



Minnesota Regional Transit
Board: Records.

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MEETING OF THE REGIONAL TRANSIT BOARD

Monday, June 17, 1991
Mears Park Centre Chambers
4:00 p.m.

AGENDA

A. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

B. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. Policy Committee Meeting, May 28, 1991
2. Regional Transit Board Meeting, June 3, 1991

D. CHAIR'S REPORT

1. Reschedule Board and Committee Meetings in July 1991
2. Metro Mobility Administrative Center Consultant Report

E. REPORT OF THE ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

Ruth Franklin, Chair

1. April 1991 Financial Statements
2. 1990 RTB Agency Audit
3. University of Minnesota Route 52 Contract Renewal
4. Metropolitan Transit Commission 1991 Operating Budget Amendment
5. Schedule Public Hearing on Proposed 1992 Regional Transit Board Budget
6. Report of the Audit Advisory Committee
7. Metro Mobility Consultant's Contract

F. OTHER BUSINESS/PUBLIC COMMENT

Michael J. Ehrlichmann
Chair

Note: At 5 p.m. the board will conduct a public hearing on Marginal Cost Guidelines for Submitting Bids as Part of Proposals to Operate Public Transit Service.

REGIONAL TRANSIT BOARD

ROLL CALL AND ATTENDANCE SHEET

DATE: Board

BOARD OR COMMITTEE: 6/12

Member Name Present Vote Vote Vote Vote Vote Vote Vote Vote

ISSUE

Mike Ehrlichmann	✓								
Doris Caranicas (P)	✓								
John Finley (A&F)	✓								
Ruth Franklin, Chair (P)	✓								
Ed Kranz (A&F)	✓								
Sandra Hilary (P)	✓								
Terry O'Toole (P)	✓								
Open (P)									
Norbert Theis (P)									
El Tinklenberg (Chair-P)	✓								
Richard Wedell (A&F)	✓								

Visitors

Coyell
Lynn
Auld
Whares
de Vries
Ding
Bunt

Staff

ga, jh, cho, daw, ac
com, ls



REGIONAL TRANSIT BOARD

Mears Park Centre, 230 East 5th Street
St. Paul, Minnesota 55101
229-2700

DATE: June 11, 1991
TO: Regional Transit Board
FROM: Mary Fitzgerald
SUBJECT: Meeting Schedule

The new board members will take their Oath of Office on June 24. In July we will encounter the usual problems that develop over a major holiday.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Regional Transit Board amend its meeting schedule as follows:

Special Board Meeting	June 24, 1991
Board Retreat	July 8, 1991
Administration and Finance Committee Meeting	July 15, 1991
Board Meeting	July 22, 1991
Policy Committee Meeting	July 29, 1991

mff

REGIONAL TRANSIT BOARD

Mears Park Centre
230 East Fifth Street, St. Paul, Minnesota 55101
612/292-8789

DATE: June 14, 1991
TO: RTB Board Members
FROM: Michael J. Ehrlichmann, Chair



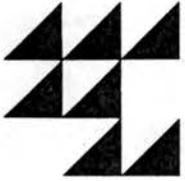
There have been numerous questions raised regarding the Metro Mobility service changes scheduled to take place July 1, 1991. In addition, as you are aware, Dakota County Commissioners and the Metropolitan Council have asked us to reconsider board action taken on May 20, 1991.

I have enclosed a packet of information for your review which not only reiterates the action taken, but also shows the notices and minutes of hearings on Metro Mobility changes.

This item will be on our agenda, Monday, June 17.

Please call if you have questions or need additional information.

MJE/kag



METROPOLITAN COUNCIL

Mears Park Centre, 230 East Fifth Street, St. Paul, MN 55101-1634 612 291-6359 FAX 612 291-6550 TTY 612 291-0904

June 14, 1991

Michael Ehrlichmann
Regional Transit Board
Mears Park Centre
230 E. Fifth St.
St. Paul, MN 55101

Dear Mike:

The Metropolitan Council discussed, at its June 13, 1991 meeting, the service changes proposed for Metro Mobility effective July 1, 1991. Council members expressed serious concerns about the elimination of mid-day and evening hours in Area II communities because those services are also essential for their residents. I understand the serious budgetary constraints the RTB is operating under for Metro Mobility. I also realize how difficult it is to implement budget reductions for a service as essential to its users as Metro Mobility is.

Council members were concerned about the equity implications of cutting back service hours for selected geographic areas. In their view, impacts on the affected residents should be thoroughly analyzed and alternative cost reduction measures should be considered. It was also suggested that additional public debate should take place to provide further input opportunity for users and providers.

The following motion by Council Member Schreiner and seconded by Council Member Featherstone recommending rescission and reconsideration of the proposed service cuts was adopted:

"That the Regional Transit Board rescinds, at its June 17, 1991 meeting, its action of May 20, 1991 eliminating Metro Mobility service during the midday and evening hours in Area II, until thorough consideration is given to impacts on users and to alternative cost reduction measures".

I would appreciate your prompt consideration of this important matter. If we can be of any assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Mary E. Anderson
Chair

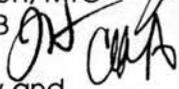
MEA:jl

REGIONAL TRANSIT BOARD

Mears Park Centre
230 East Fifth Street, St. Paul, Minnesota 55101
612/292-8789

DATE: June 14, 1991

TO: Members of the Regional Transit Board
Members of the Metropolitan Transit Commission

FROM: Beverly Auld, Assistant Chief Administrator for Administration, MTC 
Judith G. Hollander, Director of Planning and Programs, RTB 

SUBJECT: Staff Response to Metro Mobility Customer Service Quality and Safety Report

Staff members at both the MTC and RTB are now reviewing in detail the findings and recommendations presented by Mary O'Hara Anderson in her recently released report entitled, "Metro Mobility Customer Service Quality and Safety Report." It is our plan to examine these findings and recommendations and then determine how to best respond in making improvements to the Metro Mobility program.

To that end, we have begun to develop an action plan (see the attached document) and established an RTB/MTC staff committee that will make recommendations for specific actions to be taken by the MTC and the RTB, both singly and jointly. The action plan, once completed, will list the report recommendations and then identify current status of staff activities, the proposed action(s) to be taken, the agency to be responsible, cost of implementation and target dates for completion.

It is our intent to provide regular updates of the action plan to both the RTB and the MTC as well as the Transit Accessibility Advisory Committee.

**METRO MOBILITY
CUSTOMER SERVICE QUALITY AND SAFETY REPORT
ACTION PLAN**

DRAFT

Study Issues	Study Recommendations	Current Activities/Status	Proposed Action	Agency Responsible
Certification Process	Establish certification panel made up of medical professionals.	RTB staff will examine and pursue certification eligibility changes.		RTB
Eligibility Criteria	Establish new criteria for eligibility.	ADA establishes specific criterion for identifying those persons deemed eligible for paratransit service. The determination of eligibility and the processing of potential users will be done in accordance to ADA.		RTB
Escort Policy	Determination of whether or not an applicant needs an escort to travel is the decision of a medical professional.	MMAC has an escort policy. Determination is based on medical professional, endanger to themselves or other passengers, or demonstrated harmful behavior to themselves or other passengers.	MMAC will reexamine escort policy.	MMAC/RTB
Medical Verification Forms	Letter to Metro Mobility applicant with Tennessee Warning statement. Proposed changes in medical verification form.	MMAC certification form contains statements that serve as a Tennessee Warning. These statements currently appear where the applicant signs the form. The proposed medical verification form lacks the medical information required to determine whether or not the applicant requires an escort to travel or can be certified for seasonal use. The proposed form also does not state that the medical professional will provide supporting documentation upon request.		MMAC

Agency
Responsible
DRAFT

Study Issues	Study Recommendations	Current Activities/Status	Proposed Action	Agency Responsible
Medical Advisory	Educational advisory for medical professionals.	TAAC has recommended to the RTB that a warning to physicians notice be placed on the Metro Mobility application form be reconsidered for the next legislative session.		RTB
MMAC Staffing	<p>Add position qualifications to all position descriptions. Create new staff position with computer programming/ technician skills. Add two qualifications to field observer position; vehicle mechanical background, to years of previous vehicle inspection experience. Rename safety administrator to "compliance trainer." This position would train all special transportation/Metro Mobility drivers and change procedures for this service.</p> <p>Integrate riders' liaison into MTC's customer service unit. This position should require knowledge of data privacy laws. Create new intake administrator position. This position would take calls, document information, route calls to other staff, and give out accurate information about the program. Reassign other tasks to two current supervisors.</p>	<p>Reorganization of MMAC staff structure proposed for July 1, 1991. The safety administrator will become the contract compliance supervisor as part of the staff reorganization. This position will assure compliance of Metro Mobility providers with contract requirements and state standards, and provide safety support to providers, analyze safety data, and take corrective action to assure the elimination of safety problems.</p> <p>The primary responsibility of the field observer is the visual inspection of Metro Mobility vehicles using a checklist to determine compliance with providers contract.</p>		<p>MTC/MMAC</p> <p>MMAC/MTC</p>
Policy Procedure Manual	Document should be revised to include data privacy practices, comprehensive processes for handling service complaints, process for handling vehicle inspection, staff training requirements, hiring procedures, and a comprehensive list of A & B violations.	The manual will be updated with relevant material as the contract is finalized. STS rules and regulations are promulgated and when the vulnerable adult law is finalized and made part of the provider contract.		MTC/MMAC

DRAFT

Study Issues	Study Recommendations	Current Activities/Status	Proposed Action	Agency Responsible
MMAC Computer	New computer enhancement options should be explored including the use of the MTC's mainframe computer and additional software packages for all aspects of managing the MMAC. A letter of understanding between the RTB and MTC should be developed with a timeline for completion of the computer enhancements/changes projects.	A study is in process by the MTC management information services department of the MMAC services and functions by July 1, 1991. RTB/MMAC staff work together.		MTC/RTB
Operating Standards for Special Transportation	Letters of support for the proposed revisions should be sent by the RTB to Mn/DOT and the hearing examiner when published. The RTB should support the establishment of a unit within MN/DOT to investigate and take immediate action on safety/vehicle violations.	RTB staff has met with Mn/DOT staff regarding the proposed rules. RTB staff supports the need to support the establishment of a unit in Mn/DOT to investigate vehicle violations.		RTB
Contingency Plan	In the event that a provider of Metro Mobility service is unable to provide service, the MMAC will contact the remaining providers and coordinate trips. A plan should be developed to use MTC accessible buses.			MTC/MMAC



REGIONAL TRANSIT BOARD

Mears Park Centre, 230 East 5th Street

St. Paul, Minnesota 55101

612/229-2700

REPORT OF THE ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

At its meeting of June 10, 1991 the committee discussed and approved the following actions:

April 1991 Financial Statements

That the Administration and Finance Committee recommend:

That the Regional Transit Board receive the April 1991 financial statements and direct that they be placed on file.

1990 Regional Transit Board Agency Audit

That the Administration and Finance Committee recommend:

That the Administration and Finance Committee recommend that the Regional Transit Board accept the following audit statements for the year ended December 31, 1990 and that they be placed on file.

- Auditors' Management Letter;
- Independent Auditor's Report on Compliance with Applicable Laws and Regulations Based on an Audit of the General Purpose Financial Statements; and
- Independent Auditor's Report on the General Purpose Financial Statements and Supplementary Information.

University of Minnesota Route 52 Contract Renewal

That the Administration and Finance Committee refer the staff recommendation, dated June 6, 1991, to the full board without committee recommendation.

The staff recommendation is as follows:

That the Regional Transit Board authorize its executive director to enter into a contract agreement with the University of Minnesota for the period July 1, 1991 through June 30, 1993 in an amount not to exceed \$966,191.

Metropolitan Transit Commission 1991 Operating Budget Amendment

That the Administration and Finance Committee recommend:

That the Regional Transit Board amend the 1991 MTC budget to reduce operating expenses by \$2,119,000 and to set the RTB subsidy to the MTC at a maximum of \$63,864,663, segmented as follows:

Regular Route Transit (including Jobseekers fare subsidy)	\$62,570,217
Metro Mobility Administrative Center Contract	\$679,518
Minnesota Rideshare Contract	\$614,928

Schedule Public Hearing on Proposed 1992 Regional Transit Board Budget

That the Administration and Finance Committee recommend:

That the Regional Transit Board set a public hearing for 5:00 p.m., Monday, August 12, 1991 at Mears Park Centre, for the purpose of receiving public comment on the Proposed 1992 Regional Transit Board budget.

Report of the Audit Advisory Committee

Audit of Transportation Program of Human Services, Inc., Washington County, 1986 Through 1989

That the Administration and Finance Committee recommend:

That the Regional Transit Board approve the final audit report of the Transporter Program of Human Services, Inc., Washington County, for 1986, 1987, 1988 and 1989, dated March 1, 1991.

Audit of Westonka Rides Transportation Program - 1990

That the Regional Transit Board approve the final audit report of the Westonka Rides Transportation Program for 1990, dated April 25, 1991.

Audit of Columbia Heights Shared-Ride Paratransit Program - 1990

That the Regional Transit Board approve the final audit report of the Columbia Heights Shared-Ride Paratransit Program - 1990, dated April 30, 1991.

Audit of Metro Mobility Administrative Center Office Function

That the Regional Transit Board accept the Metro Mobility Administrative Center Office Function Audit Report dated April 12, 1991.

Upon receipt of the consultant's analysis of the computer system, Metro Mobility Administrative Center staff is directed to prepare a report for the Regional Transit Board on when or how controls will be implemented.

The the Regional Transit Board retain the firm of McGladrey and Pullen to review the recommendations made by the consultant for the computer system to assure that they are in the interest of the board and chair.

Metro Mobility Consultant's Contract

That the Administration and Finance Committee recommend:

That the Regional Transit Board authorize the executive director to enter into a contract with Mary O'Hara-Anderson for the period of June 18, 1991 to June 17, 1992 for an amount not to exceed \$33,000 including \$3,000 for expenses to assist with the implementation of recommendations to improve the Metro Mobility program in the areas of customer service and quality, safety, order-taking and billing procedures and policy issues.

Other Business:

The next committee meeting is scheduled for July 15, 1991.

Ruth Franklin
Chair

mff

REGIONAL TRANSIT BOARD

Mears Park Centre
230 East Fifth Street, St. Paul, Minnesota 55101
292-8789

REPORT OF THE TRANSIT ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

At its June 12, 1991, meeting, the Transit Accessibility Advisory Committee (TAAC) approved the following recommendation:

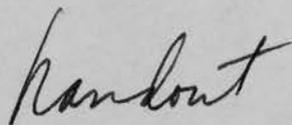
That the Transit Accessibility Advisory Committee endorse the ranking of 16(b)(2) grant applications, as presented in a June 4, 1991, memorandum to the committee, for submittal to the Minnesota Department of Transportation.

No further action was taken by TAAC at this meeting.

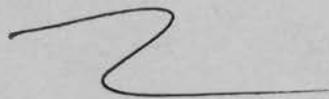
A special meeting of the Transit Accessibility Advisory Committee was held on Monday, June 17, 1991, to review the *Metro Mobility Customer Service Quality and Safety Report*. The following recommendations were approved at this meeting:

That the Transit Accessibility Advisory Committee recommends to the Regional Transit Board that the policy and administration recommendations contained in the *Metro Mobility Customer Service Quality and Safety Report* completed by consultant Mary O'Hara-Anderson be further investigated and if found to be of value, action should be taken.

That the Transit Accessibility Advisory Committee strongly recommends to the Regional Transit Board that it draw together the supporting documentation that underlies this report so it would be available for review by the public or other interested individuals as needed.



Kandout



REGIONAL TRANSIT BOARD

Mears Park Centre
230 East Fifth Street, St. Paul, Minnesota 55101
612/292-8789

DATE: May 3, 1991

TO: Chair and Members of the Administration and Finance Committee

FROM: Ed Kouneski, Manager of Programs
Cyndie Mayer, Senior Project Manager
Cynthia Curry, Paratransit Analyst 

SUBJECT: Metro Mobility Fare and Service Changes

SUMMARY

This memorandum presents the following staff recommendations for Metro Mobility fare and service changes proposed to become effective July 1, 1991:

- an increase in customer fares, with provider subsidy rates simplified and reduced to offset the additional fare revenue that will be collected;
- elimination of service during the midday and evening hours in the Area II communities where regular route bus service is generally limited to peak hours; and
- elimination of the over-8-mile coupon program.

These changes have been discussed and endorsed by the Policy Committee at their April 29, 1991 meeting.

BACKGROUND

The RTB's revised 1991 budget, adopted on March 4, 1991, reduced Metro Mobility funds by \$750,000 from \$15,000,000 to \$14,250,000 exclusive of the Metro Mobility Administrative Center (MMAC) costs. To achieve this budget reduction in the current year, immediate fare and service policy changes must be implemented.

This memorandum presents specific actions in response to the 1991 budget reduction. It also mentions other potential actions to be explored in order to restore an approximate \$1 million overrun in the Metro Mobility budget for 1990; and prepare for the next biennium assuming that our legislative request for \$27 million to fund Metro Mobility will not be met.

Overall, the RTB staff goal was to identify measures to reduce the subsidy requirement for Metro Mobility by \$2 to \$3 million annually. In doing so, we have been concerned about developing options which would:

- least negatively affect customers and maximize the number of rides available to them, given our budget constraints; and
- be equitably administered, consistent with state human rights and federal civil rights laws.

The public participation process for this decision included discussion at meetings with the Transit Accessibility Advisory Committee and its subcommittees, the Local Officials Advisory Committee (LOAC) and at public hearings held on March 18 and March 25, 1991. Approximately 115 persons attended the hearings. The United Handicapped Federation (UHF) presented a recommendation that all the fares be temporarily increased one dollar for the last six months of 1991 to help with the budget shortfall.

After the hearings, additional written comments were received. Although various opinions were expressed, Option C was the favored fare structure among those who indicated a preference. The minutes of the public hearings were attached to a recent board mailing and copies of all the letters and comments received are available for review.

DISCUSSION

Immediate Policy Actions

Three policy changes are recommended at this time, as summarized below; a detailed description of each action is also attached (see attachment A). To summarize:

1. Fare Increase/Subsidy Rate Changes

Three fare options were presented recently at two public hearings (see attachment B). To summarize:

- a. Option A would increase fares for peak-hour and long-distance trips, the most costly to provide. Also, a 50-cent surcharge would be added to standing order trips.

Additional Revenue Generated \$580,000

- b. Option B, similar to Option A, increases fares for peak-hour service and long-distance trips but does not require a 50-cent surcharge for standing order trips.

Additional Revenue Generated \$502,000

- c. Option C increases all fares by \$1. This option was proposed by the United Handicapped Federation as a temporary measure to address the 1991 budget reduction. Among those who expressed a preference at the public hearings, this option was favored. This option generates the greatest revenue.

Additional Revenue Generated \$818,000

- d. Staff is recommending Option D, a modified version of Option C that incorporates the TAAC recommendation that in addition to the one dollar increase, an even dollar amount on all fares (\$3.75 to \$4.00 and \$4.75 to \$5.00) would be easier for both the rider and driver. The exchange of coins involved in the fares is difficult for many riders and is time consuming for the drivers.

Additional Revenue Generated \$880,000

Please note that the above stated revenue gains do not take into account the potential loss of ridership.

Option C, proposed by UHF, calls for a temporary one dollar increase for all fares. A temporary increase in fares would help the current budget shortfall, assuming the RTB received the full legislative appropriation, but would not help the future budget shortfall. It would be difficult to change back to the original fare or another fare option after the six month period.

Comparability, MTC regular route fares must be considered in light of federal law and regulations. Previous Section 504 regulations suggested paratransit fares can be set two to three times higher than regular route bus fares. The following table shows the comparison of MTC fares to current and proposed Metro Mobility fares:

Current MTC Bus Fares		Current Metro Mobility Fares		Proposed MM Fares
Basic service	\$.85	Under 8 miles	\$1.00	\$2.00
Express bus (Peak/Off peak)	\$1.35/\$1.10	Over 8 miles	\$2.00-3.75	\$4.00
Express/zone	\$1.60/\$1.35	Over 12 miles	\$3.75	\$5.00

Provider subsidy rates would decrease to compensate for the increase in the rider fares. This is an opportunity to simplify the rate structure which has been rather involved because of the volume and long distance rates. The number of rates would drop from eighteen to two. Area 1 and 2 designation of communities would not be included in the rate structure. The simplification of the rate structure would improve overall administrative and operating efficiencies.

2. Service Hour Cutbacks

Staff also recommends the elimination of Metro Mobility midday and evening service hours in Area 2. An estimated savings of \$244,000 over six months is projected for reduced service in Area 2. The projected savings for a six month period would be \$244,000 based on 221 trips per day times 128 weekdays times the subsidy per trip.

In December 1990, there were 18,568 certified riders on the Metro Mobility system. The home location of certified riders is illustrated in attachment C. This map shows that over 50 percent of all certified riders reside in Minneapolis or St. Paul and 85 percent of all certified riders live in Area 1. Daily weekday ridership averages 6,900 trips with 81 percent of trips occurring in Area 1 and 19 percent of trips occurring in Area 2 (see attachment D). The following table presents data pertaining to day of week, hours of service, and actual ridership for Area 1 and Area 2. (Also, see chart, attachment E.)

Days of Week	Hours of Service	Average Daily Riders	Average Daily Riders	
			Area 1	Area 2
Weekdays	6:00 a.m.-11:00 p.m.	6,900	5,700	1,200
Saturdays	8:00 a.m.-11:00 p.m.	1,160	955	205
Sundays	8:00 a.m.-11:00 p.m.	1,300	1,200	100

Therefore, three percent or 221 of the daily 7,900 trips will be affected by this change.

Proposed ADA regulations suggest that paratransit service needs to be provided in a similar geographical area and time period as regular route service. It appears that the Metro Mobility service area now exceeds that of regular route service and therefore can be reduced and yet consistent with federal regulations. Furthermore, hours of service provided between Metro Mobility and regular route transit service are not comparable. To provide comparable service between Metro Mobility and regular route service, the following changes are recommended:

- Peak hour service only on weekdays and weekends in some Area II communities. Reduce area of coverage in Area 2 communities (see attachments E and F) to coincide with communities receiving peak hour regular route transit service.
- Midday service eliminated in Area I on weekdays and weekends. Reduce area of coverage to Area 1 communities to coincide with communities receiving peak hour regular route transit service. The three Area I communities affected by this change are Mendota Heights, west Bloomington and east Edina. (see attachment E)

3. Over-8-Mile Coupon Elimination

This program was implemented in 1987 with a special one-year emergency appropriation from the State for the purpose of subsidizing long distance trips for any rider. In 1988, the board decided to continue this program and budget for it.

Even though the over-8-mile coupon program has relieved passengers' financial burden the program encourages riders to take long distance trips. The estimated number of riders that would be affected by this change is forty riders a day.

The over-8-mile coupon program subsidizes the additional fare charged for rides over eight miles. This program requires significant administrative effort and cost. The MMAC must print, distribute, and sell the coupons; verify that the proper number of coupons have been submitted by providers; key enter the number of coupons billed for each trip; prepare authorizations for MTC payment to providers and invoice RTB for 75-percent reimbursement of provider payments. The total amount spent on the over-8-mile coupon program in 1990 was \$164,187 and \$175,680 is projected for 1991.

TAAC recommended that the rider subsidy and RTB subsidy be changed to show more of an increased portion for the rider. The RTB subsidizes the program 75-percent currently. TAAC recommended that a fifty-fifty share be implemented instead of eliminating the program.

Timing

The proposed timing for implementation of the above recommendations coincides with the new one-year term of the Metro Mobility provider contract scheduled to begin July 1, 1991.

Budget

If adopted, as presented here, the Metro Mobility subsidy requirement for calendar year 1991 would drop just below \$14,250,000, the current budgeted level.

Other Policy Actions

To operate within available funding levels, additional changes in the Metro Mobility program could also be implemented in the near future, such as:

- Implementation of a user side subsidy program, as an alternative to Metro Mobility van service,
- Elimination or modifications of the Trip Assurance Program,
- Placement of limitations on standing orders,
- Discontinuation of RTB funding for all human service agency trips, as permitted by state law,
- Implementation of a revised certification process for eligibility criteria, and
- Elimination of subsidy for escorts.

