 2004).

UNLIMITED RIDE PASS PROGRAMS - There will not be any changes to any unlimited ride pass programs, which have contracted fare rates.

FUTURE FARE PROGRAMS - May be introduced at a later date.



APPENDIX

LOW-INCOME CRITERIA

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services publishes a yearly poverty guideline. Metro uses 150% of the poverty guideline to determine eligibility for its low-income half-price fare.

The 2024 guideline is listed below.

US Department of Health and Human Services 2024 Poverty Guidelines

Persons in family/household	Poverty guideline	150%
1	\$15,060	\$22,590
2	\$20,440	\$30,660
3	\$25,820	\$38,730
4	\$31,200	\$46,800
5	\$36,580	\$54,870
6	\$41,960	\$62,940
7	\$47,340	\$71,010
8	\$52,720	\$79,080

Appendix C – Public Comments Received

(TBD following March 13th Meeting)