



## NEW FARE TECHNOLOGY ROLL-OUT PLAN

### OVERVIEW

Metro is implementing new fare technology as part of its upcoming bus rapid transit system. The Masabi fare system will make it easier, more convenient, and less financially burdensome for riders to purchase fares through personal online accounts and receive multiple-ride discounts without paying in advance. It will also allow for faster boarding on all Metro buses.

At launch, the system will center on the use of smartcards. A rider will need to tap their card or present a bar code paper ticket at a fare reader each time they board a bus.

So that riders can board more quickly at BRT stations, passengers will be able to board using fare readers available at all doors of Metro's new 60-foot articulated buses. Fare readers will also be installed at all doors on Metro standard-size buses with multiple-door boarding available at a later date.

Ticket vending machines will also be installed at all BRT stations. Riders using cash while boarding at a BRT station will need to purchase a bar code single ride ticket or 1-day pass at these machines rather than directly on the bus.

When the system launches, riders boarding at local bus stops (not on BRT platforms) can continue to use cash and old fare media. Paper transfers and old fare media will be phased out by the end of 2024. Staff will launch a fare media exchange program later this spring or early summer.

New fare technology is expected to roll out later this summer so that it's in place and ready to go when BRT launches in the fall. **No fares will increase as a result of this new system.**

### ADDITIONAL DETAILS

#### Account-Based System

The new Masabi system will be an account-based system that focuses on automatic fare capping. Fare capping allows riders to pay as they go and receive multiple-ride discounts along the way. This eliminates the need to purchase multiple passes or tickets throughout the year as well as the need to purchase an expensive pass all at once.

**It is not necessary to be a computer user to use this new system.** You can add money to your account online, at Metro Transit, at a sales outlet or at a BRT platform vending machine.



## Fast Fare Smartcards

Rather than passes and multiple ride cards, a rider will simply obtain a new Metro Fast Fare Card and add money to their personal account. The rider then taps their Fast Fare card every time they board the bus. Riders can receive a free Fast Fare card through 2024. There will be a \$2 card fee starting in 2025.

**Card Reloading:** When a rider's account reaches zero, the system will allow for one additional ride. The rider will then need to add additional balance to their card online, at a sales outlet, or using a vending machine on a BRT platform. An automatic account reload feature will be available next year. To avoid a \$2 replacement fee, riders are encouraged to reload an empty card rather than discarding it.

**Traveling with Others:** Each person riding the bus needs to use their own fare item. At this time, there isn't a way for a card to be tapped more than once for multiple riders.

## BRT Platform Vending Machines

At ticket vending machines, you'll be able to purchase a single ride ticket, a 1-day pass and be able to reload a Fast Fare card. Without the ability to verify eligibility criteria, only the standard adult priced ticket or 1-ride pass will be available at these machines. Machines will have information available in English and Spanish. Cash, coins, and credit cards will be accepted at the machines but not on buses at BRT platforms.

## Sales Outlets

Riders can pick up their first Fast Fare card at Metro Transit or receive it through the mail. Riders can then reload Fast Cards at Metro Transit and a number of sales outlets located throughout the Metro Transit service area.

To start, there will be nearly 70 new sales outlets where you can pick up or reload a Fast Fare card. Outlets include Kwik Trip, CVS, Walmart, Walgreens, Dollar General and Speedway locations throughout Metro's service area.

### [New Sales Outlet Locations](#)

Staff have reached out to current sales outlets to gauge their interest in trying our new system and offering Fast Fare cards.



## Fare Capping (Adult Fare)

When a rider taps their Fast Fare Card on the new fare reader, the system will deduct a single cash fare (\$2). When riding multiple times, once the passenger hits the “cap” of Metro’s daily pass price (\$5), the rest of the rides that day are free. When a rider hits a weekly cap of \$16.25, rides are free the rest of the week. The most a rider will pay on any day is \$5. The most they’ll pay any week is \$16.25. The most they’ll pay any month is \$65.00.