Budget savings, impact statement and potential implementation schedules for these other actions will be presented to the Policy Committee on May 28, 1991.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

- The recommended policy actions, for implementation on July 1, 1991, will bring the Metro Mobility program to perform within the board approved 1991 budget of \$14,250,000.
- Overall, the RTB staff goal was to identify measures to reduce the subsidy requirement for Metro Mobility by \$2 to \$3 million annually that:
 - least negatively affect customers and maximize the number of rides available to them, given our budget constraints; and
 - can be equitably administered, consistent with state human rights and federal civil rights laws.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Administration and Finance Committee based on Policy Committee endorsement of the Metro Mobility policy changes proposed by staff, as described in this memorandum, recommend to the Regional Transit Board that contracts with the providers be executed and the following options be presented for approval to become effective July 1, 1991:

- an increase in customer fares, with provider subsidy rates simplified and reduced to offset the additional fare revenue that will be collected as follows:

<u>Modified Option C</u>	
Under 8 Miles	\$2.00
Over 8 Miles	\$4.00
Over 12 Miles	\$5.00

- Reduce area of coverage in Area 2 communities to coincide with communities receiving peak hour regular route transit service. Peak hour service only on weekdays and weekends in the following communities:

Apple Valley
Arden Hills
Birchwood
Burnsville
Centerville
Chanhassen
Chaska
Circle Pines
Dellwood
Eagan
Eden Prairie
Lilydale
Lino Lakes

Maple Grove
Medicine Lake
Mendota
Mendota Heights
Plymouth
Prior Lake
Rosemount
Savage
Shakopee
Sunfish Lake
White Bear Lake
White Bear Township
Woodbury

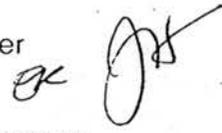
- reduce area of coverage to Area 1 communities of Mendota Heights, west Bloomington and east Edina to coincide with communities receiving peak hour regular route transit service, and
- elimination of the over-8-mile coupon program.

REGIONAL TRANSIT BOARD

Mears Park Centre
230 East Fifth Street, St. Paul, Minnesota 55101
612/292-8789

DATE: May 21, 1991

TO: Chair and Members of the Policy Committee

FROM: Cyndie Mayer, Senior Project Manager
Cynthia Curry, Paratransit Analyst 

SUBJECT: Additional Metro Mobility Program Changes

SUMMARY

This memorandum summarizes the staff review of proposed additional Metro Mobility options to reduce subsidy requirements in the next biennium and beyond. Staff recommends approval of two additional program changes for implementation July 1, 1991 and seeks direction from the board to pursue two long term options:

- the implementation of lower cost, complementary paratransit service; and
- certification eligibility changes consistent with the final federal regulations to be issued this summer.

BACKGROUND

Recently, the board approved Metro Mobility fare and service changes to become effective July 1, 1991. The fare change was an increase in customer fares with provider subsidy rates simplified and reduced to offset the additional fare revenue that would be collected. One service change was to eliminate service during the midday and evening hours in the Area I and II communities where regular route bus service is generally limited to peak hours; another was to eliminate the over-8-mile coupon program.

Other potential actions have been explored by staff in recent months in preparation for reduced state funding. The 1991 legislature appropriated only \$25 million for Metro Mobility over the next biennium, and it restricted the RTB from using other funding sources to supplement the state appropriation.

DISCUSSION

Along with the immediate fare and service changes there are other policy actions that are necessary in order to operate within available funding levels. Staff has investigated

additional changes in the Metro Mobility program, some of which could also be implemented in the near future, including:

- Implementation of a user side subsidy program, as an alternative to Metro Mobility van service,
- Elimination or modifications of the Trip Assurance Program,
- Placement of limitations on standing orders,
- Discontinuation of RTB funding for all human service agency trips, as permitted by state law,
- Evaluation of other Metro Mobility administrative options,
- Implementation of a revised certification process for eligibility criteria,
- Elimination of subsidy to providers for escorts, and
- Implementation of a \$10 dollar annual and renewal fee for standing orders.

All the above mentioned service and administrative changes are potential options for implementation. However, staff has reviewed each option for compliance with the proposed Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) regulations governing supplemental paratransit and find that not all options are allowable. Only five of the options appear to be consistent with the proposed regulations. They are as follows:

- Elimination of subsidy to providers for escorts,
- Implementation of a \$10 dollar annual and renewal fee for standing orders,
- Implementation of a user side subsidy program, as an alternative to Metro Mobility van service for some users,
- Evaluation of other Metro Mobility administrative options, and
- Implementation of a revised certification process for eligibility criteria,

The first two options listed above could be implemented July 1, 1991, along with the fare and service changes.

Escort Subsidy

Escorts accompanying a certified rider do not now pay a fare and the Metro Mobility providers receive a subsidy for the escort. Staff is recommending that the subsidy to providers be eliminated as a cost saving measure and that the escort pay a fare comparable to the rider. The average monthly operating subsidy for escorts is \$25,000. The six month generated savings would be \$150,000. The escort subsidy was not an original cost to the program. It was implemented in 1988 in response to a consultants recommendation that suggested paying for service provided, with equal treatment in fares for guests and escorts.

Standing Order Fees

Currently, riders with standing orders pay a one time annual fee of \$10 for administrative costs incurred in setting up and altering standing order requests. A standing order is the same trip from and to the same location a minimum of three days and a maximum of five days a week. At present, there are 2,576 certified Metro Mobility riders with standing orders.

The change would be that a \$10 fee would be charged for any changes to standing orders. In addition, new standing orders after July 1, 1991, would pay the 10 dollars and at the anniversary date of the standing order another fee of 10 dollars is required to renew the standing order for that year.

The revenues generated from the \$10 annual fee for 1991 are \$25,760. The revenues generated from a \$10 dollar renewal fee is \$25,760. The additional revenue generated for the six month period would depend on the number of riders applying for new standing orders because the renewal fee is renewed on the anniversary date.

ADA Regulations

Recently, the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) drafted its proposed regulations regarding the provision of transportation services to persons with disabilities in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities ACT (ADA). ADA signed into legislation by President Bush in the summer of 1990, is a civil rights bill which prohibits discrimination against persons with disabilities in various areas, including transportation. This bill establishes several mandates which federal agencies must comply with in establishing regulations, including those pertaining to transportation. Among the issues the DOT regulations address is the provision of supplemental paratransit service, such as Metro Mobility.

Staff have been reviewing these proposed regulations to determine how current and proposed Metro Mobility policy may or may not comply with the direction which ADA seeks to establish in the provision of paratransit service. It becomes clear that these regulations will have a significant impact on future administration of the Metro Mobility program, as many policies and procedures will need to be revised to comply with the regulations, which clearly dictate how paratransit service is to be provided. While transit entities do have the option to provide service above and beyond what ADA mandates, they must ensure that basic paratransit service meets all ADA criteria.

In light of these proposed regulations, which will be finalized in July of this year, the RTB proposes to dismiss those options which have been determined to most likely be in non-compliance with ADA mandates, and to only pursue those options which we feel will be acceptable by DOT regulations.

Other Long Term Options

One of the major proposals we recognize as being in compliance with ADA and also allowing us to maximize cost savings is implementation of a revised certification process for eligibility criteria, and subsequently, the establishment of complementary service. ADA establishes specific criteria for identifying those person deemed eligible for paratransit service. These criteria are narrower and stricter than current Metro Mobility policy permits. DOT regulations base a person's eligibility on the ability to get to, board, and utilize an accessible regular route vehicle for completing one's travel. This determination of eligibility and the processing of potential users of the service could save the Metro Mobility program additional revenue by identifying those persons who

may no longer be considered ADA paratransit eligible, and limiting the growth of new ridership.

In order to accommodate the needs of public transit users who are determined to be non-paratransit eligible but who may still require some type of specialized transportation, a complementary or alternative taxi scrip program could meet these needs without overloading the Metro Mobility program. The complementary service would serve as an alternative program for persons found to be non-ADA paratransit eligible.

The alternative scrip service and revised eligibility criteria and process will be presented to the committee for further discussion when staff develops final programs guidelines.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

- Staff recommended a fare and two service changes for implementation July 1, 1991.
- Staff also recommended two other administrative service changes that could be implemented July 1, 1991.
- The eligibility criteria and process should be reviewed and revised ADA eligible paratransit criteria recommended for implementation by January 1992.
- The complementary service or alternative taxi scrip program should be reviewed and implemented January 1, 1992.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Regional Transit Board:

1. Endorse the following two proposed service changes to become effective July 1, 1991:
 - eliminate the subsidy to providers for escorts; and
 - implement an annual fee of \$10 and a renewal fee of \$10 for standing orders.
2. Direct staff to pursue other long term changes including certification eligibility changes and a lower cost, complementary paratransit service.

Metro Mobility Fare and Service Options

Option: Increase fares

Description:

Currently customer fares cover only 11 percent of the cost of the Metro Mobility program. Three options were presented recently at two public hearings. (See attachment B) Option D incorporates the TAAC recommendation that in addition to the one dollar increase, an even dollar amount on all fares (\$3.75 to \$4.00 and \$4.75 to \$5.00) would be easier for both the rider and driver. The exchange of coins involved in the fares is difficult for many riders and is time consuming for the drivers.

Implementation date:

The implementation date for increased fares in the Metro Mobility program is July 1, 1991.

Estimated budget reduction:

It is estimated that an additional \$880,000 would be generated, if ridership remains at the 1990 level.

Impact on users:

Staff projects that ridership will decline by five percent with any fare increase.

Impact on providers:

The providers' total trip cost is based on the subsidy per ride plus fares received from riders. Depending on the impact of the budget, rates will be reduced.

Consistency with Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA):

Metro Mobility fares must be comparable to base fare and equivalent to discounts, transfer fees, premium service charges that a passenger on a comparable fixed route trip would encounter. Except for such fees and charges, the provider could charge no more than twice the base fare. The fare should be a comparable fare in the same geographic area for which service is provided to nondisabled persons.

Option: Reduce Service Hours in Area II

Description:

Reduce midday and evening service hours in Area II. No service would be provided in Area II during 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. and after 6:00 p.m in the communities listed on attachment F. Staff analysis indicated that the average number of daily trips (not riders) on weekdays in Area II is 1,200 with 305 trips on weekends.

Implementation date:

The implementation date for reduced service hours in Area II would be July 1, 1991.

Estimated budget reduction:

The estimated budget reduction for reduced service hours in Area II would be \$244,000. The projected savings for a six month period would be \$244,000 based on 221 trips per day times 128 weekdays times the subsidy per trip.

Impact on users:

The reduction of evening service hours in Area II would encourage the riders in that area to travel during peak times only. Service would not be eliminated entirely but it would be provided the same as with regular route service.

Impact on providers:

The efficiency of vehicle use during midday hours in Area II during midday hours is a concern all providers share if this service is eliminated.

Consistency with Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA):

For most communities in Area II, which do not receive midday or evening regular route bus service, this proposal would be consistent with proposed ADA/DOT regulations, which only require that supplemental paratransit be provided in areas which receive regular route service, at the same days and hours as such service. It is not required that areas with commuter (express) routes also have supplemental paratransit. However, some communities in Area II do receive evening regular route service. If such regular route service is not commuter service, but local routes, then these communities would be required to have evening paratransit service.

Consistency with Minnesota State Human Rights Act:

Federal guidelines were used to assist the Department in defining the service area: "Service Area The special service shall be available throughout the circumferential service area in which the recipient provides bus service (exclusive of extended express or commuter bus service) to the general public. The recipient shall also ensure that service to points outside the service area served by the recipients' extended express or commuter bus service shall be available to handicapped persons." 49C.F.R., Section 27.95 (b) (6).

Option: Eliminate over-8- mile coupon

Description:

The RTB over-8-mile coupon program subsidizes fares for persons who travel long distances. Currently, the RTB subsidizes the over-8-mile coupon seventy-five percent and the rider pays twenty-five percent of the cost of the coupon which is used for trips over eight miles in length.

Implementation date:

The over-8-mile coupon program would be eliminated July 1, 1991.

Estimated budget reduction:

The estimated budget reduction for calendar year 1991 is \$164,000.

Impact on riders:

The low income rider would view the loss of the over 8 mile coupon as a financial burden. They may limit their long distance trips in a given time period. Approximately forty daily riders would be affected by this change in policy.

Impact on providers:

The over-8-mile coupon has been an administrative burden to the MMAC and providers because of the handling of coupons and coins necessary to make change for the rider.

Consistency with Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA):

Since paratransit fares cannot be based on trip length, based on the concept that they be comparable to fixed route fares, which are not based on trip length (other than the minimal charge for ones or express routes), trip length coupons

PROPOSED FARE OPTIONS

Option A

	Existing	Proposed	
		<u>Demand</u>	<u>Standing</u>
Under 8 Miles			
Peak Hours	\$1.00	\$1.50	\$2.00
Off-Peak	\$1.00	\$1.00	\$1.50
Over 8 Miles	\$2.00-\$3.75	\$3.00	\$3.50
Over 12 Miles	\$3.75	\$5.00	\$5.50

	<u>Existing</u> <u>July-Dec. 1990</u>	<u>Proposed</u>	<u>Potential</u> <u>Savings</u>
Ridership	817,970	817,970	
Subsidy Amount	\$7,070,435	\$6,491,776	
Fares	\$1,328,732	\$1,908,527	\$579,795
Total	\$8,399,167	\$8,400,303	
Subsidy Per Passenger	\$8.64	\$7.94	

Option B

	<u>Existing</u>	<u>Proposed</u>
Under 8 Miles		
Peak Hours	\$1.00	\$2.00
Off-Peak	\$1.00	\$1.00
Over 8 Miles	\$2.00-\$3.75	\$3.00
Over 12 Miles	\$3.75	\$5.00

	<u>Existing</u> <u>July-Dec. 1990</u>	<u>Proposed</u>	<u>Potential</u> <u>Savings</u>
Ridership	817,970	817,970	
Subsidy Amount	\$7,070,435	\$6,562,990	
Fares	\$1,328,732	\$1,830,805	\$502,073
Total	\$8,399,167	\$8,393,795	
Subsidy Per Passenger	\$8.64	\$8.02	

-2-

Option C

	<u>Existing</u>	<u>Proposed</u>
Under 8 Miles	\$1.00	\$2.00
Over 8 Miles	\$2.00-\$3.75	\$3.00-\$4.75
Over 12 Miles	\$3.75	\$4.75

	<u>Existing July-Dec. 1990</u>	<u>Proposed</u>	<u>Potential Savings</u>
Ridership	817,970	817,970	
Subsidy Amount	\$7,070,435	\$6,249,174	
Fares	\$1,328,732	\$2,146,702	\$817,970
Total	\$8,399,167	\$8,395,876	
Subsidy Per Passenger	\$8.64	\$7.64	

Option D

	<u>Option C Proposed</u>	<u>Modified Option C</u>
Under 8 Miles	\$2.00	\$2.00
Over 8 Miles	\$3.00-\$4.75	\$4.00
Over 12 Miles	\$4.75	\$5.00

	<u>Existing July-Dec. 1990</u>	<u>Option C</u>	<u>Proposed</u>	<u>Potential Savings</u>
Ridership	817,970	817,970	817,970	
Subsidy Amount	\$7,070,435	\$6,249,174	\$6,196,527	
Fares	\$1,328,732	\$2,146,702	\$2,209,024	\$880,292
Total	\$8,399,167	\$8,395,876	\$8,405,551	
Subsidy Per Passenger	\$8.64	\$7.64	\$7.58	

5/6/91

Proposed Metro Mobility Fare Options

Attachment B (pg. 3 of 3)

Option A \$579,795 fares generated*

Pros

- No change in the current \$1.00 fare for travel during off peak hours.
- Fares are increased for peak hour and long distance trips, the most costly to provide.
- A 50-cent surcharge is added to standing order trips.

Cons

- Discrimination of demand and standing order trips.
- Long distance trips cost prohibitive to rider.
- Peak and off peak hour fare increase unfair.
- Peak and off peak hour fare incentives only for short trips.

Option B \$502,073 fares generated*

Pros

- No change in the current \$1.00 fare for travel during off peak hours.
- No surcharge for standing order trips.
- Even dollar amounts make handling of fares easier for riders and drivers.
- Fares are increased for peak hour and long distance trips, the most costly to provide.

Cons

- Peak and off peak hours would be an administrative problem.
- Smallest amount of fares generated by this option.
- Long distance trips cost prohibitive to rider.
- Peak and off peak hour fare incentives only for short trip

Option C \$817,970 fares generated*

Pros

- Option C endorsed most favorable at public fare hearings.
- Largest potential of savings generated by this option.
- Option C is the easiest one to understand by riders and providers.

Cons

- Fare increase for short period of time will not satisfy budget deficit for the biennium.
- Option C does not provide incentive to schedule trips during off peak hours.
- Long distance trips cost prohibitive to rider.

* Based on six months July - December 1990 data.
4/5/91

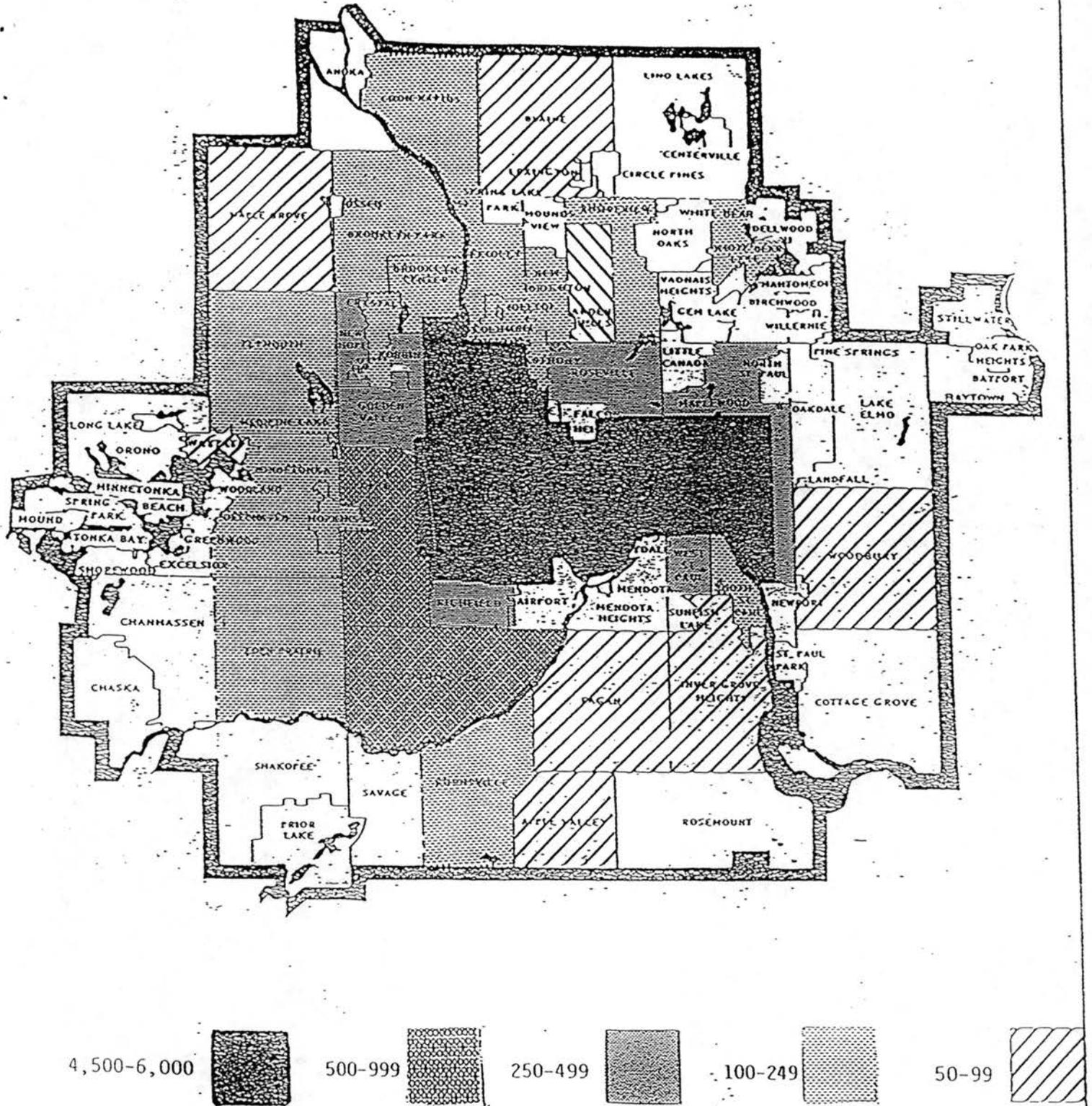


Figure 5



1990 Metro Mobility Certifications
By Community
Total Certifications 18,568

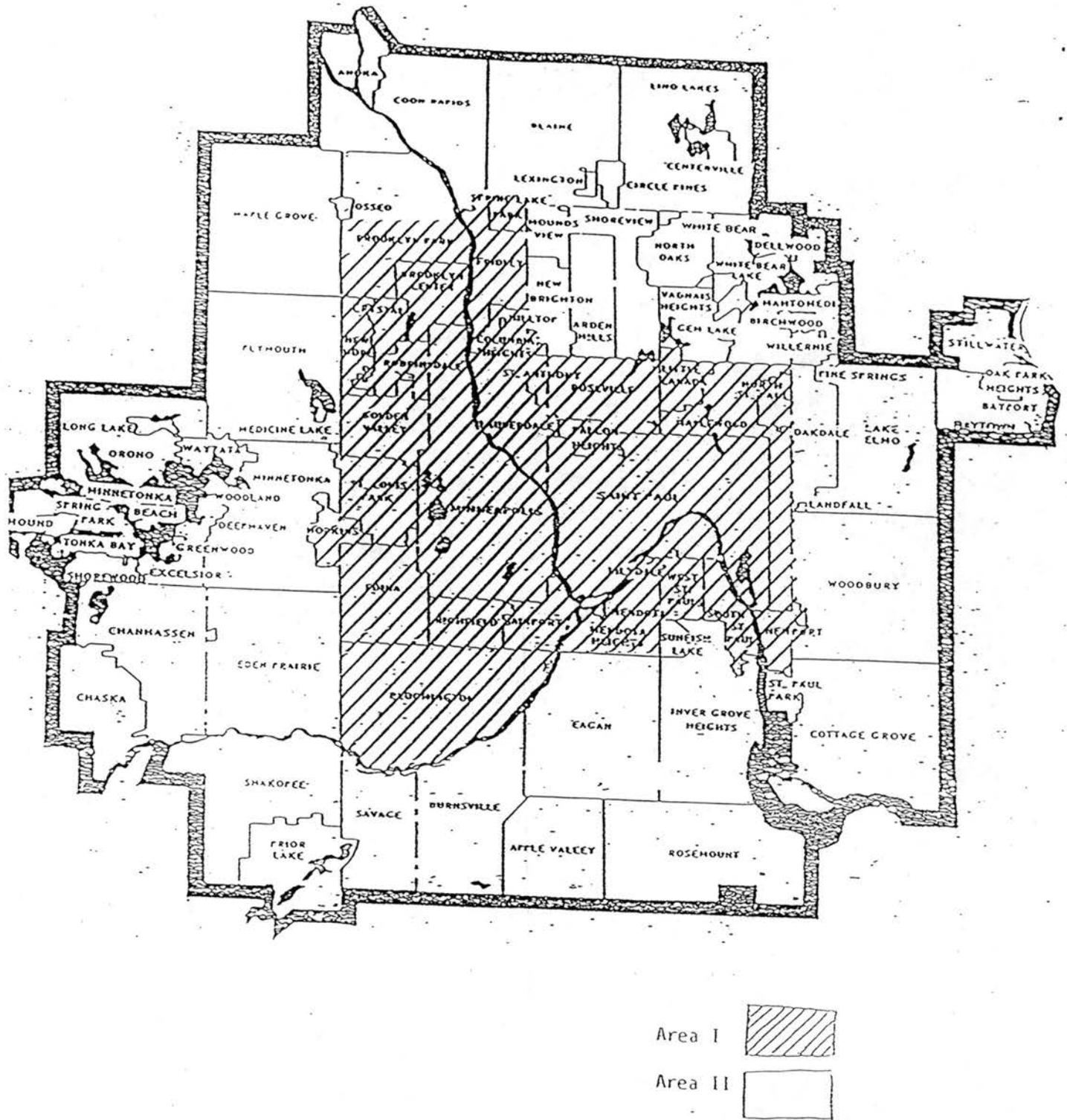


Figure 6



Metro Mobility Service Area

Attachment F

Peak hour service only on weekdays and weekends in the following communities:

Apple Valley
Arden Hills
Birchwood
Burnsville
Centerville
Chanhassen
Chaska
Circle Pines
Dellwood
Eagan
Eden Prairie
Lilydale
Lino Lakes
Maple Grove
Medicine Lake
Mendota
Mendota Heights
Plymouth
Prior Lake
Rosemount
Savage
Shakopee
Sunfish Lake
White Bear Lake
White Bear Township
Woodbury

METRO MOBILITY
CUSTOMER SERVICE QUALITY AND SAFETY
REPORT

SUMMARY REPORT

Regional Transit Board
Mears Park Centre
230 East Fifth Street
St. Paul, MN 55101

Mary O'Hara-Anderson, Consultant
5251 13th Avenue South
Minneapolis, MN 55417
824-4788

Introduction

The Regional Transit Board (RTB) hired a consultant to review Metro Mobility policies and procedures to determine how service quality and safety can be improved. The effort is an independent evaluation of existing Metro Mobility Administrative Center (MMAC) and provider practices and procedures to ensure that follow-up investigations occur with consequences and that customers receive satisfaction.

Objectives

The Regional Transit Board developed four objectives for the study.

1. Customer Service and Quality

Identify strengths, weaknesses and issues regarding MMAC procedures for accepting, documenting and responding to requests for certification, inquiries and complaints regarding Metro Mobility service.

2. Safety

Identify safe and unsafe practices and provider compliance with contract responsibilities that ensure the safe transport of Metro Mobility customers.

3. Order Taking and Billing Procedures

Identify ways to streamline MMAC's policies and procedures for taking orders and billing and determine if current policies are being adhered to.

4. Policy

Identify situations that can be improved by policy decisions made by the Regional Transit Board and improve understanding of roles and responsibilities between participating agencies and organizations.

The research devised to meet the study objectives involved review and assessment of existing policies and procedures to determine the impact of these policies and procedures on customer service and safety. All previous consultant reports related to Metro Mobility were reviewed. Interviews were held with MMAC employees involved with all areas of operation, Metro Mobility customers, providers, and drivers. Over 300 Metro Mobility

rides were observed both as a passenger and from other vehicles. Customer complaints were tracked through the process to measure accountability. Phone calls were made to MMAC to test customer service. Medical forms were sent to doctors to fill out to test the appropriateness of the forms. Internal and external memorandums, operational data and future were reviewed.

Overview Summary

Metro Mobility is the largest demand-responsive door-through-door transit service of its kind in the United States. Since its restructuring in 1986, the Metro Mobility program has experienced tremendous growth in the size of its service area, the number of certified riders, and the total monthly ridership. Demand for the program is growing 10 to 15 percent annually. Approximately 19,000 people are certified to use Metro Mobility.

As the demand for the program increases, so do safety, service, administrative, and policy concerns. The current Metro Mobility system has evolved over time with increased efficiency. This report contains a number of opportunities and recommendations for improvement.

Significant Findings and Recommendations

The significant findings and recommendations were prepared to address the objectives of the research project and several other issues that surfaced when the research plan was implemented. They have been organized by the following topics:

1. Customer Service and Quality
 - A. Handling Customer Complaints
 - B. Communication and Education
 - C. Driver Contact
 - D. Data Privacy Laws
 - E. Eligibility Criteria
 - F. Transit Service Improvements
2. Safety
 - A. Vulnerable Adults
 - B. Contract Compliance
 - C. Employee Hiring and Training
 - D. Vehicle Safety Violations
3. Order Taking and Billing Procedures
 - A. Computer
 - B. Forms
 - C. Reimbursements

4. Policy Issues
 - A. RTB/MTC/MMAC Coordination and Responsibilities
 - B. MMAC Staff Structure
 - C. Functional Program Policies

Findings: Customer Service and Quality

Metro Mobility customers have special needs. Over the last few years, communication with Metro Mobility customers has increased. However, there are areas where customer service can be improved.

Handling Customer Complaints:

- Customer complaints are not handled in a timely fashion, allowing the same complaint to resurface and have to be dealt with a number of times by a variety of staff members.
- Phone contact with customers is rushed, inconsistent messages are sent by MMAC staff, and customers are often put on hold for long periods of time.
- Many customers are afraid of complaining about the service as they fear they may lose their transportation.

Communication and Education:

- Riders, care givers, housing operations, medical professionals, and social service agencies are confused about how Metro Mobility works and who is eligible to use Metro Mobility.
- Riders, care givers, housing operations, medical professionals, and social service agencies are confused about the differences between Department of Human Service Medical Assistance trips and Metro Mobility.

Driver Contact:

- For many customers, the definition of Metro Mobility is the driver and the vehicle.
- Customers receive most of their information about the Metro Mobility program from drivers.
- Drivers are not always well informed about Metro Mobility policies or program changes.

- Drivers are not consistent in their fare collection, which confuses riders and often results in loss of revenue.

Data Privacy Laws:

- Data privacy laws are not being adhered to throughout the program.
- Personal information about customers is exchanged freely between the MMAC, medical professionals, providers and drivers.
- Data privacy laws require the Tennessee Warning be given to all Metro Mobility applicants, which lets applicants know who may be receiving their personal information.

Eligibility Criteria:

- The existing criteria are unclear and interpreted differently by different individuals.
- There are inequities in the eligibility process as some medical professionals are unfamiliar with the program and have a desire to help their patients access special services.

Transit Service Improvements:

- Many customers do not require door-through-door service.
- Some senior citizens living in senior housing use Metro Mobility for shopping trips as a convenience.

Recommendations: Customer Service and Quality

Handling Customer Complaints:

- ◆ More staff time should be dedicated to customer service and dealing with complaints.
- ◆ MMAC and MTC staff must be trained to answer the phone with courtesy and to handle each complaint following the same pattern.
- ◆ All MMAC and MTC staff on phone duty should have adequate knowledge of the program to answer programmatic questions correctly. Topical fact sheets could be developed for phone use.

- ◆ Customers must be encouraged to voice their complaints so they do not feel threatened and program trouble spots are identified.
- ◆ To better utilize resources, Metro Mobility complaints should be handled by the MTC Customer Service department.

Communication and Education:

- ◆ The senior community should be educated about who is eligible for Metro Mobility and should be made aware of other transportation options available to seniors.
- ◆ An advisory should be issued to the medical community explaining what Metro Mobility is and who is eligible. Background should be supplied about the program's budget hardship and struggle to provide rides to people who really need them.

Driver Contact:

- ◆ Drivers need to be trained in customer service, the power of positive attitudes, communication styles, and Metro Mobility program policies.
- ◆ The *Metro Memo* newsletter should be distributed to all drivers so they are aware of program changes and the messages that have been sent to customers.
- ◆ Providers need to make sure drivers are charging the correct amount for each trip and treating each customer in the same way.

Data Privacy Laws:

- ◆ The MMAC, MTC and providers should have data privacy training to understand current laws and the purpose for protecting customer privacy.
- ◆ Barriers should be constructed to the computer to prevent private information from being accessed by unauthorized staff.
- ◆ Medical forms should be changed to require only necessary information and these forms should be reviewed only by authorized staff.
- ◆ The data privacy laws require that the Tennesson Warning be given to each Metro Mobility applicant.

Eligibility Criteria:

- ◆ The eligibility criteria should be revised. (The Americans with Disabilities Act should be used as a guideline for criteria.)
- ◆ A certification panel should be established to ensure criteria is applied in a consistent manner.
- ◆ All current Metro Mobility customers should be recertified based on the new eligibility criteria.

Transit Service Improvements:

- ◆ Metro Mobility taxi service should be allowed to provide curb-to-curb service rather than door-through-door service to save time and meet customer needs.
- ◆ Mainline buses should be re-routed to senior citizen and disabled housing to lessen the demand on Metro Mobility.
- ◆ The MMAC should track all rides to determine if Metro Mobility trips can be replaced by bus service.

Findings: Safety

The Metro Mobility customer population includes people who are vulnerable adults, easily confused individuals, and people with mobility limitations. Therefore, the issue of safety includes more than careful loading and unloading and operation of vehicles. Safety encompasses a broad range of program areas.

Vulnerable Adults:

- Metro Mobility customers depend on drivers for reassurance and protection from danger in addition to their ride.
- Customers have been left unattended by drivers.
- The policies on the use of aides and escorts are unclear.

Contract Compliance:

- Provider contracts are not consistently and equitably enforced.

- All violations are not identified in the current policy and procedures manual.
- Consequences are not clear for Class A and Class B violations.
- MMAC is not strictly administering the program's regulations and procedures.

Employee Hiring and Training:

- MMAC staff do not have the necessary knowledge to perform their jobs as well as possible. The MMAC safety administrator and field observer do not have the mechanical knowledge to prevent faulty equipment from creating accidents. The MMAC should have access to all MTC staff.

Vehicle Safety Violations:

- Vehicle safety violations are not always reported or acted on in a timely fashion.
- Providing as many rides as possible outranks vehicle safety as the top priority.

Recommendations: Safety

Vulnerable Adults:

- ◆ Drivers need training to better understand their responsibility in protecting customers against danger as well as ways to offer reassurance and make the customer comfortable.
- ◆ The field observer should make observations on driver responsibility in regards to the customer and reprimands should be given to a driver who is found abandoning a customer or otherwise neglecting a customer.
- ◆ Examine other transit option for serving vulnerable adults.

Contract Compliance:

- Need to develop comprehensive contract enforcement procedures manual and implement the procedures.
- All violations must be identified in the policy procedure manual.

- Consequences must be developed and communicated for Class A and Class B violations.
- The MTC must enforce the MMAC's administration of the program's regulations and procedures.

MMAC Employee Hiring and Training:

- ◆ Firm job descriptions containing specific safety-related job skills and knowledge need to be written for the safety administrator and field observer positions.
- ◆ Current safety administrator and field observer need education to enable them to find faulty equipment and take it out of service.
- ◆ The MMAC should have access to MTC staff for vehicle safety inspections and other technical functions.

Vehicle Safety Violations:

- ◆ MMAC staff and Metro Mobility drivers need the support of management to operate safely at all times regardless of the rides not given or disruption a slowdown in service might cause.
- ◆ A unit should be established at the Department of Public Safety/Mn/DOT that would investigate and immediately take action on vehicle safety violations.
- ◆ A system should be developed for initiating financial penalties to providers if they continue to use vehicles that do not pass inspection.
- ◆ Performance indicators should be developed to identify and track safety problems and corrections.

Findings: Order Taking and Billing Procedures

Administrative procedures take up too large a portion of staff time and are confusing to customers and providers. Procedures should be standardized and streamlined to ensure consistency and free up staff time for handling customer complaints. Staff needs additional training to make the best use of the computer's capability and eliminate time-consuming procedures currently being carried out manually.

Computer:

- Progress on computer enhancements/changes is slow.
- MMAC staff are not knowledgeable about computer functions, programming and possible usage.
- The MMAC rider liaison unit is not automated requiring all complaints and customer feedback to be handwritten and filed.

Forms:

- Customer forms do not comply with data privacy laws.
- Forms are confusing and interpreted in a variety of ways.
- Medical verification forms do not obtain adequate information.
- MMAC does not have an efficient process for tracking internal information.

Recommendations: Order Taking and Billing Procedures

Computer:

- ◆ RTB should set a timetable and deadline for completion of the computer enhancement/changes project.
- ◆ The MTC Information Services Division should be involved in Metro Mobility computer operations.
- ◆ The MTC and the MMAC should explore the use of the MTC's mainframe computer for MMAC functions.
- ◆ The MMAC rider liaison unit must use the computer to record customer feedback and ensure an adequate response is given to the customer.
- ◆ All new standing orders should be checked with bus routes to determine if the bus system can provide the requested trips.
- ◆ The MMAC should hire a full-time data processing computer expert to fully utilize computer capabilities.

Forms:

- ◆ Customer forms must be rewritten to comply with data privacy laws.
- ◆ Forms must be rewritten and tested for clarity.
- ◆ Medical verification forms need to be changed to include adequate information.
- ◆ Forms could be developed for in-house use by MMAC to process complaints and perform other daily tasks.

Findings: Policy Issues

The roles of the various organizations involved with the Metro Mobility program need to be clearly defined. The RTB is too often pulled into operational matters that are the responsibility of the MMAC and MTC. Policy matters are not always referred to the RTB for rulings. Outside expertise should be sought from appropriate parties, including Mn/DOT and the DPS, to enhance staff capability. Policies differentiating Metro Mobility and Limited Mobility programs must be clearly defined and adhered to. The RTB should designate a liaison to be responsible for seeing that policy recommendations are implemented.

RTB/MTC MMAC Coordination and Responsibilities:

- The MMAC needs help making operational decisions and depends on the RTB for help.
- The MTC does not get involved in Metro Mobility decisions or make Metro Mobility a priority even though they are the contract holder. (The MTC expects the MMAC to make the operational decisions without MTC assistance.)
- The MMAC and MTC do not refer important policy decisions back to the RTB for rulings.
- The RTB's Transit Accessibility Advisory Committee spends too much time on operational issues and not enough time on policy issues.
- The MMAC does not utilize the transportation and safety expertise of Mn/DOT or the Department of Public Safety.
- The MTC does not have a strong disability perspective within the staff.

MMAC Staff Structure:

- MMAC staff are busy doing a variety of tasks, but have difficulty focusing on their assignments.
- MTC light duty staff do not have adequate information to be working at the MMAC.
- Some MMAC staff are inadequately trained to meet the expectations of their job responsibilities.

Functional Program Policies:

- Customers who are capable for taking the bus to take advantage of the Limited Mobility program are also using Metro Mobility.
- The escort policy is not defined and confusing to drivers and customers.
- Non-medical personnel have waived medical personnel recommendations.
- It is unclear as to how some Developmental Activity Centers are using Metro Mobility service.

Recommendations: Policy Issues

RTB/MTC/MMAC Coordination and Responsibilities:

- ◆ The MMAC needs help with operational decisions and should solicit the MTC for assistance.
- ◆ The MTC should work on operational challenges with the MMAC and refer policy decisions back to the RTB.
- ◆ A memo of understanding should be developed between the RTB and the MTC that outlines roles and responsibilities of all the program's policy and operations participants.
- ◆ The MTC should organize an advisory committee made up of Metro Mobility customers and providers to advise the MMAC about operational issues.

- ◆ A better relationship should be developed between MMAC staff and Mn/DOT and Department of Public Safety staff in order to use the expertise of transportation professionals outside the Metro Mobility program.
- ◆ The RTB should send letters of support for Mn/DOT's proposed rule for special transportation.
- ◆ The MTC should hire a disability representative to assist in the Metro Mobility program and other MTC programs.
- ◆ The RTB should require Metro Mobility orientation for all MMAC and MTC employees.
- ◆ The MTC/RTB contract for the MMAC should be on the same schedule as the Metro Mobility providers. (A three-year contract with yearly renewals.)

MMAC Staff Structure:

- ◆ MMAC job assignments should be delineated so each employee focuses on one or two major areas of emphasis.
- ◆ MTC light-duty staff should get an overview of the Metro Mobility program before starting work and a daily rundown of current issues they may need to be aware of.
- ◆ Hiring for MMAC staff should be done carefully to make sure employees have enough background or knowledge to handle their jobs.

Functional Program Policies:

- ◆ The MTC's Limited Mobility Program needs to be eliminated from the MMAC's administration and a marketing/communications effort should be started so MTC and Metro Mobility customers understand the program.
- ◆ The escort policy needs to be written clearly and communicated to providers, drivers and customers.
- ◆ Non-medical personnel should not be judging the opinions of medical personnel or changing medical classifications in order to provide Metro Mobility service.

- ◆ The MMAC should investigate how some Developmental Activity Centers are utilizing Metro Mobility services. The results of this study should be presented to the RTB.

Conclusion

The results from this study have identified customer service and quality improvements, safety concerns, administrative procedures and policy issues that need to be addressed.

The current Metro Mobility system has evolved over time with increased efficiency. Yet, there are a number of opportunities for improvement. Safety issues must be addressed as quickly as possible in order to prevent accidents from happening. Streamlining and reorganizing administrative procedures can save time and increase program efficiency. Improvements made to customer service and quality will continuously provide customers with positive experiences with the program. The report contains a variety of recommendations for clarifying the responsibilities of the organizations that have a role in managing and operating the program. An ongoing commitment by the RTB will be necessary to see these recommendations are put into action.

RESEARCH RESULTS FOR
METRO MOBILITY
CUSTOMER SERVICE QUALITY AND SAFETY
REPORT

Regional Transit Board
Mears Park Centre
230 East Fifth Street
St. Paul, MN 55101

Mary O'Hara-Anderson, Consultant
5251 13th Avenue South
Minneapolis, MN 55417
824-4788

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Appendix A *Policy and Procedures Manual and Contract Enforcement Procedures*

CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS

- 1976 "Project Mobility" began operating under the direction of the MTC.
- 1979 Program changed to "Metro Mobility" and Minnesota Department of Transportation (Mn/DOT) was designated the lead agency by the Minnesota State Legislature.
- 1980 Minnesota State Legislature directed Mn/DOT to adopt rules that would establish criteria to determine eligibility for Metro Mobility services (loose criteria up to this point).
- 1981 Ad hoc committee established by Mn/DOT recommended determining eligibility upon the basis of permanent functional limitations. The Metropolitan Council provided direction and support to a certification task force and developed an "Ideal Certification System."
- 1984 The legislature created the Regional Transit Board. Authority and responsibility for Metro Mobility was transferred from Mn/DOT. The Legislative Commission to Review Administrative Rules (LCRAR) requested Mn/DOT amend the criteria to respond to people with visual impairments.
- 1985 The RTB adopted amended eligibility criteria.
- 1986 The RTB implemented a decentralized system.
- 1987 The legislature mandated Mn/DOT to revise statewide operating standards to address the safety concerns of users.
- 1988 The RTB contracted with the Metropolitan Center for Independent Living to recommend changes in criteria.
- 1988 RTB contracted with Carter Goble and Associates, and N.K. Fredrichs and Associates to do a comprehensive review and evaluation of the Metro Mobility program.

- 1988 RTB/MTC conducted an audit of the MMAC.
- 1988 RTB contracted with Pine and Associates, Lawrence, Kansas, for a customer service enhancement project.
- 1988 The Legislative Auditor's Office, State of Minnesota Evaluation Division, did a report on Metropolitan Transit Planning, including the Metro Mobility planning.
- 1990 The RTB contracted with Ilium and Associates, Bellevue, Washington, for Metro Mobility and Mainline Bus Accessibility and Consumer Research Study.
- 1990 The RTB contracted with Mary O'Hara-Anderson to do a review and assessment of Metro Mobility customer service and safety.

There have been eight studies regarding Metro Mobility since it went to a decentralized system.

CERTIFICATION PROCESS

The current certification process places the MMAC certification secretaries in a position of interpreting professional medical recommendations. Applicants are not advised of the way private data they supply is utilized. Currently, private data is being collected that does not impact the task of providing transportation services.

METRO MOBILITY CERTIFICATION FORM

Remember to include your check or money order for \$10, payable to Metro Mobility. Return to: Metro Mobility Administrative Center, 560-6th Avenue North, Minneapolis, MN 55411-4398

Office Use Only	
Certification #	_____
Disability Code	_____
Zone	_____

PLEASE TYPE OR PRINT CLEARLY

1. Name _____
first middle last

2. Address _____
street number street name city/suburb state

3. _____ 4. _____ 5. _____ 6. Telephone _____ / _____
zip code apt. no. medical assistance no. home work

7. Does your weight, size or wheelchair pose any special considerations? Yes _____ No _____
If yes please explain: _____

8. Sex: Female _____ Male _____ 9. Date of Birth: _____
month day year

10. In case of emergency, please notify (name): _____
Emergency contact home phone: _____ work phone: _____

11. Is this the first time applying for Metro Mobility? Yes _____ No _____

12. Please explain how your disability prohibits you from use of regular route bus service:

13. Are you in need of an escort/attendant when traveling? (You may bring one guest even if you do not need an escort.)
Yes _____ No _____ If yes, please explain: _____

Some persons may be issued certification that requires them to be accompanied by an escort when traveling on Metro Mobility. Escorts are not provided by Metro Mobility.

Office Use Only					
<input type="checkbox"/>	Code _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	Post _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	Label _____
<input type="checkbox"/>	Number _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	Zone _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	Card _____
<input type="checkbox"/>	Book _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	Enter _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	File _____
					Check Number _____
					Standing Order _____

14. Do you use a wheelchair when you travel? Yes _____ No _____ If yes, are you able to propel your own wheelchair independently? Yes _____ No _____ transfer to an auto? Yes _____ No _____

15. Are you able to enter a van or bus without the use of a ramp or lift? Yes _____ No _____

16. Do you require a raised/high door van? Yes _____ No _____

17. I use the following equipment when I travel outdoors:

- | | | |
|---|----------------------------|------------------------------|
| _____ None | _____ Crutch(es) | _____ Walker |
| _____ Wheelchair, Manual | _____ Artificial Limb | _____ Guide Dog |
| _____ Wheelchair, Powered | _____ Portable Oxygen Tank | _____ Other (describe) _____ |
| _____ Brace(s) | _____ Orthopedic Cane | _____ |
| _____ 3-wheeled Power Mobility Device (Amigo, Lark) | _____ Hearing aids | _____ |
| | _____ White Cane | |

(Metro Mobility does not provide wheelchairs or any other mobility aids)

Please describe any special considerations (walk slowly, wide wheelchair): _____

18. What means of transportation do you currently use, other than Metro Mobility? _____

I certify that all information on this application form is accurate. I understand that misinformation or misrepresentation of facts will be cause for disqualification or rejection of my application. I also understand that the Metro Mobility Administrative Center may contact my medical professional to clarify or obtain additional information required to determine my eligibility or unique service needs.

Is applicant able to sign Metro Mobility vouchers? Yes _____ No _____

Signature of Applicant (Signature required if applicant is able to sign) _____ Date _____

Signature of Preparer (If other than applicant) _____ Relationship to applicant _____ Date _____

The information contained on this form is private data and is used by the Metro Mobility Administrative Center (MMAC) to determine program eligibility and by the MMAC and contract carriers to provide you with appropriate Metro Mobility service. The MMAC's ability to supply you with program service will be restricted if all information requested on this form is not provided.

Proposed Certification Process

A panel should be established to certify Metro Mobility riders. This panel would be made up of medical professionals with experience in physical medicine and rehabilitation (P.M.R.), a qualified mental retardation professional, a rider and the MMAC certification secretaries. The panel would bring the appropriate expertise to the process and would review all applications.

Another panel or team of medical professionals should be established to make decisions on appeals or disputes regarding certification.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Currently interpretation of the eligibility criteria is subjective rather than objective. People without disabilities are being certified to ride simply because other transit is not available for all of their transportation needs. New criteria must be approved by the RTB and implemented as soon as possible.

Current Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible for certification, a person must meet at least one of the following criteria:

1. A permanent, physical functioning mobility limitation that prevents a person from walking independently for a distance of 1,000 feet without the aid of an assisting device such as a walker, cane, crutches, braces, a prosthetic device, or a wheelchair, or from negotiating the steps of a standard transit vehicle.
2. A medically demonstrative condition that seriously impedes or prevents a person from walking a distance of 1,000 feet; or that affects coordination and stability to the extent that it presents a risk of falling.
3. An arterial oxygen tension (Pa O₂) of less than 60 mm/hg in room air at rest.
4. A cardiac condition that is therapeutically classified according to standards set by the American Heart Association in one of the following areas:
 - a. Class D: Person with cardiac disease whose ordinary physical activity should be markedly restricted.
 - b. Class E: Person with cardiac disease who should be at complete rest, confined to bed or chair.
5. Sensory impairment(s) that prevents the applicant from independently using regular route bus service. That is, the impairment prevents the applicant from using regular route service for all his/her travel needs.
6. A mental functioning limitation that prevents the applicant from independently using regular route bus service. That is, the impairment prevents the applicant from using regular route service for all his/her travel needs.

Proposed Eligibility Criteria

Proposed recommendations on eligibility criteria:

1. A permanent, physical, functional mobility limitation that prevents a person from walking independently without the aid of an assistant device such as: walker, cane, crutches, braces, a prosthetic device, or a wheelchair, or from negotiating the steps of a standard transit vehicle.
2. A medically demonstrative condition that affects coordination and stability to the extent it presents the risk of falling and/or seriously reduces or limits a person's mobility.
3. An arterial oxygen tension (Pa O₂) of less than 60 mm/hg in room air at rest.
4. A cardiac condition that is therapeutically classified according to standards set by the American Heart Association in one of the following areas:
 - a. Class D: Persons with cardiac disease whose ordinary physical activity should be markedly restricted.
 - b. Class E: Persons with cardiac disease who should be at complete rest, confined to bed or chair.
5. Sensory impairment(s) that prevent(s) the applicant from independently using regular route bus service.
6. A mental functional limitation that prevents the applicant from independently using regular route bus service.

ESCORT POLICY

The escort policy was established to provide transportation services to people who require an escort. Currently MMAC staff are determining which Metro Mobility riders require an escort. This task should be done by medical professionals as outlined in the certification process. The RTB needs to clarify this policy.

Current Escort Policy

In 1985, the RTB adopted Mn/DOT rules that require a medical professional to determine the need for an escort.

Proposed Escort Policy

A medical professional must determine whether or not an applicant is in need of an escort when traveling. This determination will not affect the applicant's eligibility. The need of an escort when traveling does not exclude compliance with the eligibility criteria. Escorts will be required to pay the base fare.

MEDICAL VERIFICATION FORMS

Private data given to the MMAC by riders has not been dealt with in accordance with current data privacy laws. The law states that individuals providing confidential data must be given a Tennessee Warning. This warning notifies the individual how the data will be utilized. Furthermore, individuals must be notified with whom the information is being shared. The current medical verification does not address this or state that contract providers must adhere to the data privacy laws.

Proposed Letter to Metro Mobility Applicant

To the Metro Mobility Applicant:

Metro Mobility is a subsidized door-through-door transportation service for persons with disabilities. Before you complete the application, we would like to inform you that the information you provide is generally private. The information will only be shared by people who administer and provide Metro Mobility services. The information requested is necessary to determine eligibility and provide the service. Please note that eligibility is based upon disability. The unavailability of regular route buses is not a consideration in determining eligibility for Metro Mobility. Your medical professional must also submit a signed statement about your disability, on professional stationery or a prescription blank. To apply for Metro Mobility certification, please complete the certification form, have your medical professional complete the medical verification form. Mail that along with the signed statement from your medical professional with a check or money order for \$10 to:

Metro Mobility Administrative Center
560 Sixth Avenue North
Minneapolis, MN 55411-4398

It will take approximately two weeks to process your application. If you are certified, you will receive an identification card, a rider's guide, and a list of transportation providers in your area, with instructions for arranging rides.