### Draft Adult Fare Pricing

Single Ride	\$2.00
Day Pass	\$5.00
Week	\$16.25
Month	\$65.00

## Reduced Fare Capping

Metro is simplifying its reduced-price fare options by creating one reduced fare cap for youth, seniors, those with disabilities, and those with low income. These discounted rates will be combined into a half price fare option based on the low-income pass (\$28.00). Riders would qualify at Metro Transit and their accounts will otherwise work the same as any other rider, just with a lower cost per tap.

### Draft Half Price Fare Pricing

Single Ride	\$1.00
Day Pass	\$2.50
Week	\$7.00
Month	\$28.00

## Transfers

Transfers will be automatically tracked by this new system. A rider will need to tap their card every time they ride, but their account will only be charged after the 2-hour transfer has expired.

Metro’s current paper transfers will continue to be available for a limited time when riding buses that board at regular Metro stops. Paper transfers will not be accepted on buses boarding on BRT platforms.

Riders are encouraged to switch to the Fast Fare system so that they can easily transfer to/from routes using BRT platforms. Paper transfers will be phased out by 2025.



## Future Features

- *Phone App* – An app that allows you to reload your Fast Fare card balance and board using your phone will be released in the coming months.
- *Credit Cards* – The ability to board with just a contactless credit card or Google Wallet and Apple Pay on your smartphone will be available in 2025.
- *Account Auto Reload* – The ability to automatically add funds to your online account when your balance runs low is also coming in 2025.
- *Additional NFC Phone Features* – The ability for all pass program users to board with smartphones is currently being developed and expected sometime in 2026 or 2027.

## Transition Process

This new fare system is expected to make it much easier and more convenient to pick up a fare, and staff are excited to get riders switched over to Fast Fare cards as soon as possible. Picking up a Fast Fare card will be free in 2024, but there will be a \$2.00 card fee starting in 2025.

There will be a great deal of outreach and promotion this summer encouraging people to bring in their old fare items so that the dollar value of these old items can be loaded into a Fast Fare card.

Riders can continue to use old fare media at regular bus stops (not boarding at BRT stations) through the end of 2024. Old fare items are expected to be completely phased out by the beginning of 2025.

## Unlimited Ride Pass Partners

Fast Fare cards will be distributed to unlimited ride pass program users. Pass program partners will be billed according to their current contracted rate. The ability for pass program participants to board with smartphones will be available in future years.

## Social Service Agencies

Social service agencies have set processes for how they distribute fare items to their clients. Metro staff have started to reach out to agencies to help figure out the best way to distribute new fare items.

## Training Sessions

Additional information and public materials will be available this spring. Metro outreach staff are available to come to your group or organization to answer questions and provide additional information. To set up a training session, call (608) 266-4466 or email [mymetrobus@cityofmadison.com](mailto:mymetrobus@cityofmadison.com).



Ride Guides in yellow vests will also be out in the community this summer to answer questions and provide assistance.

## 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

### ACCESSIBILITY INFORMATION

#### Online Portal

Masabi’s customer account web portal complies with WCAG 2.0. Their mobile app also complies with general ADA requirements. Masabi has worked with the MBTA, the first customer to deploy the platform, extensively to ensure that the platform met the agency’s accessibility guidelines based on WCAG 2.0 and ADA requirements.

Since then, Masabi has continued to work with its clients to make sure that as the platform evolves it continues to support this user base. The web portal was designed with WCAG 2.0 guidelines in mind and maintains a WCAG 2.0 audit on a regular basis as needed by clients and as the platform evolves.

Most recently, Masabi has undertaken a more in-depth audit process with one of its customers to take into consideration additional accessibility features and is in the process of adding additional accessibility support based on feedback from this client. This portal is currently deployed with a variety of



accessibility-supporting capabilities and is fully compliant with all relevant accessibility legislation across all its global deployments.

### **Ticket Vending Machines**

Ticket vending machines complies with ADA guidelines for reach, access, signage, and Braille in accordance with the U.S. Access Board's Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines for Buildings and Facilities (ADAAG). All operable controls are on the front vertical plane of the equipment.