If you have any questions regarding the process, please call the Metro Mobility Administrative Center at 349-7480.

MEDICAL VERIFICATION

This section is to be completed by a physician, licensed psychologist, certified physical therapist, licensed chiropractor, or orientation and mobility specialist. All requested information must be provided. Your prompt response will allow an expedient determination of the applicant's eligibility for Metro Mobility service.

A. Please indicate whether or not the following conditions apply to the applicant:
(respond to as many of the six criteria as you can verify.)

- | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| Yes | No | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1. A permanent physical functional mobility limitation that prevents a person from walking independently for a distance of 1,000 feet without the aid of an assistive device such as a walker, cane, crutches, braces, a prosthetic device, or a wheelchair, or from negotiating the steps of a standard transit device. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 2. A medically demonstrable condition that seriously impedes or prevents a person from walking a distance of 1,000 feet; or that affects coordination and stability to the extent that it presents a risk of falling. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 3. An arterial oxygen tension ($P_{A}O_2$) of less than 60 mm/hg in room air at rest. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 4. A cardiac condition that is therapeutically classified according to standards set by the American Heart Association in one of the following areas: |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | a. Class D: Persons with cardiac disease whose ordinary physical activity should be markedly restricted. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | b. Class E: Persons with cardiac disease who should be at complete rest, confined to bed or chair. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 5. A sensory impairment(s) that prevents the applicant from independently using regular route bus service. That is, the impairment prevents the applicant from using regular route service for all his/her travel needs. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 6. A mental functional limitation that prevents the applicant from independently using regular route bus service. That is, the impairment prevents the applicant from using regular route service for all his/her travel needs. |

B. Please describe the applicant's disability as indicated above and how the disability affects the applicant's ability to use regular route bus service:

C. Is applicant: Vision Impaired _____ Hearing Impaired _____ Mentally Disabled _____

D. If any of the criteria in Section A (above) apply to the applicant **only** during typical winter weather, please identify the specific criterion: _____

E. What is the expected duration of the applicant's condition(s) that is identified in Section A? (Be as specific as you can; this information is used to establish length of eligibility). _____

- | | | |
|---|-------|-------|
| F. The applicant is able to: | Yes | No |
| 1. Travel from a protected setting to a protected setting without an escort/attendant | _____ | _____ |
| 2. Comprehend and follow instructions | _____ | _____ |
| 3. Communicate travel needs | _____ | _____ |
| 4. Comprehend time of day for travel purposes | _____ | _____ |

NOTE TO THE MEDICAL PROFESSIONAL:
A **NO** response to item F.1 means that the applicant will require an individual (other than the driver) to escort the applicant when using Metro Mobility.

G. Please describe any behavioral problems which prevents the applicant's ability to travel independently:

H. Date that applicant was last examined by you: _____

I certify that I have medical information to document the above statements and will provide such documentation at the request of the Metro Mobility Administrative Center.

Signature of Medical Professional

Print or Type Name of Medical Professional

Profession

MN License No.

Office Address

Date

Telephone Number

City

State

Zip Code

Proposed Changes in Medical Verification Form

MEDICAL VERIFICATION: This section is to be completed by a physician, licenses psychologist, certified physical therapist, licensed chiropractor, or an orientation mobility specialist. All requested information must be provided. Your prompt response will allow an expedient determination of the applicant's eligibility for Metro Mobility service.

1. Please indicate (by circling yes or no) which of the following criteria, that can be verified, apply to the applicant; the condition must be a permanent disabling condition or expected to last for at least 12 months from the date of the verification:

Yes No A permanent, physical, functional mobility limitation that prevents a person from walking independently without the aid of an assisting device such as a walker, cane, crutches, braces, a prosthetic device, or a wheelchair, or from negotiating the steps of a standard transit device.

Yes No A medically demonstrative condition that affects coordination and stability to the extent that it presents the risk of falling and/or seriously reduces or limits a person's mobility.

Yes No An arterial oxygen tension (Pa O₂) of less than 60 mm/hg in room air at rest.

Yes No A cardiac condition that is therapeutically classified according to standards set by the American Heart Association in one of the following areas:

a. Class D: Persons with cardiac disease whose ordinary physical activity should be markedly restricted.

b. Class E: Persons with cardiac disease who should be at complete rest, confined to bed or chair.

Yes No Sensory impairment(s) that prevent the applicant from independently using regular route bus service.

Yes No A mental, functional limitation that prevents the applicant from independently using regular route bus service.

Date of last examination or verification of disabling condition, whichever is most recent

Diagnosis on professional stationery or prescription blank must accompany the completed medical verification form.

Signature of Medical Professional

Name of Medical Professional

MN License No.

Office Address

Date

Telephone No.

City

State

Zip Code

MEDICAL ADVISORY

Medical professionals believe Metro Mobility is a program for people with disabilities and the elderly. Metro Mobility is strictly for people with disabilities. An educational advisory should be sent to medical professionals that states who is eligible for the program and how they fit in diagnosing and recommending people for the program.

Proposed Medical Advisory

Proposed Medical Advisory
(to be attached to Medical Verification Form)

Dear Medical Professional:

Metro Mobility is a public service for people with disabilities who cannot use mainline bus service. To be eligible for this service, a medical professional who is familiar with the person's disability indicates whether or not the person meets the eligibility criteria by completing the attached form.

The cost to taxpayers for each person certified to use Metro Mobility service is \$10,000 annually. Funds are limited. If you have questions regarding this application process, please call the Metro Mobility Administrative Center at 349-7480. Please exercise diligence in completing the form so that only persons who qualify will have access to this important service. Diagnosis on your professional stationery or prescription blank must accompany the completed form.

MMAC STAFFING

The volume and nature of the tasks performed at the MMAC require employees to have detailed position descriptions and job responsibilities. Position qualifications should be added to all position descriptions. An additional staff person with computer programming/technician skills should be hired to capitalize on the computer technology available. The MTC staff should assist the MMAC when their skills are needed.

Field Observer Position Description



METROPOLITAN TRANSIT COMMISSION
560-6th Avenue North, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55411-4398 612/349-7400

NOTICE OF JOB OPENING

DATE: January 9, 1990
POSITION: Metro Mobility Field Observer
DIVISION: Transportation
WAGE CLASS: 7

COMPENSATION: \$ 7.87 (Start Rate)
\$11.24 (Top Rate)

REPORTS TO: Metro Mobility Safety Administrator

PRIMARY OBJECTIVE: Perform visual inspections of provider vehicles and periodic field observations to assure compliance with contract requirements and state standards.

RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. Conduct regular and follow-up visual inspections of Metro Mobility vehicles to evaluate compliance with Metro Mobility contract and state operating standards for special transportation service; e.g., wheelchair lift/ramp condition, tire tread depth, wheelchair securement, etc., and to direct vehicle off the street when there is a serious defect.
2. Conduct periodic field observations of provider service to assure compliance with contract requirements.
3. Prepare reports on visual inspections and field observations and maintain accurate records. File reports that verify provider has corrected defect.
4. Immediately notify Safety Administrator of serious contract or safety violations.
5. Other duties as assigned.

WORKING CONDITIONS:

1. Ability to work outdoors in inclement weather.
2. Must have reliable transportation when staff cars are not available.
3. Must have flexible schedule - able to work evening hours as necessary.

QUALIFICATIONS:

1. High school degree or equivalent, plus one (1) year experience in passenger transportation services.
2. Knowledge of Special Transportation Services guidelines desirable.
3. Good interpersonal communication skills.
4. Knowledge of vehicle safety is desirable.
5. Valid Minnesota driver's license and good driving record and safety record.
6. Good work record.
7. Qualify on personnel selection test(s).

To be considered for this position, please send letter and Internal Application form (which can be obtained from your supervisor) to:

Barbara Geborek, Personnel Administrator
Metropolitan Transit Commission
560 Sixth Avenue North
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55411-4398

Forms must be received within the Human Resources Office no later than 4:30 p.m., Tuesday, January 16, 1990, in order to be considered. If you wish additional information regarding this position, please contact:

Barbara Geborek, Personnel Administrator, 349-7551
AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER M/F/H/V

Proposed Changes

The following qualifications should be included in the field observer position description: vehicle mechanical background, two years of previous vehicle inspection experience.



METROPOLITAN TRANSIT COMMISSION

560-6th Avenue North, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55411-4398 612/349-7400

JOB DESCRIPTION

DATE: September 6, 1989
POSITION: Metro Mobility Safety Administrator
INCUMBENT: Joyce Dingman
DIVISION: Transportation
REPORTS TO: Manager, Metro Mobility Administrative Center
WAGE CLASS: 5

RECEIVED
JUN 11 1991
R.T.B.

PRIMARY OBJECTIVE: Assure the regular inspections of provider vehicles, records, and procedures to verify compliance with contract requirements and state standards. Act as liaison between riders, providers and agencies regarding all phases of Metro Mobility service.

RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. Act as rider liaison
 - a. Accept and reserach rider concerns and complaints.
 - b. Resolve and respond, in writing, to providers and passengers any recommended corrective measures and/or resolutions to problems.
 - c. Investigate safety complaints.
 - d. Provide regular reports to the Manager of Metro Mobility regarding service complaints, concerns and problems.
2. Refer riders to service providers that best meet their specialized transportation needs.
3. Supervise regular inspections of Metro Mobility vehicles to evaluate compliance with Metro Mobility contract and state operating standards for special transportation service; e.g., wheelchair lift/ramp condition, tire tread depth, wheelchair securement, etc.
4. Make periodic visits to provider sites to review Metro Mobility vehicle maintenance procedures and records. Maintain accurate records related to drivers and vehicles, including Certificates of Compliance, Passenger Assistance Training Certificates, inspection sheets, and disciplinary action.
5. Prepare reports on inspections and on-site visits for review by the Regional Transit Board, Mn/DOT, Department of Public Safety and providers which identify safety deficiencies that need to be corrected.
6. Follow-up on providers who have vehicles in need of repair to ensure corrections have been made. Recommend disciplinary action for providers who have serious or repeated safety violations. Issue notices of violation to providers who do not comply with contract and/or safety requirements.

Metro Mobility Safety Administrator
September 6, 1989
Page Two

7. Provide safety support services to providers to assist them in improving their vehicle maintenance and other safety practices. Develop and maintain safety awareness program, including recognition for sound safety practices.
8. Analyze safety data, determine causes of safety problems, and take corrective action to eliminate safety problems.
9. Other duties as assigned.

SUPERVISORY RESPONSIBILITIES:

Direct

Field Observer

QUALIFICATIONS:

1. Post high school education, plus three (3) years' experience in passenger transportation services.
2. Previous supervisory experience desirable.
3. Knowledge of Special Transportation Services guidelines desirable.
4. Knowledge of vehicle safety is desirable.
5. Basic mechanical aptitude desirable.
6. Excellent administrative and organizational skills.
7. Ability to communicate effectively in both oral and written forms.
8. Valid Minnesota driver's license and good driving and safety record.
9. Good work record.
10. Qualify on personnel selection test(s).

crf/917(3-4)

Proposed Changes

This position should be renamed "compliance trainer." The position should be responsible for inspection of on-site records and compliance with operating standards. The position should train all special transportation/Metro Mobility drivers and charge the providers for this service. This training would bring uniformity to the program as well as improve safety and quality.



Administrative Center
570-6th Avenue North
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55411
612-349-7480

Metro Mobility Riders' Liaison
Job Description and Information

Hours: Tue., Thur. and Fri. - 12:30 to 8:30
Wed. & Sat. - 3:00 to 11:30- 8 hr. computer purge
On call for computer purge.

Job Responsibilities.

1. Service complaints.
2. Resolve passenger problems.
3. Record and follow up on all accident/incident reports.
4. Field all customer service requests and questions.
5. Monthly report.
6. Full time receptionist, daily after 4:30 P.M.
7. Full time computer maintenance person.
8. Additional duties as assigned.

Proposed Changes

This position should be integrated into the MTC's customer service unit.
This position should require knowledge of data privacy laws.



METROPOLITAN TRANSIT COMMISSION

560-6th Avenue North, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55411-4398 612/349-7400

JOB DESCRIPTION

DATE: January 1, 1988
POSITION: Certification Secretary for Handicapped Services
INCUMBENT: Claudia Fuglie, Sheila O'Brien
DIVISION: Transportation
REPORTS TO: Manager of Metro Mobility Administrative Center (MMAC)
WAGE CLASS: 1

PRIMARY OBJECTIVE: Certify handicapped people for Metro Mobility services and respond to inquiries about the program.

RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. Certifies eligible disabled persons for Metro Mobility services:
 - a. Reviews all applicants for eligibility and assigns codes and zones to applicants.
 - b. Prepares certification card.
 - c. Sends information and certification cards to new Metro Mobility passengers.
2. Conduct passenger satisfaction surveys, vis the telephone, of the daily Metro Mobility ridership.
3. Coordinate the annual registration of Metro Mobility passengers:
 - a. Update information from passenger files in computer.
 - b. File the registrations.
4. Responds to inquiries, resolves problems and furnishes information regarding Metro Mobility services.
5. Maintains files and records for the program.
6. Assists the Manager of Metro Mobility in compiling statistical data.
7. Answers phones and takes messages.
8. Performs other duties as assigned by the Manager of Metro Mobility.

QUALIFICATIONS:

1. Two years' clerical/secretarial experience.
2. Familiarity with various types of disabilities.
3. Ability to type a minimum of 30 wpm.
4. Good work record.
5. Qualify on Personnel Selection test(s).

Proposed Changes

This position should not approve eligibility of Metro Mobility riders.

Intake Administrator (proposed new position)

A new position should be developed to take calls, document information, route calls to other staff, and give out accurate information about the program. This position requires a person with strong oral and written communication skills and detailed knowledge of the Metro Mobility program.

The intake process is a forum for interested individuals to use to get information about the Metro Mobility program. Some potential program applicants may not apply to the program if they have a complete understanding of who is eligible for the program. Often this information can be handled in one phone call. This position should provide applicants and riders with consistent information and help manage the time of the other MMAC staff.

Computer Programmer/Technician (proposed new position)

Computer-related issues continue to plague the management of the Metro Mobility program. A full-time computer programmer/technician should be hired to serve as the task-master for all computer issues. This position would provide the MMAC with knowledge of computer functions and applications, and programming skills. It would also assist in making the changes necessary in order to fully automate the Metro Mobility program.

Supervision

Since the MMAC is now closed on weekends, only three supervisors are needed. The manager and the assistant manager should take a more active role in supervising staff. Two of the current supervisors should be reassigned to other tasks.

POLICY PROCEDURE MANUAL

The *Policy and Procedures Manual and Contract Enforcement Procedures* document sets forth operating policies and procedures for the Metro Mobility program. Page 1 of the manual states: "the manual is not totally comprehensive." The manual should become a comprehensive document that guides the management of the Metro Mobility program.

Current Policy and Procedures Manual

A copy of the current *Policy and Procedures Manual and Contract Enforcement Procedures* is attached to this report.

Proposed Policies and Procedures

The entire *Policy and Procedures Manual and Contract Enforcement Procedures* document should be revised to include data privacy practices, comprehensive processes for handling service complaints, processes for handling vehicle inspections, staff training requirements, hiring procedures, and a comprehensive list of A and B violations, their definitions, and their consequences.

MMAC COMPUTER

The MMAC computer capabilities have been the topic of discussion for a long time. There is general agreement that many tasks could be handled by computer technology. However, the resources have not been available to make computer capabilities a priority at the MMAC. The MMAC should hire a full-time data processing/programming computer expert and explore all computer enhancement options to improve the productivity and management of the Metro Mobility program.

Current Computer Situation

The current computer system and usage does not adequately meet the needs of the MMAC. The software does not calculate subsidies and budget information is sketchy and outdated. Customer complaints are still handled manually and providers are entering information twice in order to process it.

Proposed Computer Changes

Many time consuming tasks that could be done by a computer are currently done manually at the MMAC. The MMAC should hire a full-time data processing/programming computer expert before the recently approved \$500,000 for computer improvements is spent. This person could make sure the MMAC's computer technology needs are met through computer enhancements and software. A letter of understanding between the RTB and MTC should be developed with a timeline for completion of the computer enhancements/changes project. Data privacy laws should be followed in regard to the computer data and access of information. All new and existing Metro Mobility standing orders should be checked with bus routes to determine if the bus system can provide the requested trips. New computer enhancement options should be explored including the use of the MTC's mainframe computer and additional software packages for all aspects of managing the MMAC.

OPERATING STANDARDS FOR SPECIAL TRANSPORTATION

In 1987 the Minnesota State Council on Disabilities sought legislative action to deal with the increasing numbers of safety concerns regarding Metro Mobility. The 1987 Legislature mandated the Minnesota Department of Transportation (Mn/DOT) to revise the statewide operating standards for special transportation services. The RTB established management policies and addressed many of the areas of concern on contracts with providers.

Current Situation for Operating Standards for Special Transportation

The final draft received from Mn/DOT of the operating standards for special transportation is thorough, clear and addresses issues raised by the RTB and incorporates recommendations from the RTB legal counsel. The only controversy in the proposed revisions is the requirement of a criminal background check that would include volunteer drivers. Red Cross is totally opposed to this requirement and plans to object to these provisions via the rules promulgation procedures.

The driver training requirements are comprehensive. The training components that are required before driving are essential and should ensure a greater degree of safety for both passengers and drivers. The language says drivers not only must receive but "demonstrate" training skills. This sends a message that training is not simply a passive experience, but new drivers should have to actually show that they can operate vehicle equipment and are familiar with proper passenger assistance techniques.

The provision regarding vehicle inspections has been greatly improved with the addition of "out-of-service criteria" which are set out in uniform federal standards and incorporated into the rules. Because the enforcement provisions now require the suspension of a provider's certificate of compliance, without a hearing, for failure to correct a violation, there is greater incentive to remain in compliance rather than risk the loss of vehicles that cannot be utilized.

The changes and additional language that were offered by Mn/DOT's advisory committee necessitate that the rules be returned to the revisor's office. Any legislation that might be ultimately adopted regarding the endorsement or licensing of drivers of special transportation services would simply render the rule language moot in those areas.

Proposed Action for Operating Standards for Special Transportation

Letters of support for the proposed revisions should be sent by the RTB to Mn/DOT and the hearing examiner when published.

The RTB should support the establishment of a unit within Mn/DOT to investigate and take immediate action on safety/vehicle violations.

CONTINGENCY PLAN

The Metro Mobility program does not have a contingency plan in the event that a provider is suspended or goes out of business. A contingency plan should be developed.

Proposed Contingency Plan

In the event that a provider of Metro Mobility service is unable to provide transportation services, the MMAC will contact the remaining providers and ask (not require) them what trips they could provide. If vehicles but no drivers are available, the MMAC will pay the salary of the drivers. The MMAC should work out a plan with the MTC for the use of MTC accessible bus use for Metro Mobility.



METRO MOBILITY

**Policy and Procedures Manual
&
Contract Enforcement Procedures**

Issued March 1, 1989

Metro Mobility Administrative Center
560-6th Avenue North
Minneapolis, MN 55411-4398

612/349-7480

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INTRODUCTION

This manual sets forth operating policies and procedures related to the Metro Mobility program. The intent of this manual is to guide day-to-day decisions involving Metro Mobility service.

Each section of the manual identifies the applicable policy and defines procedures according to category of responsibility: provider, passenger, Metro Mobility Administrative Center (MMAC), and Regional Transit Board (RTB).

The policies and procedures in this manual comply with all applicable local, state, and federal laws, rules, and regulations, including: Minnesota Statutes, Section 174.30 to 174.31; Minnesota Statutes, Section 473.386; Minnesota Rules, Parts 7450.0100 to 7450.0900; Minnesota Rules, Parts 8840.5100 to 8840.6300; Minnesota Statutes, Section 299A.11 to 299A.18; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; municipal regulations and ordinances; and federal and state laws relating to child restraint devices.

The manual is not totally comprehensive. Other documents, publications, and forms are cited and should be referred to for more specific information.

The policies and procedures in this manual are considered fundamental to the successful operation of Metro Mobility. However, this does not mean that they can never be revised to reflect changing situations or to be improved. If you feel that anything in the manual is unreasonable or outdated, please contact the Metro Mobility Administrative Center at 349-7480.

Revisions to the manual will be made by the Metro Mobility Administrative Center, as necessary. The Metro Mobility Administrative Center is responsible for assuring that the information provided in the manual is current and in compliance with applicable laws, regulations, agreements, etc., as far as is practicable. Revisions will be distributed to all individuals and organizations who have been issued a manual. Each revision will be numbered so that you can determine if you have received all revisions. Contact the Metro Mobility Administrative Center at 349-7480 if you have any questions regarding revisions to this manual.

Also included in this document are Contract Enforcement Procedures. These Procedures are used by the Metro Mobility Administrative Center to handle provider non-compliance with the Regional Transit Board contract for provision of Metro Mobility service.

Metro Mobility

Metro Mobility offers advance reservations, door-through-door transportation service for eligible disabled persons. The service operates throughout the entire Minneapolis-St. Paul metropolitan area taxing district, covering 960 square miles and serving 91 communities. Currently, 15,000 persons are certified to use the service.

The Regional Transit Board currently holds contracts with 14 qualified special transportation service providers. Approximately 140 vans and minibuses and 190 taxicabs are available for Metro Mobility service.

The Metropolitan Transit Commission (MTC), also under contract to the RTB, administers the day-to-day operations of the Metro Mobility program, monitoring the service delivery of providers. The MTC's Metro Mobility Administrative Center is responsible for the following functions:

- rider certification and annual registration;
- customer complaint handling and resolution;
- rider communications;
- provider trip verification and billing; and
- provider performance and contract compliance monitoring.

I. PASSENGER ELIGIBILITY

The Regional Transit Board (RTB) establishes the eligibility criteria for Metro Mobility.

The Metro Mobility Administrative Center (MMAC) is responsible for certifying applicants and conducting an annual registration of certified passengers.

Persons who have been determined eligible under existing criteria may ride the Metro Mobility system.

Metro Mobility providers may transport certified riders, guests, and escorts. Providers will receive payment for certified Metro Mobility riders and escorts.

A. Providers

1. Acknowledgement of Certification Numbering Codes

Providers may carry and receive Metro Mobility trip reimbursements for only those persons who have current certification numbers.

Providers shall have a working knowledge of the Metro Mobility certification numbering system and use the first two digits of the certification numbers (Transportation Codes) in determining passengers' transportation needs and escort requirements. Information regarding transportation codes will be communicated to drivers who need to know passengers' transportation needs.

Lift or Ramp Equipped Vehicle:

- 21 Uses a wheelchair and requires a lift or ramp equipped vehicle, but does not need to be accompanied by an escort.
- 22 Uses a wheelchair and requires a lift or ramp equipped vehicle and **requires an escort or attendant while traveling.**
- 23 Uses a personal assistance device and requires a lift or ramp equipped vehicle, but does not need an escort.
- 24 Uses a personal assistance device and requires a lift or ramp equipped vehicle **and requires an escort or attendant while traveling.**

Auto, Van or Taxi:

- 31 Uses a wheelchair and can travel in an auto, van or taxi (with or without driver assistance in getting in and out of the vehicle), but does not need to be accompanied by an escort.
- 32 Uses a wheelchair and can travel in an auto, van or taxi (with or without driver assistance in getting in and out of the vehicle) **and requires an escort or attendant while traveling.**
- 33 Uses a personal assistance device and can travel in an auto, van or taxi, but does not need an escort.
- 34 Uses a personal assistance device and can travel in an auto, van or taxi **and requires an escort or attendant while traveling.**

35 Does not use a wheelchair or personal assistance device and can travel in an auto, van or taxi, but does not require an escort.

36 Does not use a wheelchair or personal assistance device and can travel in an auto, van or taxi **and requires an escort or attendant while traveling.**

38 65 years of age or older and cannot walk to a bus route.

New codes 1987:

37 **Seasonal:** November 1st through April 15

39 **Conditional:** Certification for six months while receiving orientation and mobility training depending on functional ability. This certification number may change depending on continuing need for transportation.

2. Certification/Registration Responsibilities

Providers shall **not** certify, register or assign Metro Mobility certification numbers. Providers may provide inquirers with certification applications (if available) and/or direct the potential applicants to the MMAC.

Providers shall notify the MMAC of passengers with transportation codes that are inappropriate.

B. Passengers

1. Application for Metro Mobility Certification

Metro Mobility Certification Forms are available by contacting the MMAC.

a. Application Form

Certification Forms must be filled out completely before the applicant's eligibility can be determined.

Applicant must have his/her health professional complete the medical portion of the form. The health professional must be a licensed physician, registered physical therapist, licensed psychologist, certified orientation and mobility specialist, or a licensed chiropractor.

Completed applications shall be sent to the MMAC for processing.

b. Application Fees

The certification fee is \$10.00.

All fees should be paid by cash, check or money order, payable to Metro Mobility.

The fee shall accompany the Certification Form.

The fee will be refunded only if applicant is found ineligible for Metro Mobility service.

c. Acceptance into Metro Mobility Program

To be eligible for Metro Mobility service, a person whose transit needs cannot be accommodated by other public transit alternatives must meet one of the following six criteria:

1. A permanent physical functional mobility limitation that prevents a person from walking independently for a distance of 1,000 feet without the aid of an assistive device such as a walker, cane, crutches, braces, a prosthetic device, or a wheelchair; or from negotiating the steps of a standard transit vehicle; or
2. A medically demonstrable condition that seriously impedes or prevents a person from walking a distance of 1,000 feet; or that affects coordination and stability to the extent that it presents a risk of falling; or
3. An arterial oxygen tension (PAO₂) of less than 60 mm/hg in room air at rest; or
4. A cardiac condition that is therapeutically classified according to standards set by the American Heart Association in one of the following areas:

Class D: Persons with cardiac disease whose ordinary physical activity should be markedly restricted.

Class E: Persons with cardiac disease who should be at complete rest, confined to bed or chair; or
5. A sensory impairment(s) that prevents a person from independently using, or learning to use, an alternative mode of public transit. If a person is unable to learn or apply the transportation skills in circumstances which are not routine, permanent certification will be granted; or
6. A mental functional limitation that prevents a person from independently using, or learning to use, an alternative mode of public transit. If a person is unable to learn or apply the transportation skills in circumstances which are not routine, permanent certification will be granted.

Applicants found eligible for Metro Mobility service will receive an identification card and material explaining how to use the service.

Passengers should review the material before using the service. Questions should be addressed to the MMAC.

d. Recertification

Passengers will be required to be recertified every five years. This recertification will proceed according to the passenger's month of birth.

2. Annual Registration

a. Registration Form

Once a year certified passengers will be sent a Registration Form from the MMAC.

Passengers wanting to continue using Metro Mobility service must complete the Registration Form by the date specified in the registration packet. The annual registration will proceed according to the passenger's month of birth.

The form will not require a statement from the passenger's health professional unless the passenger's functional ability, as stated in the Registration Form, has changed from passenger's original certification form.

b. Registration Fees

The annual registration fee is \$10.00.

All fees should be paid by cash, check, or money order, payable to Metro Mobility.

All fees should accompany the Registration Form.

The registration fee will be refunded if passenger is found to no longer qualify for Metro Mobility service.

c. Deadlines

Certification Form, complete with statement from the passenger's health professional, may be required if the annual registration form is submitted after the registration deadline.

3. Appeals Process

Applicants found ineligible for Metro Mobility service will be notified by the MMAC in writing. The reason for the ineligibility will be explained in the letter of rejection.

The appeals process will also accompany the rejection notice. (See Section I,C,4 for details on the appeal process.)

Applicants or their representatives electing to appeal the ineligibility determination should submit additional information describing how their functional ability prohibits their use of fixed route transit.

4. Updating Passenger Information

a. Functional Ability Changes

Passengers should notify the MMAC of any changes in their functional ability that would affect their transportation requirements.

Passengers with changed functional abilities may be issued a new identification card with a new certification number and transportation code.

Providers have been directed to notify the MMAC when they detect changes in passengers' transportation requirements.

Passengers may be in possession of only one identification card at any given time.

There is no charge for new cards issued as a result of changes.

b. Other Changes

Passengers should notify the MMAC of name, address, and phone number changes.

Failure to notify the MMAC of these changes promptly could adversely affect passengers' ability to secure rides and receive satisfactory service.

MMAC should be notified when a passenger dies.

Passengers may be in possession of only one identification card at any given time.

There is no charge for new cards issued as a result of changes.

5. Unusual Circumstances

Any unusual circumstances which may affect a person's eligibility to ride Metro Mobility should be brought to the attention of MMAC staff.

C. Metro Mobility Administrative Center

1. Forms

The MMAC is responsible for distributing Metro Mobility forms. There are three basic forms used in determining rider eligibility. They are the Certification Form, the annual Registration Form, and the Reclassification Form.

The MMAC shall update its files based on the information contained in these forms to comply with any changes that affect the eligibility or registration criteria.

a. Certification Form

The Certification Form shall require information supplied by the applicant and by an appropriate professional who can authoritatively comment on the applicant's medical status and functional ability.

The MMAC will recognize the following professionals for completing the medical verification/functional limitation section of the Certification Form: licensed physician, registered physical therapist, licensed psychologist, orientation and mobility specialist, licensed chiropractor.

b. Annual Registration Form

A Registration Form and introductory letter will be sent to all certified passengers each year so that they can renew their eligibility to ride Metro Mobility. The annual registration will proceed according to the passenger's month of birth.

A medical verification statement is not required for the annual registration when completed on or before the stated deadline.

c. Reclassification Form

A Reclassification Form will be sent to certified riders when/if their functional ability changes result in a change of transportation needs.

2. Processing Forms

a. Certification Forms

The MMAC will certify an applicant as eligible for Metro Mobility service if the person meets the eligibility criteria as specified in B,2,a of this section.

A person with temporary disabilities (a disability expected to last for less than one year) is not eligible for Metro Mobility service.

The MMAC shall process properly completed forms and send out certification cards to eligible applicants within 21 calendar days of their receipt. Applicants found ineligible for Metro Mobility will be notified within 21 calendar days of the receipt of their certification application.

The MMAC shall assign certification numbers to eligible passengers. The first two digits of the certification number is the passenger's transportation code. The last four digits represent the passenger's individual identification number.

The MMAC shall maintain all certification records.

Data from the Certification Forms shall be entered into the Metro Mobility computer data base by the MMAC. Passenger data shall be retrievable by using the passenger's name and/or certification number.

The MMAC will maintain all inactive certification information for three years.

The original application shall be filed numerically, by certification number.

The following information is sent to accepted applicants:

- "Metro Mobility Rider's Guide", which explains how to use the service
- Embossed identification certification card
- Introductory letter explaining applicant's certification number
- Listing of providers serving the passenger's community
- Listing of accessible entrances used by providers at common Metro Mobility pick up and drop off locations
- Current issue of the Metro Memo
- Listing of all providers and communities served

b. Annual Registration

The MMAC shall review all Registration Forms, assuring that the information on record concurs with the information found on the registration form.

Any changes identified shall be updated in the computer data base.

The Registration Form shall be attached to the passenger's original certification form.

c. Reclassification

The MMAC normally becomes aware of the need for a reclassification from the passenger, however, the MMAC shall reevaluate a passenger's certification upon written request by a provider.

The MMAC shall review the Reclassification Form including health professional's statement. Applicant will be allowed to ride during the reclassification process.

The MMAC shall process Reclassification Forms within 21 calendar days of receipt of complete information by the MMAC. Applicants who do not agree with the reclassification determination have the same appeals rights afforded new applicants.

Applicants will be allowed to ride during the reclassification process or while a lost card is being replaced. (Lost cards will be replaced for a \$5.00 fee. Broken cards will be replaced free when the broken card is returned to the MMAC.)

3. Appeal Process

Any applicant found to be ineligible for Metro Mobility services will be notified by certified mail within 21 calendar days from the date the completed application is received by the MMAC. The notification will state why the applicant was found ineligible. It will also include a copy of the procedures that the applicant may use to appeal the decision.

The appeal process consists of the following steps:

- Applicant must submit, in writing, to the manager of the MMAC, additional information and explanation justifying the applicant's eligibility. This notification must be received by the MMAC manager within 30 days from receipt of the rejection notice.
- MMAC manager shall review additional documentation, make an eligibility determination, and notify the applicant within 30 days from receipt of appeal. The written notification shall address the reasons for the manager's decision. It will also remind the applicant of the next step in the appeal process.
- If applicant is dissatisfied with the manager's decision, applicant may request, in writing, that the Metro Mobility Certification Appeals Board review the application. The request should be sent to the Regional Transit Board. The Certification Appeals Board shall make its determination within 30 days upon receipt of request. This decision is the final agency decision.
- The applicant shall be automatically certified if the MMAC manager or the Certification Appeals Board fails to act within the given deadlines. If the applicant fails to meet his/her deadline in the appeal process, the finding of the ineligibility shall stand.

D. Regional Transit Board (RTB)

1. Designated Governing Agency

The RTB establishes eligibility criteria and directs the MMAC to insure that the criteria are being applied properly.

The RTB approves certification and registration policies and procedures established by the MMAC.

The RTB establishes the procedure by which persons determined ineligible by the MMAC may appeal the decision.

II. RATE STRUCTURE

Metro Mobility rate structure is established by the Regional Transit Board.

The Metro Mobility Program shall verify and determine provider payments by using vouchers and a computer system that records all trip information.

The MMAC is responsible for determining the providers' payment.

The MMAC forwards the recommended provider payment amount to the RTB for payment to the provider.

A. Providers

1. Reimbursable Trips

Providers shall receive payment for each certified passenger trip.

Only complete vouchers will be processed for payment. A completed voucher includes passenger name, pick up address and time, a drop address, passenger signature, validated Metro Mobility card and driver signature. Passengers whose certification number is followed by a "u" need not sign the voucher. Providers shall also be reimbursed for an escort accompanying a passenger whose certification number indicating an escort is needed while traveling. The escort reimbursement will be at the ambulatory, Area I rates. The escort must sign a voucher and the escort voucher must be attached to the certified passenger's voucher when submitted to the MMAC.

The MMAC shall process all completed vouchers submitted to date as of 4:30 p.m. on the first and the fifteenth day of each month. Payment for valid vouchers shall be made to the provider by the Regional Transit Board within 30 days of submittal.

Payment will not be made for:

- Transporting guests of certified passengers
- Trips originating from or completed outside the Metropolitan Transit Taxing District
- Medical Assistance compensated trips
- Any trip that violates the terms of the provider's contract
- Trips originating outside the provider's designated service area without prior authorization from MMAC
- Failure to submit vouchers within 30 days of the date a trip was provided.

2. Reimbursement Rates

Providers will be reimbursed at the following trip rates:

Individual Subsidy Rates	Communities	Area I Area II Communities
Taxi Service		
• Ambulatory	\$ 6.50	\$ 8.00
• Wheelchair	\$ 9.50	\$11.00
Van Service		
• Ambulatory	\$ 6.60	\$ 8.00
• Wheelchair	\$14.50	\$17.50
Volume Subsidy Rates	Area I Communities	Area II Communities
Taxi Service		
• Ambulatory	\$ 4.50	\$ 4.50
• Wheelchair	\$ 8.00	\$ 8.00
Van Service		
• Ambulatory	\$ 4.50	\$ 4.50
• Wheelchair	\$10.00	\$10.00

a. Area I/Area II

Reimbursement rates are higher for transporting passengers residing within Area II, than transporting passengers residing within Area I, with the following exception:

- One-way trips originating and ending in Area I shall be reimbursed at Area I rates, regardless of passenger's residence. One-way trips originating and ending in Area II shall be reimbursed at Area II rates.

b. Wheelchair/Ambulatory Rates

The providers' payment shall in part be determined by whether the passenger is ambulatory or uses a wheelchair.

c. Volume Rates

The provider will be paid volume rates for the following types of trips:

- Transporting three or more certified passengers together on the same vehicle between the same locations

- Transporting five or more certified passengers to or from the same address at least five times per week between the hours of 6:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m. or 2:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. Each provider shall receive an updated list of its volume rate locations on a monthly basis from the MMAC. All trips scheduled and designated as volume rate trips shall receive the volume rates, without consideration for occasional cancels or holidays.

3. Ticket/Coupon Redemption

a. Commuter Tickets (blue)

All Commuter Tickets collected by providers shall be submitted to the MMAC on a monthly basis. Providers shall complete the Commuter Ticket Redemption Form.

Providers shall receive the reimbursement for Commuter Tickets from the MTC Finance Department within 30 days of ticket submittal.

b. Over-Eight-Mile Coupons (orange)

Over-Eight-Mile Coupons shall be attached to the vouchers for which they were collected.

Providers shall receive the reimbursement for Over-Eight-Mile Coupons from the MTC Finance Department within 30 days of ticket submittal.

4. Medical Assistance Trips

Providers may have the MMAC process their Medical Assistance trips if the provider is not recognized by the Minnesota Department of Human Services.

These providers must submit a Medical Assistance Trip Form to the MMAC.

The MMAC will verify that the Medical Assistance trip was taken and then submit the verified trip information to Minnesota Department of Human Services for payment.

The provider shall receive payment for the trip once the MTC Finance Department has received payment from the Minnesota Department of Human Services for the trip.

5. Billing Disputes

Disputes involving voucher validation, reimbursement amounts, Medical Assistance billings and Over-Eight-Mile Coupon and Commuter Ticket discrepancies should be brought to the attention of an MMAC administrator or assistant manager.

If the provider is dissatisfied with the MMAC administrator or assistant manager decision, the provider should address the dispute to the MMAC manager in writing stating why the payment should be honored.

If not satisfied with the manager's decision, the provider shall bring the dispute to the attention of the designated RTB staff person for final and binding resolution.

B. Passenger

Not applicable

C. Metro Mobility Administrative Center

1. Reimbursable Trips

The MMAC shall process provider payment requests.

The MMAC shall validate the vouchers submitted by matching the completed voucher with the computer generated trip roster for the day's trips.

The MMAC shall use the reimbursement rates as described in Section II,A,2.

2. Ticket/Coupon Processing

a. Commuter Tickets

The MMAC shall validate the number of Commuter Tickets received and submit a Please Pay Form to the Finance Department of the MTC.

Providers will be paid for Commuter Tickets within 30 days of being submitted to the MMAC.

b. Over-Eight-Mile Coupons

MMAC account clerks shall verify that trip length is appropriate for the number of coupons attached and submit to an MMAC administrator for preparation of a Please Pay for the coupons.

The MTC Finance Department reimburses the provider for the full value of the coupon and submits a request for payment to the RTB for 75% of the coupon value.

3. Medical Assistance Processing

The MMAC will process Medical Assistance billings for providers that are not Medical Assistance providers for the Minnesota Department of Human Services.

The MMAC requires that these providers complete a Medical Assistance Trip Form for each Medical Assistance trip and submit the forms to the MMAC.

The MMAC shall send a Verification Form to the health professional seen by the passenger. When this form is returned to the MMAC, the reimbursement request is submitted to the Minnesota Department of Human Services.

When the MTC Finance Department receives the reimbursement, it is forwarded on to the provider.

4. Billing Disputes

The MMAC shall investigate and resolve provider billing disputes involving voucher validation, reimbursement amounts, Medical Assistance billings and coupon/ticket submittals.

If the provider is dissatisfied with the MMAC administrator or assistant manager decision, the provider should address the dispute to the MMAC manager, in writing, stating why the voucher should be honored.

If not satisfied with the manager's decision, the provider shall bring the dispute to the attention of the designated RTB staff person for final and binding resolution.

D. Regional Transit Board

1. Establishing Rate Structure

The RTB establishes the rate structure, which is included in the providers' contracts.

The RTB may change fares and/or rate structure during a contract period by giving the provider 120 days advance notice.

2. Resolving Disputes

The RTB shall have a designated staff person to resolve issues that are not satisfactorily resolved by the MMAC manager.

III. HOURS OF OPERATION

Metro Mobility passengers shall have similar hours of access to transportation service as do mainline passengers.

A. Providers

1. Order Taking

Sufficient order takers must be available to take orders from 6:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Monday through Friday and 8:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Saturday, Sunday, and holidays.

Providers shall enter orders into the computer in a timely manner.

2. Service

Service hours are from 6:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. Monday through Friday, and 8:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. Saturday, Sunday, and holidays, with the exception of individual contractual differences.

Vehicles must be available throughout service hours in the number specified in each contract.

Providers must answer phones while vehicles are in operation and have staff available to respond to service issues.

Providers must inform passengers before 2:00 p.m. in the event the following day's ride request cannot be honored.

TDD equipment and staff trained to respond to these calls must be available during service hours.

Providers shall be available to honor emergency requests from the MMAC.

B. Passengers

1. Rights/Responsibilities (listed in the Metro Mobility Riders Guide)

Passengers shall place orders during order taking times only.

Passengers must be available to accept their ride at the agreed upon place and 10 minutes before or after the agreed upon time.

Passengers should notify the provider if the vehicle is more than 15 minutes late and delays should be reported to the MMAC.

C. Metro Mobility Administrative Center

1. Hours of Regular Service

The MMAC will operate from 6:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday and 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Saturday, Sunday, and holidays.

2. Contingencies

The MMAC will provide emergency phone answering after hours.

The MMAC may authorize emergency service after service hours.

The MMAC will authorize permission for providing service outside established service hours.

The MMAC may authorize same-day service.

3. TDD Equipment

The MMAC must maintain TDD equipment and TDD trained staff during service hours as well as after hours for emergency situations.

D. Regional Transit Board

1. Hours of Service

The RTB establishes order taking and service hours for providers as well as hours of operation for the MMAC.

IV. SERVICE AREA

Service will be provided throughout the Metropolitan Transit Taxing District.

A. Providers

1. Service Areas

Providers will accommodate trip requests that have both pickup and drop off within the providers' service area.

Providers will accommodate the return trip outside the provider's service area when they have provided the initial trip.

B. Passengers

1. Service Areas

Passengers place orders with provider operating in appropriate service area.

Passenger pickups and drop offs must be within the Metropolitan Transit Taxing District.

C. Metro Mobility Administrative Center

1. Service Areas

The MMAC compiles and maintains a list of providers for each service area; notifies passengers of changes as they occur, and provides information to riders and others upon request.

The MMAC furnishes zone maps to providers which illustrate the entire service area.

2. Vouchers

The MMAC checks vouchers to ensure that:

- Rides occur within the Metro Mobility service area
- Rides originate within the provider's service area

Vouchers for rides outside the service area parameters will not be paid.

3. Zoning Home Addresses

The MMAC zones all home addresses of certified riders and enters them into the computer, thus ensuring that all trips not zoned "00-00" are indeed within the Metropolitan Transit Taxing District.

D. Regional Transit Board

1. Service Area

The RTB establishes service area parameters.

2. Contracts

The RTB contracts with providers for service.

V. FARES

Metro Mobility fares are to be comparable with those of mainline service.

A. Providers

1. Provider Policies

Providers will submit a company policy regarding charges for distance travel and guest services to the MMAC.

2. Administration

Providers will zone all orders so the MMAC can confirm distance rates.

Providers will complete Medical Assistance billing forms if they are to be processed by the MMAC.

Providers will submit Commuter Tickets monthly to the MMAC accompanied by the completed Commuter Ticket Reimbursement Form.

Providers will staple the Over-Eight-Mile Coupon to the appropriate voucher and submit with daily billings to the MMAC.

3. Passengers

Providers will charge passengers the basic \$1.00 fare for each ride.

Providers will inform passengers of potential extra charges either at the time the order is taken or when it is confirmed.

4. Escorts

Providers will accommodate the need for escorts.

Providers will complete a voucher for an escort using the passenger's ID card and have the escort sign his/her own name.

Providers will be reimbursed at the Area I ambulatory rate for each escort ride.

Escorts do not pay for rides.

B. Passengers

1. Payment of Fares

Passengers will pay the basic fare with either cash or convenience fares, which include Commuter Tickets and Over-Eight-Mile Coupons.

Passengers will pay over-eight-mile charges with either cash or Over-Eight-Mile Coupons.

2. Guests/Escorts

Guests are optional riders that a passenger desires to have ride on a trip, and escorts are care givers who must accompany those riders so certified.

Requests for guests must comply with both the MMAC and provider policies.

Passengers will request rides for guests while placing an order.

Children under six who are accompanying a passenger are considered guests and must pay the appropriate fare.

Guests may use Over-Eight-Mile Coupons for payment of an over-eight-mile ride.

Certified children under six years old will pay the fare and must be accompanied by an escort.

One escort may accompany the passenger if such a need is established through the certification process.

3. Medical Assistance

If the ride is to be paid by Medical Assistance, the passenger must inform the provider during order placement time and provide the necessary information (Medical Assistance number, doctor's name, address, and phone number).

C. Metro Mobility Administrative Center

1. Selling Convenience Fares

The MMAC will sell convenience fares in the form of Commuter Tickets at the rate of \$10.00 for a book of 10 tickets.

The MMAC will also sell Over-Eight-Mile Coupons at the rate of \$2.50 for 10 coupons to passengers for their use or for their guests.

2. Reimbursing Providers

The MMAC will reimburse providers for commuter tickets and Over-Eight-Mile Coupons.

3. Monitoring/Processing Payments

The MMAC will monitor payment of the basic fare through surveys.

Accounting clerks will ensure proper use of the Over-Eight-Mile Coupons when processing vouchers by checking the trip distance and the number of coupons used versus the number of passengers riding.

The MMAC will process Medical Assistance payments for those providers who bill through Metro Mobility. These providers will be reimbursed for Medical Assistance trips once the MMAC receives payment from the Minnesota Department of Human Services.

- D. Regional Transit Board

1. Basic Fare

The RTB establishes the basic fare; all passengers except escorts and those covered by Medical Assistance will pay the basic fare.

2. Reimbursement

The RTB reimburses the MMAC for 75% of the total over-eight-mile payment.

VI. SAFETY

Riders have a right to safe transportation. (See the Metro Mobility Riders' Rights and Responsibilities in the Metro Mobility Riders' Guide.)

A. Providers

1. Vehicles

Providers shall comply, at a minimum, with the statewide Operating Standards for Special Transportation Service, Chapter 8840.5100-.6300, and Wheelchair Safety Devices, Chapter 7450.0100-.0900. Any additional requirements will be specified in the contract.

All qualifying vehicles must have a current Certification of Compliance from the Minnesota Department of Public Safety, with the corresponding sticker displayed on each qualifying vehicle. Providers must submit and maintain a list of certified vehicles for the MMAC.

Each vehicle shall have at least one seat belt extension to secure large passengers.

2. Drivers

Drivers will be trained according to the guidelines found in the Operating Standards for Special Transportation Services. Any additional training requirements will be specified in each contract.

Drivers will be trained to operate all of the provider's vehicles as well as all the lifts and securement devices that the provider maintains.

Drivers must ensure that passengers enter the appropriate door of their destination.

3. Unloading/Loading Situations

Providers must train drivers to recognize and avoid unsafe situations.

Providers/drivers may refuse service in the presence of unsafe loading/unloading situations (i.e., broken steps, ice, deep snow).

Providers shall report any unsafe loading/unloading situations to the MMAC.

Drivers may transport passengers up/down outside stairs according to driver capabilities.

4. Accidents/Incidents

All occurrences involving injury and/or property damage during the provision of Special Transportation Services must be reported by telephone to the MMAC within 24 hours. A detailed written report must be submitted within 48 hours.

5. Passengers

Providers must transfer passengers from any three-wheeled vehicles to a vehicle seat or standard wheelchair for the ride.

If there are steps at either the pickup address or the destination, these steps must meet the following standards:

- o At least 10 inches deep
- o No more than 7 1/2 inches high
- o Have at least 30 inches clear width, free of chipped corners or broken edges

Steps, ramps, and walks must be in good repair and free of snow, ice, and debris.

If a passenger requires an escort by certification, an escort must accompany such a passenger.

Passengers are responsible for putting on and removing coats, hats, gloves, boots, etc.

Passengers are responsible for transfers from their wheelchairs once inside the main door.

6. Inclement Weather

Provider shall determine whether to cancel service due to inclement weather and notify MMAC of this decision, as well as attempt to notify passengers as soon as possible. If inclement weather develops during the day, provider should work with passengers/agencies to return passengers home as early and safely as possible and cancel remaining orders for the day.

B. Passengers

1. Safety Concerns/Accidents

Passengers shall contact the provider and the MMAC in the event of an accident or when they have safety concerns.

Passengers should check with provider to determine if service will be cancelled due to inclement weather.

C. Metro Mobility Administrative Center

1. Accidents/Safety Violations

For safety violations, not resulting in injury to person or property, the MMAC will comply with the appropriate procedure and use the Service Report Form.

In the event of an accident, the MMAC will comply with the appropriate procedure and use the Accident/Incident Report Form.

MMAC personnel, with proper ID, will conduct random on-street vehicle inspections, and leave a copy of the Inspection Form with the driver.

The MMAC will resolve reported unsafe loading/unloading situations.

2. Contracts

The MMAC enforces the safety provisions of provider contracts.

D. Regional Transit Board

1. Contracts

The RTB contracts with providers to meet state operating standards at a minimum.

VII. INFORMATION/COMMUNICATION

Written system information will be collected and appropriately disseminated on a timely basis. All necessary records will be maintained.

A. Providers

1. TDD Access

Providers will be TDD accessible.

2. Meetings/Reports

Providers will conduct internal driver meetings.

Providers will comply with contractual reporting requirements.

Providers will attend system meetings.

B. Passengers

1. Change in Status

Passengers will notify the MMAC of any changes (i.e., name, address, functional ability, phone number).

Providers will notify the MMAC of any passenger changes (i.e., needs wheelchair, change of address).

C. Metro Mobility Administrative Center

1. News Releases

The MMAC, upon consultation with the RTB, will communicate program changes to the public through news releases.

2. Reporting Requirements

The MMAC will comply with reporting requirements as stipulated in the MMAC Management Plan.

3. Meetings

The MMAC will attend THAC meetings.

The MMAC will conduct regular provider meetings.

The MMAC will attend RTB meetings related to Metro Mobility.

4. Correspondence

The MMAC must distribute an informative bimonthly newsletter (Metro Memo) that provides complete and current system information as well as advance notice to riders of any program changes.

5. Public Relations

An MMAC staff member is available to speak at meetings and to publicize the service. Requests for speakers are booked through the Riders' Liaison.

D. Regional Transit Board

1. Meetings

The RTB will attend regular system meetings.

The RTB will conduct THAC meetings.

2. Contracts

The RTB will maintain contractual documentation.

3. Reports

The RTB will provide regular reports to the legislature.

The RTB will maintain basic program and reporting information.

4. Program Logo

The RTB will design a program logo for vehicle identification.

5. News Releases

The RTB will communicate program changes to the public through news releases.

VIII. SERVICE QUALITY/COMPLAINT PROCEDURES

Mechanisms will be implemented to assess service quality and to acknowledge and resolve complaints.

A. Providers

1. Passenger Comments/Complaints

Providers will address comments/complaints as specified in their contract.

Providers will record complaints on the Service Report Form.

Providers will cooperate with the MMAC and passengers in effecting problem resolutions.

2. Problem Passengers

Providers will use the Service Report Form to report problems with passengers to the MMAC.

B. Passengers

1. Complaints

Passengers will follow procedures in the Metro Mobility Riders Guide for resolving a service problem.

C. Metro Mobility Administrative Center

1. Surveys

The MMAC will conduct periodic provider site visits for the purpose of record reviewal (i.e., vehicle maintenance, vehicle compliance, driver records).

The MMAC will conduct regular telephone surveys with passengers.

During vehicle inspections, information on service parameters (i.e., comfort, safety) will be elicited from passengers.

2. Passenger Complaints

The MMAC will tabulate complaints by provider, month, and type.

The MMAC will complete a monthly complaint report by category.

The MMAC will monitor and report complaint trends to the RTB.

The MMAC will respond to passenger comments/complaints as stipulated in the Management Plan.

3. Program Changes

The MMAC will implement changes in response to complaint report trends.

D. Regional Transit Board

1. Program Changes

The RTB will modify policy in response to complaint report trends.

IX. NO SHOWS

Three passenger no shows within 30 days will trigger a warning letter which states that one additional no show within a 30 day period will result in a 30 day suspension of service.

A. Providers

1. Documentation

Providers will document and notify the MMAC of no shows as they occur.

2. Return Trips

If there is a no show for a return trip, providers will make every effort to ensure the passenger is returned within four hours.

B. Passengers

1. Trip Cancellations

Passengers will contact the provider in the event of a trip cancellation as far in advance as possible.

C. Metro Mobility Administrative Center

1. Tracking

The MMAC will monitor no show activity.

2. Correspondence

The MMAC will send warning letters to passengers stating specific dates and times of no show incidents.

The MMAC will send follow-up service suspension letters if warranted.

The MMAC will inform providers of suspended service situations.

D. Regional Transit Board

Not applicable

X. ORDER TAKING

Ride orders are taken one day prior to the trip until 2:30 p.m.

A. Providers

1. Accepting/Entering Orders

Providers will accept qualified orders during established times.

Providers will enter orders into the computer in a timely manner.

2. Time Changes

In the event the pickup will occur more than 10 minutes on either side of the requested time, providers will notify passengers by 9:00 p.m. the evening prior of any time changes.

3. Special Needs

Providers will inform drivers of special needs of passengers.

B. Passengers

1. Placing Orders

Passengers will place orders according to the Metro Mobility Rider's Guide.

Passengers will inform providers of any special needs (i.e., large passenger, extra equipment needs, escorts, guests, car seats, steps at destination, wide wheelchair, three-wheeled vehicle, specific entrance) at the time of order placement.

C. Metro Mobility Administrative Center

1. Funding Limits

The MMAC will notify RTB of service suspension (need to implement funding limit).

The MMAC will notify passengers and providers of service suspension due to funding limits two weeks prior to implementation.

D. Regional Transit Board

1. Funding Limits

The RTB will implement the funding limit.

XI. STANDING ORDERS

Standing orders will be established whenever possible.

A. Providers

1. Ridership Patterns

Providers will notify passengers riding in a pattern that they may qualify for a standing order.

2. Standing Order Requests

Providers will respond to MMAC requests for standing orders in a timely manner.

3. Honoring Standing Orders

Providers will honor standing orders on a continuous basis until permanently cancelled.

4. Changes

Providers will inform the MMAC of any passenger changes to a standing order.

B. Passengers

1. Standing Order Requests

Passengers will initiate a request by completing the Standing Order Request Form and submitting a \$10.00 fee along with the application to the MMAC. There is no fee for standing order changes, if the duration of the change is less than 30 days.

2. Changes

Passengers will inform the MMAC of any changes to standing orders.

There is a \$5.00 charge for a permanent change in a standing order.

C. Metro Mobility Administrative Center

1. Passenger Requests and Arrangements

Upon request, the MMAC will send standing order forms to passengers.

The MMAC will identify providers for service according to passenger preference.

The MMAC will confirm arrangements with providers and passengers.

The MMAC will cancel all standing orders falling on holidays listed in the Metro Mobility Riders' Guide.

2. Standing Order Records

The MMAC will document fees received.

The MMAC will provide confirmation for standing orders on a weekly basis.

The MMAC will enter standing orders into the computer.

The MMAC will maintain standing order files.

D. Regional Transit Board

1. Monitor Service

The RTB will monitor the volume of standing orders versus demand orders.

2. Agency-Related Standing Orders

The RTB will establish a policy regarding agency-related standing orders.

CONTRACT ENFORCEMENT PROCEDURES

These procedures are established to fairly and consistently address provider violations of the contract and to correct the causes of these violations. The MMAC is granted authority to establish and administer enforcement procedures under X. GENERAL PROVISIONS, D. ENFORCEMENT of the contract between providers the Regional Transit Board.

The MMAC will monitor provider performance and contract compliance. Monitoring methods will include conducting field observations, surveying passengers by telephone, reviewing vehicle inspection reports submitted to the MMAC by the Minnesota Department of Public Safety, analysis of customer complaints, and conducting inspections at provider sites.

It should be noted that the MMAC has procedures for handling service complaints which are separate from these enforcement procedures. Complaints received by the MMAC are generally processed under the complaint procedures rather than under the enforcement procedures. The MMAC may follow the contract enforcement procedures after analysis of a complaint or where a provider fails to comply with the agreed upon solution to a problem.

It should also be noted that the MMAC has separate procedures related to vehicle inspections. The MMAC conducts inspections of vehicles, completes the MMAC Vehicle Inspection Report, and takes follow-up action in accordance with established procedures.

These contract enforcement procedures set forth the steps that may be taken.

I. Processing Violations

- A. A Notice of Possible Violation may be written only by MMAC personnel authorized to do so by the MMAC Manager and will be reviewed for approval by the MMAC Manager or his/her designee. A Notice of Possible Violation will be written within 48 hours of the MMAC becoming aware of the possible violation. Each Notice of Possible Violation will contain pertinent information concerning the possible violation.
- B. The provider will have three days after receiving written Notice of Possible Violation to respond to the charge. The manager will determine if the provider response is sufficient to warrant that the notice be withdrawn. If the notice is withdrawn, the manager will document this decision and return it along with the provider response and the Notice of Possible Violation to the person who originated it and to the provider. If it is determined that the provider is in violation, a Notice of Violation will be issued to the provider and the provider will have three days after receiving the notice to indicate in writing to the MMAC how it will cure the violation.
- C. Once the cure is submitted to the MMAC by the provider, the MMAC Manager will take appropriate disciplinary action as outlined in these procedures. Determination of appropriate disciplinary action may be influenced by factors such as satisfactory nature of the cure, provider cooperation, and past record.

- D. Documentation on all matters related to provider contract compliance will be retained in MMAC files for three years and will be accessible only to the MMAC, RTB, and the appropriate provider.

II. Possible Disciplinary Actions

The following disciplinary actions may be taken:

A. Notice of Violation

A provider may be issued written notification of a contract violation. The provider has three days after receiving the notice to indicate in writing to the MMAC how it will cure the violation.

B. Letter of Warning

A provider may be issued written notification advising that probation and/or a financial penalty not to exceed \$500.00 will result if another violation occurs within the next 60 days.

C. Financial Penalty

A provider may be assessed a financial penalty in accordance with step 3 of the Steps for Handling Class B Violations.

D. Probation

Probation is a 60 day period of supervised time in which provider activities are monitored by MMAC and/or RTB inspections conducted biweekly. The first of these inspections will be arranged at a mutually agreed upon time. Subsequent inspections will require a two-hour advance notice by MMAC or RTB staff. More severe disciplinary action will result if violations occur during these inspections or during the probationary period.

E. Suspension

Contract service may be suspended by the RTB after consultation with the MMAC.

F. Termination

Contract Service may be terminated by the RTB after consultation with the MMAC.

III. Classes of Violations

A. Class A Violations

These are violations of a serious nature which could result in severe disciplinary action. In general, Class A violations endanger the safety of passengers or involve deliberate fraudulent activity. These violations may be used in determining future disciplinary action. Class A violations will be handled in accordance with Handling Class A Violations (see below).

B. Class B Violations

These are violations of contract requirements that are serious in nature, but not as serious as Class A violations. A series of Class B violations repeated over a relatively short period of time indicates that a provider needs to correct a problem. These violations will be handled in accordance with the Steps for Handling Class B Violations (see below).

IV. Violation List

The list of violations below will be categorized as either Class A or Class B according to the definitions in the previous section. Violations are not limited to this list; other violations may be identified and processed.

- Failure of driver to provide needed door-through-door assistance
- Improper use of ramp/lift
- Improper use of tie downs
- Number of passengers in excess of seating/seat belt capacity
- Provider strands passenger by not providing scheduled return trip
- Noncompliance with Special Transportation Service standards established in **Minnesota Rules**, Section 8840.5100 - 8840.6300 as amended
- Noncompliance with wheelchair securement device requirements defined in **Minnesota Statutes**, Sections 299.11 - 219A.18
- Noncompliance with driver requirements established in **Minnesota Rules**, Section 8840.59 Subpart 1
- Negligence on the part of providers which could lead to accident and/or injury to riders
- Records are not maintained as established in **Minnesota Rules**, Section 8840.61
- Provider representative does not attend mandatory provider meeting (unexcused absence)
- Provider does not use accessible entrance when it is available
- Ride requests made within communities that a provider is contracted to serve are not honored by that provider
- Service during contracted hours is not provided
- Failure to provide dispatch services including dispatching and communication with drivers at all times a vehicle is in service
- Ride requests are accepted at times other than the day before the scheduled ride during order hours specified in contract

- Passenger trip exceeds 90 minutes
- Provider fails to pick up passenger within 10 minutes of scheduled time
- Demand orders are taken after a system shut-down has been declared when the available daily funding allocation is reached
- Standing orders are not honored in the event of a system shut-down
- A provider does not refer a passenger to at least one other provider or does not record a trip denial on the appropriate reporting form in the event that the provider is unable to honor a trip request due to a lack of capacity.
- \$1.00 base fare is not collected by the provider in the form of either cash or commuter tickets
- Passengers are charged in excess of \$1.00 per mile after traveling more than eight miles
- Total fare exceeds \$3.75 per person per trip
- Fares are collected for trips which are later billed as Medical Assistance trips
- Marketing is not approved by RTB in writing prior to its initiation
- Reimbursement is requested for cancelled or no show trips
- Noncompliance with MMAC billing procedures
- Nonpayment of monthly management fee for computer-related services
- Failure to report no shows, cancellations, and other information as required by contract
- Damage to computer equipment due to provider abuse or negligence

V. Handling Class A Violations

These violations are so serious that they could cause the termination or suspension of contract service or other major disciplinary action. Each violation will be treated separately based on circumstances and past record.

VI. Steps for Handling Class B Violations

A. Step 1

Three violations within a 30-day period will require that the provider take immediate corrective action.

B. Step 2

A fourth violation within 30 days of the three violations in Step 1 will require that:

1. The provider take immediate corrective action.
2. A Letter of Warning is sent to the provider advising that probation and/or financial penalty not to exceed \$500.00 will result if another violation occurs within the next 60 days.

C. Step 3

Another violation within 60 days of the Letter of Warning will result in probation and/or financial penalty not to exceed \$500.00.

D. Step 4

- Another violation during the probationary period may result in suspension and possible termination of the contract.

NOTE: Any unusual circumstances in the steps of enforcement will be left up to the discretion of MMAC and/or RTB. For example, two or more of the same type of violation within a 30-day period or any gross noncompliance may lead to stronger corrective actions.

VII. Appeal Process

The following steps will be required to appeal disciplinary action taken against a provider:

- A. A written request for appeal will be sent to the MMAC Manager, along with any information relevant to the appeal. This request for appeal must be received by the MMAC within one week from when the provider receives notification of the disciplinary action.
- B. A review panel will meet within 15 calendar days of the MMAC receiving a request for appeal. The review panel will consist of five members representing providers, users, and the MMAC, and will be appointed by the RTB. The panel will review the technical aspects of the case, hear any additional testimony, and render a recommendation to the RTB within five calendar days.
- C. The RTB will render final decision on the appeal within one week of receiving the recommendations of the review panel.

REGIONAL TRANSIT BOARD

Mears Park Centre
230 East Fifth Street, St. Paul, Minnesota 55101
612/292-8789

DATE: June 13, 1991
TO: RTB Board Members
FROM: Michael J. Ehrlichmann, Chair
SUBJECT: Dakota County Resolution



Attached is a resolution from the Dakota County Board requesting that we rescind our action concerning the service reductions in the Metro Mobility Area II. I've indicated that I will bring up the matter in the Chair's report. If you have any questions regarding this issue please contact me.

MJE/kag

D A K O T A C O U N T Y B O A R D O F C O M M I S S I O N E R S
REQUEST FOR BOARD ACTION

DIVISION: Community Services BOARD MEETING DATE: June 18, 1991
DEPARTMENT: Social Services CONSENT: X Budgeted ___
Contact Person: Sally Moran REGULAR: Non-Budgeted X
Telephone Number: 450-2742 INFORMATION: N/A ___

ITEM: METRO MOBILITY CHANGES - PROPOSED RESOLUTION

Reviewed by: Management Team ___ Board Committee ___ Other ___

Background

The Regional Transit Board, which oversees the planning and funding for Metro Mobility, did not receive its state appropriation request for the 1991-1992 biennium to fund the Metro Mobility program at its present rate of growth. In addition, due to the budget shortfall, the governor requested cuts. To meet these shortages the Regional Transit Board has proposed changes in Metro Mobility service and recommended that the changes take effect by July 1, 1991.

One of the changes which would impact Dakota County residents needing Metro Mobility services is to: "Restrict service in Area I & II communities to peak time service only, to correspond to the level of regular route service in those communities. In Dakota County this affects the communities of Apple Valley, Eagan, Rosemount and Burnsville. Peak time service is from 6:00 AM to 9:00 AM and from 3:30 PM to 6:30 PM Monday through Sunday."

Recommended Resolution

WHEREAS, the Regional Transit Board has adopted changes in Metro Mobility services with limited opportunity for public input; and

WHEREAS, the proposed change to restrict service in Area I & II communities to peak time service only, to correspond to the level of regular route services in those communities will affect the communities of Apple Valley, Eagan, Rosemount and Burnsville; and

WHEREAS, this will create a gap in services in Dakota County;

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Dakota County Board of Commissioners recommend that the proposed change to restrict service in Area I & II communities to peak time service only, to correspond to the level of regular route services in those communities be delayed; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Dakota County Board of Commissioners recommends that the Regional Transit Board hold a public hearing to further consider the adopted changes in Metro Mobility services.

Sally Moran
Community Services Deputy Director
450-2742

David A. Rooney
Community Services Director
450-2742

Lyle Wray
County Administrator
438-4418

Post-It™ brand fax transmittal memo 7671		* of pages *	1
To	<i>Kathy</i>	From	<i>Comm. Turner</i>
Co	<i>Reg. Transit Bd.</i>	Co	<i>Dak. Co. Admin</i>
Dept		Phone #	<i>438-4418</i>
Fax #		Fax #	



STATE OF MINNESOTA

OFFICE OF THE LEGISLATIVE AUDITOR

VETERANS SERVICE BUILDING, ST. PAUL, MN 55155 • 612/296-4708

JAMES R. NOBLES, LEGISLATIVE AUDITOR

June 12, 1991

Greg Andrews, Executive Director
Regional Transit Board
230 E. 5th St.
St. Paul, MN 55101

Dear Mr. Andrews:

As you may know, the Legislative Audit Commission has directed the Legislative Auditor's Program Evaluation Division to conduct an evaluation of regional transit planning. The evaluation will begin immediately and result in a report to the Legislature by the end of the year.

I am enclosing a copy of the research proposal which outlines the general scope of this study. Note that this is not a financial audit, but an evaluation of the effectiveness and efficiency of transit planning in the metropolitan area. The study will also follow up on issues raised in our 1987 evaluation (also enclosed).

I have assigned two staff members to this project: John Yunker (project manager) and Jan Sandberg. From time to time other staff members may assist with the project.

We will call to arrange an "opening conference" with you or your staff to discuss this project. As our work progresses, we will need to interview and collect information from a variety of people in your agency, but we will try to minimize any disruption that our study may cause. I hope that our final report will be useful to you as well as the Legislature. To that end, we want to establish a productive working relationship with your staff and remain open to suggestions and advice from you.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Roger Brooks".

Roger Brooks
Deputy Legislative Auditor
for Program Evaluation

c: Michael Ehrlichmann
encl.

REGIONAL TRANSIT PLANNING

Evaluation Proposal

May 30, 1991

BACKGROUND

Transit planning is complex. The process by which decisions are made to develop, manage, and fund public transportation services in the Twin Cities involves many state, local, and regional agencies, as well as the federal government, citizen advisory boards, and legislatively appointed study groups. Concern has been mounting that the structural and institutional arrangements for public transit may have become too complicated and fragmented for effective planning or adequate accountability and oversight by the Legislature.

The operational costs of public transit services were estimated to be \$153 million statewide in 1990, of which approximately three-fourths was spent in the seven-county metro area.¹ State funds represent about one-third of the monies spent on public transit, with local property taxes, user fares, federal subsidies, and other sources constituting the remainder. In addition, the Legislature appropriated \$10.3 million in fiscal years 1989-91 for light rail transit planning and preliminary engineering in the metropolitan area.

In 1977, the Legislature established the Public Transit Assistance Program, which sets forth the state's public transit goals. The Transit Reorganization Act of 1984 restructured responsibilities and transferred some authority for public transit development and management from state agencies to the metropolitan level.

Under the act, the Metropolitan Council continued to be responsible for long-range transit planning and policy-setting, but primary responsibility for mid-range planning (two- to five-years), as well as management and funding of the public transit system, was consolidated in a new agency, the Regional Transit Board (RTB). Simultaneously, the transit planning and management responsibilities of MTC and the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) were reduced. The act that created the RTB also restated the state's broad public transit goals, which include providing essential mobility and transportation options in the metropolitan area, encouraging alternatives to single-occupant vehicle use, and meeting the public's transportation service needs efficiently and effectively.

Since 1984, the Legislature has reaffirmed the basic policy that responsibility for transit planning in the Twin Cities area should remain at the metropolitan level. At the same time, however, there are indications of fragmentation and diffusion of responsibility and authority for transportation planning generally, and public transit development in particular. For example, the bonding authority of the RTB and its access to federal funds have been reduced and the Met Council's authority over the RTB's mid-range transit plan has been increased. In addition, a Transportation Study Board that includes both legislative and public membership was created to identify improvements needed in the state's transporta-

¹ Transportation Study Board, *Study of Minnesota's Surface Transportation Needs*, Report to the Governor and the Legislature, January 15, 1991.

tion system (including public transit), and the number of advisory groups providing input into transit planning has been expanded. Finally, it is evident that MnDOT decisions pertaining to highway construction and upgrading, often influenced by federal policy and priorities, also affect public transit services.

The adequacy of the planning process has come to the forefront in the case of light rail transit (LRT). In 1987 the county regional rail authorities were permitted to move forward with LRT development, in 1988 MnDOT was given the responsibility to administer the state subsidy for LRT planning, and in 1989 the RTB was directed to develop an LRT plan. In addition, the Metropolitan Council reviews and comments on LRT plans and may conduct studies of its own. This process has produced different proposals regarding who should be responsible for constructing an LRT system, where the initial lines should be built, and how the system would be financed. The 1991 Legislature passed a bill that would form a light rail transit joint powers board to oversee final design and construction, in the event that federal and county funding is obtained, and requires Metropolitan Council approval on federal funding applications.

There are also indications that the current transit-planning structure may not be producing the desired end results. For example, traffic congestion on major freeways in the metropolitan area is increasing. Meanwhile, regular-route bus ridership has been declining since 1979, and a recent budget shortfall forced the RTB to raise bus fares, which resulted in an immediate 5 percent decrease in ridership.

Our 1988 program evaluation of the Regional Transit Board was critical of its initial three-years' performance, but there was insufficient evidence at that time to recommend changing the planning structure or abolishing the RTB. We suggested another review of RTB's performance after three more years.

EVALUATION ISSUES

1. **Indicators of public transit effectiveness:** What does available information suggest about the extent to which the Legislature's public transit goals are being met? Are current transit planning activities, service levels, and performance outcomes consistent with legislative goals?
2. **Institutional roles and responsibilities:** How have institutional responsibilities and authority for public transit planning and management changed since the 1984 restructuring? At the present time, which agency is responsible for what? How has the mix of funding for public transit services changed? By what mechanisms is accountability to the Legislature provided, and are those mechanisms adequate?
3. **Interagency relationships:** How well do the various agencies with responsibility for transit communicate and coordinate their activities? To what extent do these agencies rely upon a consistent set of data for planning purposes?
4. **The role of Minnesota Department of Transportation:** To what extent are MnDOT highway upgrading and construction decisions compatible with public transit needs and objectives? In what ways does MnDOT ensure that its highway planning and construction activities take into account the state's public transit goals?
5. **Regional Transit Board progress:** What progress has been made since the Program Evaluation Division's 1988 evaluation of the Regional Transit Board? Has the RTB improved its ability to be innovative and creative and to implement public transit plans? Has the RTB's relationship with the Metropolitan Council improved, and has it taken steps to formalize relationships with other key agencies?

METHODS

This study will rely primarily on qualitative methods, although some quantitative information on service levels and transit system effectiveness will be gathered and systematically analyzed. Given the large number of agencies involved in transit planning, it is estimated that between 50 to 100 structured, in-person interviews will be required in order to gather information about how planning is carried out in practice. We will conduct interviews with selected officials and staff from all affected government agencies, citizen and technical advisory groups, and private consulting firms involved in transit planning.

In addition, we will review and analyze legislative statutes, meeting minutes, and planning documents that have been prepared by these agencies. This will permit us to determine whether plans are consistent with legislative goals, whether planning documents reflect actual implementation activities, and the extent to which there are inconsistencies among the various plans. In order to determine whether MnDOT's highway planning and construction activities are consistent with public transit goals, we will select several recent or current cases and critically review the decision-making process in some detail.

DISCUSSION

In general, the proposed study meets our topic selection criteria. Our survey of legislators indicated high interest in this study. Also, it is a very timely topic. Our 1988 report on the RTB recommended that its performance be reassessed approximately three years later. The proposed study would follow-up on the RTB in those areas where problems and deficiencies were identified. In addition, this study would describe and assess the adequacy of the overall public transit planning process.

There was legislative interest during the 1991 session in modifying the formal responsibilities and relationships between the agen-

cies responsible for public transit, indicating some dissatisfaction with current structural arrangements. In addition, the 1991 Legislature considered a proposal to levy a new metropolitan-area sales tax to finance initial LRT construction. It is likely the Legislature will be facing major decisions next session as well regarding whether and how to finance LRT. The LRT plan submitted to the Legislature by the RTB calls for a \$1.6 billion system to be built over the next ten years. Given the large capital investment involved, an assessment of the adequacy of the processes by which public transit plans are developed and coordinated would be both appropriate and useful.

We anticipate this study would require at least two staff working for seven months.



MICHAEL J. EHRLICHMANN
Chair

June 12, 1991

Mary Lee Cook
Governor's Office
130 State Capitol
St. Paul, Minnesota 55101

Dear Ms. Cook:

It is hard to explain the service cuts that the Regional Transit Board (RTB) has currently undertaken without an understanding of the historical perspective of the development of Metro Mobility. However, let me try as best I can to explain the recent action of the RTB.

In the 1990-91 biennium the RTB received \$25.3 million dollars to operate Metro Mobility. The program expenditure based on 1974 eligibility criteria was \$28 million dollars. The balance of the expenditure was provided through property tax revenue.

Despite our appearance and testimony at numerous hearings on anticipated budget needs of Metro Mobility, the RTB received only \$25.3 million dollars for the programs operation. Anticipated expenditure to maintain current operation was \$29 million dollars. This left the program nearly \$4 million dollars short of potential revenue. In addition, unlike in the past, the RTB was specifically prohibited by statute from using any other revenue source to support Metro Mobility, including property tax. In other words, we were simply left with a \$29 million dollar program and a \$25.3 million dollar budget. In addition the RTB was challenged by the legislature to reduce the cost of this service. And most recently, the Five-Year Plan of the RTB was rejected by the Metropolitan Council, due in part to the expenditure of the Metro Mobility program.

With this budget inevitability, RTB staff proposed a number of initiatives to resolve the Metro Mobility funding shortfall. The first initiative was to increase fares from \$1 dollar a ride to \$2, and the other initiative was to reduce service area and hours, to those currently served by regular transit route.

Currently, federal regulation offers that public transit providers must provide transit service within the same geographic areas, during the same hours of service as it provides regular route transit. No attempt was made to geographically identify one area in the metropolitan area for service as another. The action by the Board was to match Metro Mobility service to the same hours as regular route service. Federal and state law provide severe limitations as to where the RTB can and cannot provide service. The Board's attempt was to meet that requirement and to live within our budget.

Personally, I opposed this fare increase and these service reductions. I was the only board member to cast a vote against it. However, in defense of my colleagues, the RTB Board had little or no choice. It is impossible to fit a \$29 million dollar foot into a \$25 million dollar shoe. The cuts that were recommended by staff, and made by the Board, were those that were made with the understanding that they conformed to state and federal regulations. To fully understand the service reductions, one must understand that the federal regulations match regular route service with the provisions of paratransit. For some of the third ring suburbs it's a Catch-22. They have only peak hour bus service, therefore, they receive peak hour paratransit service. That is the reason we cannot reduce service across the board, we must keep paratransit service consistent with regular route service.

They certainly were not actions that any one was anxious to take. Unfortunately, despite the fact that those budget issues were presented clearly to the legislature, funding remained at \$25.3 million dollars.

I would also like to add that the RTB has made significant reductions in service to regular route transit, as well as instituted a cash fare increase from 50 cents to 85 cents. These are difficult times that demand difficult measures, all of which are very painful. I certainly did not want to preside over any increases in fares on regular route, but understand the need to do so. Likewise I have no desire to preside over an increase in fares for Metro Mobility.

For your information both the fare increase and the service reduction were presented at public hearings on March 18 and 24th, (notice enclosed) and was subsequently dealt with in two committees of the RTB and finally voted in the full Board.

The RTB would be pleased to provide more information on this matter at any time. The Chair of the Administration and Finance Committee, Ruth Franklin is also available to answer questions in this regard.

Sincerely,



Michael J. Ehrlichmann,
Chair

MJE/kag
Attachments



Fact Sheet

Metro Mobility Facts

- Approximately 19,000 people are certified to use Metro Mobility.
- Demand for the program is growing 10-15 percent annually.
- An average of 522 new riders became certified each month in 1990 -- a 38 percent increase over 1989.
- The elderly make up the majority of new riders. Approximately 75 percent of new certifications are people over 62 years of age.
- 7,000 trips are provided daily.
 - 70 percent are during peak hours from 7:00-10:00 a.m. and 2:00-5:00 p.m.
 - 67 percent are standing order trips, which are defined as trips to and from the same places at least three times a week for a minimum of six weeks.
 - 33 percent are demand order rides requested for the next day.
- Nearly 40 percent of daily trips are made by developmentally disabled people traveling to and from human services centers.
- Only 29 percent of the daily trips are made by wheelchair users.
- In 1990, the RTB subsidy for Metro Mobility was \$14.7 million for 1.6 million rides.
- In 1990, the average RTB subsidy per ride was \$8.65. In 1986 the average RTB subsidy per ride was \$8.40. Before 1986, when the RTB restructured the program, the average subsidy per ride ranged from \$10 - \$12.
- A 1990 survey found high customer satisfaction -- 4 out of 5 riders rated Metro Mobility service "excellent" or "good."



February 25, 1991

Dear Metro Mobility Rider,

Please find enclosed a notice on the public hearings the Regional Transit Board is holding on Metro Mobility service changes and fare increase.

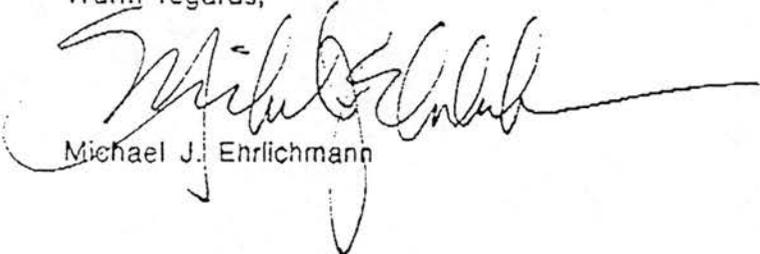
You have probably been reading in the newspapers about the severe budget shortfall the state of Minnesota is facing. The Regional Transit Board, as all agencies and programs funded by the state, must find ways to continue to provide needed service within the funding amounts available. The agency approved a fare increase for regular route service, effective March 1, and is looking at restructuring high-subsidy routes to increase operating efficiency.

Now we must look at improving Metro Mobility's operating performance as well. Before we make any changes, we will present various options at the public hearings to hear what you, our riders, have to say.

In addition to examining possible changes in the program, the RTB has been testifying at the state legislature, seeking additional funding for RTB programs, including Metro Mobility. To bolster our efforts, I am asking for your support. Please submit written comments to me, telling me how you feel about the program and how it affects your life. With these comments, we will be able to go before the legislature with a stronger case for additional Metro Mobility funding. Your letters will help show the legislature that cuts to the program are not without impact. Cuts to the program will affect people's ability to function in many aspects of everyday life.

I also encourage you to participate in the public hearings March 18 at Holmes Greenway in Minneapolis or March 25 at the RTB Chambers in St. Paul. With your input, we can work to ensure that changes made to Metro Mobility will improve and strengthen the program. Thank you for your support, and I look forward to receiving your comments.

Warm regards,


Michael J. Ehrlichmann

MsCook -

As per our discussion, please note the attached materials which show discussion on fare increase & service area changes back in March.

Sherry Munyon

MsCook -

This letter which encouraged participation of metro mobility users @ the two public hearings was mailed to approximately 19,000 people. About 200 people participated.

REGIONAL TRANSIT BOARD

Mears Park Centre
230 East Fifth Street, St. Paul, Minnesota 55101
612/292-8789

DATE: June 12, 1991
TO: Sherry Munyon, Deputy Chair
FROM: Cyndie Mayer, Senior Project Manager
Cynthia Curry, Paratransit Analyst
Virginia Beach, Accessibility Specialist
SUBJECT: Public Meetings on Metro Mobility Changes

January 22, 1991

Metro Mobility Public Meeting
Legislative public hearing

January 26, 1991

TAAC Metro Mobility Task Force
Funding and budget situation

February 5, 1991

Metro Mobility Providers
Briefing by RTB staff on possible funding shortfall.

February 6, 1991

Rural Providers
Briefing by RTB staff on possible funding shortfall

February 11, 1991

TAAC
Proposed changes to Metro Mobility program

February 14, 1991

TAAC Metro Mobility Task Force
Discussion on preferred fare structure and proposed service changes.

February 26, 1991

TAAC Metro Mobility Task Force
Three motions on proposed changes; retain over 8 miles coupons, increase one dollar for all levels of fares, and age not be consideration as a criteria for any type of service.

*Ms Cook -
Please note
the historical
view during
which a variety
of options were
discussed ~~to~~
regarding budget
and program
changes.*

March 13, 1991

TAAC meeting
Over 8 mile coupon and fare increase

March 18, 1991

Public Meeting on fare and service changes.

March 20, 1991

Metro Mobility Provider's meeting. Discussion on proposed fare and service changes and provider's selection.

March 25, 1991

Public meeting on fare and service changes.

April 8, 1991

Provider's meeting discussion on fare and service changes

April 11, 1991

Metro Mobility Transit Rally

April 15, 1991

TAAC meeting to discuss service changes. Reduction in Area II, elimination of trip assurance, complementary service, over 8 mile coupons.

April 16, 1991

Metro Mobility provider's meeting to discuss budget shortfall, fare options, reduction in Area II, elimination of trip assurance, complementary service, modification of standing orders, elimination of DAC's and certification process.

April 19, 1991

Metro Mobility provider's meeting to discuss the proposed complementary service.

April 23, 1991

Joint meeting of TAAC's Metro Mobility and Agency task force. Discussion on modification of standing orders, proposed annual /renewal fee and elimination of DAC trips. Action taken by task force at this meeting.

April 23, 1991

Meeting with MMAC on commuter tickets, escorts, certifications, complementary service etc..

April 29, 1991

Policy Committee. Presentation by RTB staff on Metro Mobility fare and services changes.

May 1, 1991

TAAC meeting. Presentation by RTB executive director on budget and state funding, MTC legislative representative, elimination of DAC's and annual/renewal fee for standing orders.

May 8, 1991

TAAC meeting. Committee opposed the elimination of the over 8 -mile coupon program. Committee discuss the reduction of service in Area II and approved the following recommendations: Retain the over 8-mile coupon, increase base fare to \$1 for all level of fares; annual/renewal fee for standing orders; opposed the elimination of RTB funding to human service agency trips and supported no other changes to the Metro Mobility program at this time.

May 13, 1991

Administration and Finance Committee. Approved the increase in fares for the Metro Mobility program.

May 20, 1991

RTB board approved of Metro Mobility fare and service changes.

May 21, 1991

TAAC Metro Mobility task force meeting on additional service changes. Elimination of escorts, annual/renewal fee for standing order, scrip program, competitive bidding of MMAC, revised certification and eligibility.

May 28, 1991

Policy Committee discussion on the additional Metro Mobility service changes: annual/renewal fee for standing orders, eliminate subsidy to providers for escorts and instructed staff to pursue certification eligibility changes and complementary service.

June 3, 1991

RTB board approved additional Metro Mobility service changes.

This handout
was distributed
at the public
hearings - 3/15 & 3/25
S. Munger

Proposed Metro Mobility Service Changes

1) Reduction of service hours

- Metro Mobility service hours cut back to 6:30 p.m. in Area II communities to match regular route service.
- This proposed change matches regular route service hours.

2) Certification requirements and procedures

- Re-examine eligibility and certification process, based on new federal ADA regulations.
- Procedures may include new eligibility criteria interpretation by medical professionals.

3) New Taxi Scrip program

- Pilot demonstration in Area I communities for ambulatory riders.
- Complement Trip Assurance program.
- Cost of the trip is shared 50 percent by the rider.

4) Revised Trip Assurance program

- After Taxi Scrip is started, the Trip Assurance program would be changed to guarantee lift service only.
- Modifications expected July 1, 1991.

Exhibit

Area II Communities served by Metro Mobility

Apple Valley	New Brighton
Arden Hills	North Oaks
Bayport	Oak Park Heights
Birchwood	Oakdale
Burnsville	Orono
Champlin	Osseo
Chanhassen	Pine Springs
Chaska	Plymouth
Cottage Grove	Prior Lake
Deephaven	Rosemount
Dellwood	Savage
Eagan	Shakopee
Eden Prairie	Shoreview
Excelsior	Shorewood
Gem Lake	Spring Park
Greenwood	St. Paul Park
Inver Grove Heights	Stillwater
Lake Elmo	Sunfish Lake
Long Lake	Tonka Bay
Mahtomedi	Vadnais Heights
Maple Grove	Wayzata
Medicine Lake	White Bear Lake
Minnetonka	White Bear Township
Minnetonka Beach	Willernie
Mound	Woodbury
Mounds View	Woodland



The board was discussed at the public hearings - S. Munger

Proposed Fare Options

Option A (Preferred)

- No change in the current \$1.00 fare for travel during off peak hours.
- Fares are increased for peak hour and long distance trips, the most costly to provide.
- A 50-cent surcharge is added to standing order trips.

8 miles 1.00
 9 miles 2.00
 10 miles 3.00
 11 to 12 miles 3.75

	<u>Existing</u>	<u>Proposed</u>	
		<u>Demand Order</u>	<u>Standing Order</u>
8 miles - under			
Under 8 miles			
• Peak Hours	\$1.00	\$1.50	\$2.00
• Off-Peak	\$1.00 <i>3.00</i>	\$1.00	\$1.50
Over 8 miles <i>8 miles - 10</i>	\$2.00-\$3.75	\$3.00	\$3.50
Over 12 miles <i>11 to 12 miles</i>	\$3.75	\$5.00	\$5.50

Option B

- No change in the current \$1.00 fare for travel during off-peak hours.
- No surcharge for standing order trips.
- Peak hour fare is 50 cents higher than that proposed under Option A.
- Long distance fares are the same as Option A.

	<u>Existing</u>	<u>Proposed</u>
Under 8 miles		
• Peak Hours	\$1.00	\$2.00
• Off Peak	\$1.00	\$1.00
Over 8 miles	\$2.00-\$3.75	\$3.00
Over 12 miles	\$3.75	\$5.00

> equity

Option C

- UHF recommended proposal endorsed by TAAC.
- Existing fares increased by \$1.00 across the board.

	<u>Existing</u>	<u>Proposed</u>
Under 8 miles	\$1.00	\$2.00
Over 8 miles	\$2.00-\$3.75	\$3.00-\$4.75
Over 12 miles	\$3.75	\$4.75

Over 8 mile fare coupons

- Applies to all proposed fare options.
- Proposed changes may include eligibility based on limited income.

Note: Peak hours are from 7:00-10:00 a.m. and 2:00-5:00 p.m.

30073
RTB memo
notice of hearing
public



REGIONAL TRANSIT BOARD

Mears Park Centre
230 East 5th Street
St. Paul, Minnesota 55101
612/292-8789

PUBLIC TRANSIT METRO MOBILITY FARES and SERVICE CHANGES

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

The Regional Transit Board is considering a Metro Mobility fare increase and service changes. It will hold two public hearings to receive comments from local agencies, communities and interested parties in the Twin Cities metro area.

March 18, 1991	noon	Holmes Greenway 114 SE Fifth Street Minneapolis
March 25, 1991	6:30 p.m.	*RTB Chambers 230 E Fifth Street St. Paul

Written comments on fares and service changes will be received through Friday, March 29, 1991. Those wishing to present comments at the public hearings should contact the RTB at 292-8789, TDD 229-2715. Interpreters will be available.

Michael J. Ehrlichmann
Chair

*5th Street entrance closed, use back entrance off Wacouta St

PUBLIC TRANSIT METRO MOBILITY FARES and SERVICE CHANGES

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Michael J. Ehrlichmann
Chair

*5th Street entrance closed, use back entrance off Wacouta St

Metro Mobility Administrative Center
560 Sixth Avenue North
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55411



Bulk Rate
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit No. 1717
Minneapolis, MN

Handwritten notes:
March 25, 1991
6:30 p.m.
RTB Chambers
230 E Fifth Street
St. Paul

metro memo

No mention of public hearings

Metro Mobility Administrative Center 560 6th Avenue N, Minneapolis, MN 55411

February 1991

Metro Mobility Administrative Center

Beginning March 2nd the Metro Mobility Administrative Center (MMAC) will be closed on weekends and holidays. This change does NOT affect Metro Mobility order taking hours or service hours. Emergency calls to the MMAC will be rout-

ed through the existing answering service.

When the change is in effect, you will need to call the MMAC Mondays through Friday between 6:00 AM and 8:00 PM to handle routine informational items.

Metro Mobility Order Taking and Service Hours

Order Taking:	weekdays	6:00 AM to 2:30 PM
	weekends and holidays	8:00 AM to 2:30 PM
Service Hours:	weekdays	6:00 AM to 11:00 PM
	weekends and holidays	8:00 AM to 11:00 PM

Trip Assurance

If a Metro Mobility carrier is unable to accept a trip request, the carrier will inform you that the trip is being placed in "Trip Assurance" at the time the order is placed. Trip Assurance is a program which guarantees that you will be transported for the

next day's trip. When a trip is assigned under Trip Assurance, the pickup time may be changed by up to an hour before or after the requested time. Carriers are expected to call passengers before 7:30 PM the evening before the trip to confirm times and the name of the

assigned carrier.

If you do not wish to be placed in Trip Assurance, **you must state this clearly.** You may then call a different carrier.

State Budget Cuts

The RTB is currently considering ways to cut costs in response to reductions in state aid. Metro Mobility service is

funded by this state aid and will likely be affected by the cut backs. Passengers will be notified before any changes

occur.

"Will my Metro Mobility carrier bring my T.V. home from the store for me?" No. Metro Mobility is designed to transport people safely. Passengers should be able to manage their carry-on items without driver assistance. Carry-on items should not take up space that could be used by another passenger. Many carriers do allow passengers to bring grocery carts that can be safely tied down. Check at the time you place your order.

"I don't need the ride I scheduled for today. How do I

cancel?" Call the carrier directly. Failure to cancel a ride that you no longer need will result in a 'no-show'. Successive 'no-shows' can result in a thirty day suspension from Metro Mobility service.

"I don't know who I called for a ride. How do I find out?" Call the carrier you think is most likely. They can check the computer if it is not assigned to them. Please write down the name and phone number of the carrier you will be using so that you have this information with you when you travel.

"There was someone smoking on the bus. Is this allowed?" Smoking is not permitted on Metro Mobility vehicles. Riders have a right to smoke-free vehicles. A list of rider rights and responsibilities is posted in each Metro Mobility vehicle. They are also listed in the Riders Guide.

To complain about this, or any other situation which affects the safety of your ride, please contact the Rider's Liason at 347-7480 (341-3322 TDD).

Apr 91
Metro
M.M.C.

RTB CONSIDERING METRO MOBILITY CHANGES

The Regional Transit Board (RTB) held public hearings in March to get people's input on proposed fare and service changes in the Metro Mobility program.

The RTB is studying three options for a new fare structure

which would help the agency accomplish two goals: spread the demand for trips more evenly throughout the day; and charge a standard fare for long distance trips. Carriers are currently having difficulty meeting the demand for peak-

hour Trip Assurance rides and there is disparity in fares charged for long distance trips.

Under the preferred option, the increased fare is determined by the type of trip (demand or standing order), the time of day and the distance travelled.

	EXISTING	PROPOSED	
		Demand Order	Standing Order
Under 8 miles			
• Peak Hours	\$1.00	\$1.50	\$2.00
• Off-Peak Hours	\$1.00	\$1.50	\$1.50
8-12 miles	\$2.00-\$3.75	\$3.00	\$3.50
Over 12 miles	\$3.75	\$5.00	\$5.50

Two other fare options are also being considered. A fare change is expected to take effect July 1, 1991.

RTB planners are proposing that Metro Mobility service hours be reduced in some outlying suburbs to match the service hours for regular route buses. Proposed hours of operation in these outlying areas would be Monday through Friday 6:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.; weekends and holidays 8:00 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.

Certification requirements

and procedures are also being examined to ensure that people who certify riders are interpreting the eligibility requirements consistently.

A new service option being studied is a taxi scrip program that would complement the Trip Assurance Program. Eligible riders would purchase subsidized coupons or "scrip" to help pay for rides they take in taxis. This program would provide a cost-effective alternative for people who cannot use regular route bus service for all

their transportation needs but do not need specially equipped vans.

RTB staff members are examining the various proposals and the comments received at the public hearings, and will make a recommendation to the Regional Transit Board in April. The agency expects that implementing these service and fare changes would save approximately \$2 million annually.

For more information, contact the RTB at 292-8789.



REGIONAL TRANSIT BOARD
Mears Park Centre, 230 East 5th Street
St. Paul, Minnesota 55101
612/229-2700

Minutes of the Public Hearing of The
REGIONAL TRANSIT BOARD
Holmes-Greenway
114 S.E. Fifth Street
Minneapolis, Minnesota
March 18, 1991

MEMBERS PRESENT: Michael J. Ehrlichmann, Chair, and Richard Wedell

OTHERS PRESENT: Michael Christenson, Metropolitan Transit Commission (MTC) and Chris Gran, Metro Mobility Administrative Center; Greg Andrews, Judy Hollander, Ed Kouneski, Garneth Peterson, Cyndie Mayer, Cynthia Curry, Virginia Beach, Suzanne Hanson and Mary Fitzgerald, Regional Transit Board (RTB) staff

The chair called the hearing to order. The Regional Transit Board (RTB) is mandated to hold a public hearing when significant service changes are proposed. A fare increase has been proposed in response to the difficult financial situation in the state's budget. The demand for paratransit service has tripled in the last three years and some legislators have serious concerns about the amount of money required to fund this service.

Kouneski explained the proposals and introduced the staff members who work on Metro Mobility, Cyndie Mayer, Cynthia Curry and Virginia Beach. At present the total cost per trip is \$10; the passenger pays \$1 and the RTB subsidy is \$9. In contrast, the subsidy for mainline service averages 35 percent. State funding cannot keep pace with the increasing demand and the state's budget cuts compel the RTB to look for ways to cut costs in all these programs.

Public Testimony

Joanne Schindler said a reduction in the service area would compel her to quit her job. Some people use the service to attend school and they would have to curtail their education. She said there are many abuses of the system by Medical Assistance clients who are not certified for Metro Mobility. They are only required to show their cards. Teenagers going to chemical dependency treat and painting classes are an abuse of the system. Providers are paid \$16 plus \$1 per mile for each Medical Assistance rider, therefore, many providers turn down Metro Mobility riders because the reimbursement is higher for that program. There are many doctors who will sign the certification form for people who do not qualify. She questioned wisdom of putting lifts on mainline buses. The chair said equipping new buses added to the fleet with wheelchair lifts is board policy and new, federal law.

Morgan Grant, Chair, Transit Accessibility Advisory Committee (TAAC), said the United Handicapped Federation's proposal called for no change to the fare for eight-mile trips and TAAC recommended a quarter increase in the over-eight-mile trips.

Betty Norman, Bloomington, said she has used the system for four years and prior to that was a prisoner in her home. Metro Mobility has transformed her life and done marvels for her self esteem. The proposed changes will negatively affect her life because she presently pays \$10.50 per week for trips. Potentially that cost could rise to \$30.00 to attend swimming therapy classes. Her greatest concern is that she is an activity coordinator at Courage Center and strongly opposes the over eight-mile coupons and would hate to see those trips eliminated. A modest increase in the base fare spreads the burden equitably. She said a \$1.75 ride with the coupon, increased to \$5.00, is a 286 percent increase, which far exceeds the increase placed on non-disabled MTC riders.

Kouneski said there is no proposal to eliminate the coupon program. Staff would like to continue it and there is one recommended option to increase the share the rider pays. Today the rider pays \$2.50 for a \$10.00 book of coupons and one proposal is to increase that to \$5.00. Currently a proposal to make the pass available only to persons with limited income is being carefully studied. Members of the audience asked what "limited income" is; the chair said the level would probably follow income requirements of social service programs.

David Cassidy, Bloomington, read a statement into the record (Exhibit A).

Andrew Gamotta, St. Paul, said he would be limited in attending school in Minneapolis.

Barbara Knowlan said this is not a social service program; it is a civil right. Metro Mobility is already close to the line on the fares. Frequent users of regular route are rewarded but Metro Mobility riders are charged overpriced fares.

Another problem is the lack of same day service. For example, she is a substitute teacher and in some schools she cannot substitute because she cannot get a ride the same day. National surveys show that two-thirds of disabled people are below the poverty guidelines. Twin Cities ADAPT is not begging for favors--they will enforce their right to use public transportation. She read the organization's statement.

Sandra Carlson, South Minneapolis, said she is disabled and using a wheelchair. Her husband is also a certified rider. The wheelchair cannot fit into any MTC bus. Metro Mobility costs them \$48 per month. Even a \$.25 increase would amount to \$60.00 a month because they have to pay double since Mrs. Carlson must have an escort. When her husband was hospitalized she could not visit him. Any fare increase would be a hardship because they are struggling with present and past due medical bills. She suggested that riders find a way to petition the government to increase the funds for Metro Mobility. It is a true necessity for anyone who is handicapped.

The chair suggested that everyone write or call their legislators to express their concerns about Metro Mobility.

Pam Weiss, Seward Square, South Minneapolis, spoke in support of Option C; however, she is concerned about the difference between off- and on-peak fares because she participates in a program with fixed hours so it is difficult to ride during off-peak hours. She tries to do that but it is not always possible.

)
Regarding limited income, it is hard to say what that is. The coupons should not be eliminated and should be available to everyone across the board.

Sharron Hardy, Brooklyn Park, said she has used the system for 12 years and has been active in the program as a volunteer and as a professional. Her community is not affected, but she feels it is discriminatory to ask suburban riders to cut back their activities in the evening hours. The disabled cannot move into the core areas because no more housing exists. Another concern is that in the past 12 years she has gotten her college degrees, been active in the DFL and does advocacy at the Legislature. Those activities would have to be cut back and her political science degree would not be used. She is also concerned about the person who must work at a certain place and cannot change residence. Her husband, who works at the Star Tribune and is disabled, is 22 miles from home. A change of fares will cost him \$200 per month. For the past 25 years they have paid taxes and she would become a prisoner in her home. She urged the rest of the disabled community to consider other means of making up the budget crunch. People should contact their city hall to find out who their legislators are and contact them.

Wedeli said RTB is getting a story it already knows; we are faced with the fare increase or cut back in service. Contacting legislators was mentioned, but another issue is the American with Disabilities (ADA) legislation. We are faced with trying to get a strong message to the Legislature and it may take a lawsuit to determine what is fair and required by law. As long as that concern is there, we are going to have a problem. Legislators are concerned about the growth in usage. We have received negative responses from them and questions on how we will cut service. We are trying to live with the law and the funds available. It may take legal action to resolve some questions.

Hazel Scharmer said nothing has been mentioned about senior citizens who are also on limited incomes. She lives in Anoka and cannot go to the eye doctor in the afternoon. Raising fares and cutting routes will have a strong effect on people who live farther out of the core cities.

Tom Zozel, Vice Chair, representing Leroy Marshall, Minneapolis Advisory Committee for Persons with Disabilities, said the committee endorsed Option C with the understanding it is a major concession by the group and cannot go any higher. Riders will accept a certain increase if the RTB and Legislature can deliver the service. RTB should be commended for looking at options. One issue that should be raised is the possibility of legal action under ADA. It is imperative that RTB postpone any action until it is known whether RTB will be the administering agency or whether the agency will be placed under the Administrative Procedures Act. In other words, if RTB is not continued, it would be hard to dispute any action.

On the issue of long distance fares, unless there is a sliding scale fee a lot of people in the low-income category would pay \$55 per month. According to the RTB's Illium study, over 60 percent of riders are earning less than \$10,000 per year.

Speaking on behalf of the M.S. Society, Zozel urged support for Option C.

Karen Kurth expressed support for Option A. She sometimes goes to Minnetonka and has had several different fares charged. Very often rides are late. If they shut down at 6:30 and the ride has not come, what can the rider do? RTB needs more input from the riders.

Jan Bourgerie, a Holmes Greenway resident, said she would support Option C, but she is concerned that service should not stop any earlier than the present schedule.

Kay Stoll read her letter into the record (Exhibit B).

Ken Arntzen, Brooklyn Center, spoke against the Trip Assurance program. People are not notified when or who will pick them up. He has been stranded half a dozen times and people do not know who to call.

Lee Parish said he uses the system almost every day for work and many other activities and believes her experience is the same as that of many other clients. She spends approximately \$60 per month for paratransit service. It is not fair that the cost to an able bodied person would be \$30.

Elizabeth Smith, Minnetonka and Eden Prairie, said she works in Minneapolis and would have to quit her job because her income is so low. The 6:30 p.m. cut off is not good. The whole thing stinks.

Peggy Wilson, Minneapolis, said that in the next ten years public bus lines will be accessible and that is a great move for independence. She asked who will help if riders are harassed on street corners. Another issue is that she is looking for a new job. She cannot get to job interviews because they are during peak hours and it is hard to make an employer understand how hard it is to get to work.

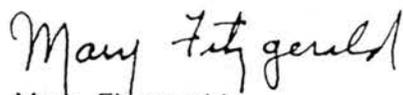
Sharron Hardy, added to her earlier testimony that two years ago she worked for a provider for the Metro Mobility system who was forced out of the system. Her additional concern is the proposal to increase fares and lower the subsidy to providers, which will force them out of the system. Many fewer providers would want to or would be able to provide the service. If we lose them we will lose the ability to obtain rides, competition between providers and better service. There is no incentive for a provider to do a better job. The drivers' wages are already very low.

David Cassidy asked about funding and whether other resources have been sought out such as the State Lottery. Also, he recognizes the independence afforded by the the MTC accessible lines, but given the budget cutbacks, does not believe that effort should continue. The chair said federal law required that all new buses be lift-equipped. A woman in the audience asked what zone Anoka is in: Kouneski said it is in Area 2 and receives MTC service in the evening and would not be affected by the cutback in evening hours.

The chair thanked the audience for coming and noted that there is another public hearing scheduled in St. Paul on March 25. The public record will close on March 29, 1991.

There being no other people wishing to speak, the meeting was adjourned. Written comments are kept on file at the RTB office.

Respectfully submitted,



Mary Fitzgerald
Secretary
Regional Transit Board



REGIONAL TRANSIT BOARD

Mears Park Centre, 230 East 5th Street
St. Paul, Minnesota 55101

Minutes of the Public Hearing of The
REGIONAL TRANSIT BOARD
Mears Park Centre Chambers
March 25, 1991

MEMBERS PRESENT: Michael J. Ehrlichmann, Chair; Doris Caranicas; Sandra Hilary; Terrance O'Toole; Ruth Franklin, Elwyn Tinklenberg and Richard Wedell

OTHERS PRESENT: Greg Andrews, Judy Hollander, Ed Kouneski, Cyndie Mayer, Cynthia Curry, Virginia Beach and Mary Fitzgerald, Regional Transit Board (RTB) staff

The chair called the hearing to order at 6:30 p.m. The Regional Transit Board (RTB) is mandated to hold a public hearing when significant service changes are proposed. A fare increase has been proposed in response to the difficult financial situation in the state's budget. The demand for paratransit service has tripled in the last three years and some legislators have serious concerns about the amount of money required to fund this service. Kouneski explained the fare options and proposed service cuts.

Public Testimony

Jerry Hayes, representing the Minnesota Senior Federation, said the federation has reviewed the options and their transportation committee's decision, which was endorsed by the delegate assembly, is that Option C is the most acceptable. Option A was felt to adversely affect those who go to school, are employed or have to go to the same place every day. Regarding service changes, the federation found them agreeable. The clause that only wheelchair trips would be guaranteed is discriminatory.

Terry Krumheuer said she uses Metro Mobility four to five days a week. Option B would be best because she lives on Social Security disability payments. She volunteers at the M.S. Office and if the fare is raised any more she cannot go as often and would have to stay home. She also uses the system to attend school at night.

Roger Blohm, Chair of the United Handicapped Federation (UHF) Transit Task Force, said the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) was passed in 1990 and it bothers him that here in Minnesota we are considering going backward. A fare increase is being considered for the users who are already financially strapped. Many work at minimum wage or less. Those in school have an income of \$425 per month to live and transport themselves. According to a 1990 transportation study, impaired seniors have an income of less than \$10,000 per year. RTB is considering cutting their time, which is their lock up time. If your friends live in the core cities there is no problem, but otherwise you cannot visit them. The cab service has not been too friendly. When UHF agreed on increased fare, it would have taken care of the \$600,000 shortfall, but now it appears the shortfall will be greater. He asked if RTB and Metro Mobility Administrative Center operations will be cut back.

) The blind, disabled and impaired seniors need to be mainstreamed by Metro Mobility to have a good life. Ehrlichmann noted that RTB's budget has been cut back by 25 percent.

Tina Hawkins commented on how the changes would adversely affect her life. She is looking for full-time employment and without Metro Mobility it would not be a consideration. If the fares increase her job prospects will be closed down. She asked the board to consider this aspect of providing this service as an important service for job seekers.

Mark Hughes spoke against increasing the demand ride cost for trips over 12 miles.

Kurt Strom, speaking for himself, thanked the board members for attending this hearing. It is fair that the Metro Mobility community experience a fare increase since MTC fares were increased recently, but the options go beyond fairness and call for a greater increase for paratransit. Either Option B or C is preferable because they spread the pain more equally. Unlike Metro Mobility passengers, MTC riders are not penalized for living outside Minneapolis and St. Paul. He strongly opposes limiting the discount coupon to those on a limited income. When Metro Mobility expanded a few years ago to include the entire Metropolitan Transit Taxing District there was a commitment to provide service to everyone. Regarding the taxi scrip program, he believes people should use cabs whenever possible. However, this proposal is a 50 percent increase for the rider and it is probably discriminatory against ambulatory people with disabilities who would have to pay 50 percent of the cost of the ride whereas the wheelchair rider would pay the regular Metro Mobility fare.

The chair read David Lundeen's letter (Exhibit A).

Lynette Lijewski said she acknowledges the need for hikes in the fares; however, she has two part-time jobs eight and 12 miles from home. If Option A is adopted, half of her earnings would go to transportation. She uses the system approximately 60 times a month. She proposed the base fare be raised to \$2 for all kinds of orders. Further, she proposed that the providers set up a barter system for riders and that partnerships be developed with the private sector to ensure continuation of the system. A task force should be set up composed of Metro Mobility providers, RTB, and each segment of the ridership. A partnership should be considered that will make the system more cooperative.

Robert Cox asked that the fare not be increased because he has difficulty in handling change and a dollar is easier to handle than a bill and two quarters.

Claudia Fuzlie, Robbinsdale, read a statement. She compared the costs of regular route and paratransit trips. The law requires that fares be comparable and she asked the board to reconsider.

Wanda Rosa agreed with the rate increase but would not support cutting back hours because that would eliminate her social life and isolate her. She said she does not expect that prices will remain the same from year to year.

Tom Markovich said he has a problem with changing hours after 6 p.m. His children have activities and he would like to participate. His life would be more difficult if his social life were ruined. He would also support retaining the coupon program.

Jim LeTourneau, President, Yellow Taxi and Checker Cab, expressed his concern about the fare options. He prefers Option C, but recommended that the \$2.00 fare be changed to \$1.50 across the board. On Saturday he drove some of the Metro Mobility clients. They like to go swimming and to evening classes, so cutting hours would hurt them. His main concern is over the taxi scrip, of which he strongly disapproves. The passenger

would have to pay \$4.00 or \$5.00 every trip, which is unfair to everyone, but particularly anyone who travels more than 12 miles.

Steven Greeley said he knows more money is needed, but some segments of society will be affected more than others. People in nursing homes would be badly affected by an increase and the taxi cab programs should be reviewed. People who are paying disproportionately should be identified so the cost is born equitably.

Ann Hipp said she is on a fixed income and has no money for rate increases.

A member of the audience spoke for people in nursing homes who have very little money and will be unable to get to doctor's appointments.

Janie (inaudible) spoke against the rate increase.

Mark Serber spoke for three people from Blaine. The biggest hardship would be elimination of night time hours. The Anoka Traveler can only take two wheelchairs and they are forced to go separately to events held outside Anoka. They would accept rate increases, but not time changes.

Donna Petit said she is a widow and on her own. If the price is raised too much she will be forced out of her activities. If the hours are cut back to 6:30 p.m. she would not be able to get around at all.

A Minneapolis resident spoke on behalf of raising the certification fee.

Mark Hughes agreed that Metro Mobility is a great program.

Tom Markovich asked if the service would improve if the fares are increased because he has had some terrible service.

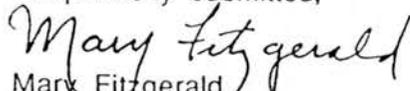
Ehrlichmann encouraged people to contact their legislators with their concerns. He reminded them of the transit rally to be held April 11 at the Capitol.

Hilary said the hearing has been a good opportunity to hear riders' concerns and congratulated people on their presentations. She suggested that people may wish to start asking for funds from the lottery.

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

I hereby certify that the foregoing constitutes a true and accurate record of the Regional Transit Board's public hearing on March 25, 1991. All written comments are on file with the secretary of the board.

Respectfully submitted,


Mary Fitzgerald
Secretary
Regional Transit Board



Fact Sheet

RTB Facing Budget Challenge

For nearly a year many transit agencies, including the Regional Transit Board, have been trying to cope without much-needed federal funding. Now the RTB finds itself trying to squeeze more services out of less money in the face of significant state revenue shortfalls. This situation jeopardizes the RTB's ability to ensure a basic level of mobility for the citizens of the seven-county metro area.

Regional transit took a \$2 million cut for the last part of the current biennium. Of that, the RTB cut \$700,000 out of its own budget which equals about 35 percent of the shortfall. Board travel and per diems, administrative costs and consulting services were included in the cuts. The RTB's budget was not extravagant and these were not easy cuts to make. In addition to the cuts made in its own budget, the RTB is forced to make service reductions. The next two fiscal years promise ongoing battles for funds.

In the next biennium, service needs will exceed anticipated funding sources by \$13.1 million. Without additional funding, regional transit will not be able to sustain service levels. The RTB is examining both operating and administrative measures that will make the transit system more efficient. For example, the RTB raised regular route bus fares on March 1, 1991. This action has the potential to raise an additional \$6.2 million in fare revenue annually.

In addition to raising fares, the RTB is looking at ways to lower the subsidy requirement for Metro Mobility. During the last year, demand for Metro Mobility increased significantly and it will continue to increase in the future. It is an expensive service to provide, yet the RTB is mandated to provide accessible transit to persons with disabilities by both the State Human Rights Act and the Federal Americans with Disabilities Act.

Last year, Metro Mobility cost \$3 million more than what the state allocated the RTB. After the state denied the funding supplement, the RTB transferred funds from its fund balance to Metro Mobility. This year demand has increased, funding has not increased and there is no money to transfer from any other service categories.

In 1990, the RTB worked with social service agencies to ensure it recovered the total federal subsidy available for transporting developmentally disabled people to day training facilities. These trips can be paid for with Medicare. The cost of these trips, which comprise one-third of the total Metro Mobility rides, amounts to an estimated \$3 million a year. RTB staff is recommending an in-depth study of Metro Mobility service to identify further changes that would reduce subsidy requirements.

While costs and demand continue to increase, the RTB is committed to providing transit services that meet people's needs. The RTB recognizes the need to be fiscally conservative, yet also recognizes that transit is no longer a privilege--it is a right.



REGIONAL TRANSIT BOARD

Mears Park Centre, 230 East 5th Street
St. Paul, Minnesota 55101
612/229-2700

Minutes of the Meeting of the
REGIONAL TRANSIT BOARD
Mears Park Centre Chambers
May 20, 1991

MEMBERS PRESENT: Michael J. Ehrlichmann, Chair; Doris Caranicas; Ruth Franklin; Sandra Hilary, Terrance O'Toole; Norbert Theis and Richard Wedell

MEMBERS EXCUSED: John T. Finley; Ed Kranz, and Elwyn Tinklenberg

OTHERS PRESENT: Charles Weaver, legal counsel; Michael Christenson and Bev Auld, Metropolitan Transit Commission; Kurt Strom, Minnesota State Council on Disability; Morgan Grant, Transportation Access Advisory Committee; Ann Gerber; Maggie Willy; Steve Dory, Courage Center, Bette Undis, Red Cross; Mary O'Hara Anderson; Chris Gran, Metro Mobility Advisory Center (MMAC); Arnie Entzel, Amalgamated Transit Union; Gregory Andrews, Judy Hollander, Dale Ulrich, Ed Kouneski, Cyndie Mayer, Sherry Munyon and Mary Fitzgerald, Regional Transit Board staff

The chair called the meeting to order at 4:05 p.m. and roll was taken.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Theis moved and Caranicas seconded approval of the agenda; the motion was unanimously approved.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

O'Toole moved and Theis seconded that the minutes of the meeting of May 6, 1991 be approved. The motion was unanimously approved.

CHAIR'S REPORT

The chair said a report on the legislative activity was being copied and the report would be made at the end of the meeting when the material was available.

He announced that all communications with board members, except in policy areas, are to be channeled through Mary Fitzgerald. Clerical duties for the chair will be performed by Kathy Grochowski.

REPORT OF THE ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

Committee Chair Franklin reviewed the recommendations approved at the Administration and Finance Committee meeting of May 13, 1991:

Financial Statements - January, February and March 1991

Franklin moved and Hilary seconded:

That the Regional Transit Board receive the January, February and March 1991 financial statements and direct that they be placed on file.

The motion was unanimously approved.

Market Research Request for Proposal

Franklin moved and Caranicas seconded:

That the Regional Transit Board authorize the issuance of a Request for Proposal for a transit market research study to be funded from Work Programs 91-19 and 91-13.

The motion was unanimously approved.

Urban Mass Transportation Administration Grant Application-Advanced Public Transportation Program, Resolution 91-04

Franklin moved and Theis seconded:

That the Regional Transit Board approve Resolution 91-04, authorizing submittal of an application for Urban Mass Transportation Administration Section 6 funding under the Advanced Public Transportation Program.

On a roll call vote, the motion was unanimously approved.

Metro Mobility Fare and Service Changes

At its meeting of April 29, 1991, the Policy Committee approved recommendations on this issue and forwarded them to the Administration and Finance Committee. Franklin said she will, as committee chair, move the committee's recommendations. The staff report, dated May 17, was distributed. It contains revised recommendations that the committee directed the staff to develop. Hilary seconded:

That the Regional Transit Board authorize the executive director to negotiate and approve contracts with the providers of Metro Mobility service with the following customer fare increases to become effective July 1, 1991:

Customer Fares

Under Eight (8) Miles.....\$2.00
Over Eight (8) Miles.....\$4.00
Over Twelve ((12) Miles.....\$5.00

Hollander reviewed the staff recommendations, which reflect committee discussion and questions raised at that meeting. Administration of the Over-Eight-Mile Coupon Program is expensive and the distribution system for coupons is not adequate.

In 1986 the Legislature appropriated funds to offset the cost to the riders for trips over eight miles. That funding was later discontinued but the board decided to continue to support the program. If the program is eliminated, the projected cost savings would be approximately \$176,000 in subsidies; not including administrative costs for the program, which are part of the MMAC work program. Forty to fifty people per day would be affected. Hilary offered a substitute motion, seconded by Franklin:

- That the Regional Transit Board increase Metro Mobility customer fares, with provider subsidy rates simplified and reduced to offset the additional fare revenue that will be collected, as follows:

Customer Fares

Under Eight (8) Miles.....\$2.00
Over Eight (8) Miles.....\$3.50

- That the Regional Transit Board reduce the area of Metro Mobility coverage in Area 2 communities to coincide with the area of coverage for peak-hour, regular-route transit service. Peak-hour service only would be provided on weekdays and weekends in the following communities:

Apple Valley	Maple Grove
Arden Hills	Medicine Lake
Birchwood	Mendota
Burnsville	Mendota Heights
Centerville	Plymouth
Chanhassen	Prior Lake
Chaska	Rosemount
Circle Pines	Savage
Dellwood	Shakopee
Eagan	Sunfish Lake
Eden Prairie	White Bear Lake
Lilydale	White Bear Township
Lino lakes	Woodbury

- That the Regional Transit Board reduce the area of Metro Mobility coverage to Area 1 communities of Mendota Heights, West Bloomington, and East Edina to coincide with the area of coverage for peak-hour, regular-route transit service in these communities; and
- That the Regional Transit Board eliminate the Over-Eight-Mile Coupon Program.

Hollander added that the Americans with Disabilities (ADA) regulations may require that RTB will have to provide some type of discount fares comparable to those offered to regular-route customers. Staff may have to make additional recommendations to the board for such a program after the regulations are received.

The motion was approved (Ehrlichmann voted nay).

1991 Capital Funding Contract for the City of Hastings

Franklin moved and Theis seconded:

That the Regional Transit Board approve 1991 capital funding and authorize the executive director to enter into a capital contract with the City of Hastings in an amount not to exceed \$24,000.

The motion was unanimously approved.

Report of the Audit Advisory Committee

Franklin presented the Administration and Finance Committee's recommendations on the following items, which had been transmitted to the committee by the Audit Advisory Committee on April 25, 1991.

Audits of Dakota Area Referral and Transportation for Seniors, Inc. (DARTS)--1986, 1987, 1988, 1989

Franklin moved and Hilary seconded:

That the Regional Transit Board approve the audit reports on the Dakota Area Referral and Transportation for Seniors, Inc. (DARTS) for 1986, 1987, 1988 and 1989, but with the settlement of the net financial elements at \$7,758 due to DARTS.

The motion was unanimously approved.

Audits of Senior Community Services Transportation--1986, 1987, 1988 and 1989

Franklin moved and Hilary seconded the following recommendation.

That the Regional Transit Board approve the audit reports of the Senior Community Services Transportation Program, 1986 through 1989, and that the executive director be directed to implement a repayment schedule of \$100 per year until repaid.

Franklin added that the action is irresponsible because it will take 170 years to repay the obligation. She asked that the board review the issue and direct the executive director to negotiate a repayment plan that would accelerate repayment of the \$17,000 debt. O'Toole said the recommendation was a compromise; some members felt the debt should be cancelled. Ehrlichmann said at that Audit Advisory Committee meeting Franklin expressed concern that there were expenditures that were not appropriate within the context of the contract, but that Senior Community Services believed they had tacit approval to use volunteer time as a match to the contract. The organization is not capable of paying a large debt and repayment funds would be taken directly out of service. The Audit Advisory Committee did not want to set a precedent of forgiving the debt, but recognized that RTB shared responsibility by allowing the practice to continue.

Hilary said no one can be obligated to a commitment for 170 years. There has to be a time certain for the beginning and end of an obligation. Franklin said the debt should either be forgiven or repaid in ten years. O'Toole moved and This seconded:

That the Regional Transit Board forgive the financial obligation of Senior Community Services Transportation incurred in the final audits for 1986, 1987, 1988 and 1989.

The motion was unanimously approved. Wedell moved and O'Toole seconded:

That the Regional Transit Board approve the audit reports of the Senior Community Services Transportation Program, 1986 through 1989

The motion was unanimously approved.

Audits of Scott County Transportation Services--1988 and 1989

Franklin moved and This seconded:

That the Regional Transit Board approve the audit reports of the Scott County Transportation Service for 1988 and 1989.

The motion was unanimously approved.

Audits of Anoka County Transportation Programs--1988 and 1989

Franklin moved and This seconded:

That the Regional Transit Board approve the audit reports of the Anoka County Transportation Programs for 1988 and 1989.

The motion was unanimously approved.

Southwest Metro Transit Capital Fund Request

Franklin moved and This seconded:

That the Regional Transit Board amend the Regional Transit Board Five-Year Transit Plan to include Southwest Metro Transit park and ride lot projects and enter into a capital agreement with Southwest Metro Transit in an amount not to exceed \$1,050,000.

The motion was unanimously approved.

Franklin said the Administration and Finance Committee received an presentation by Dale Ulrich on the current cash flow situation. Ulrich distributed an updated projection of weekly cash balances for the period of April to June 1991. RTB is in a negative cash flow position and will withhold payment of bills to get through this period. Ehrlichmann said that since the situation is expected to worsen in the next biennium, the board members will have to authorize decreasing service and/or increasing fares. Hilary said local governments are in the same situation. If they managed their funds correctly in the past and maintained a sound fund balance, they were directed by the state to spend down

their balances. Unexpected demands to fund critical services will create strains on local budgets. If there is any kind of emergency the city could be bottomed out. The levels of service will never be what they were before this started--costs are rising and services are disappearing. Ehrlichmann said MTC operates with a higher fund balance, but it gives them very little flexibility. Theis commented on the contradiction in the state maintaining a "rainy day" fund while forcing local governments to eliminate that local fund.

OTHER BUSINESS

Legislative Report

Ehrlichmann and Munyon reviewed the final action by the Legislature on light rail transit, licensing of Metro Mobility Drivers, the joint RTB and Department of Human Services committee to study all paratransit programs, allocation of funds, securement devices for wheelchairs on buses, and the provision that metro agencies will have a non-voting Senate and House member on their boards. Six members of the board must be elected officials, but the stipulation as to what office they hold has been deleted. The proposed Opt-Out legislation did not pass. Senator DeCramer plans to hold hearings on the proposal. RTB, the railroad authorities and the Minnesota Department of Transportation's Commissioner will jointly prepare any application for federal assistance for light rail transit in the Metropolitan Area. The tax bill contains provisions affecting the regional railroad authorities and reducing the amount of the LRT levy to 75 percent of the amount actually levied in 1990. Any railroad authority that requests federal funds must prepare an operations and maintenance estimate and present it to the Metropolitan Council. The Legislature will study LRT in the interim. Members discussed the implications for LRT in the half-cent increase in sales taxes.

Munyon thanked Senators Kelly, Flynn and Langseth and Representatives Rice, Anderson and Kalis for their support of transit issues.

Michael Christenson said the proposed appropriation for transit is remarkable and everyone associated with transit worked together very well. Ehrlichmann thanked him and MTC Chair Faricy for their cooperation.

Morgan Grant expressed concern over the adoption of the staff recommendations on Metro Mobility. It was his understanding that they would be considered item by item. A TAAC representative should have been called upon to present other proposals. Ehrlichmann said the TAAC proposals were considered at the Administration and Finance Committee meeting and are not customarily reconsidered at the full board meeting. Grant said members of the handicapped community wish to address the board.

Andrews reported on the current legislative language regarding a three-percent cap on the levy. Ehrlichmann said it will be an RTB priority for the next legislative session to identify a new transit funding source such as a parking tax.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Kurt Strom, Minnesota State Council on Disabilities and member of TAAC, said it is a mistake to reduce service to Area II. ADA rules indicate that a lack of capacity is not an adequate valid reason to reduce service. More rides will be scheduled during peak hours. It is a violation of the equal treatment principle because it is an attempt to give equal

treatment to Area II, making it comparable to regular-route; however, some Metro Mobility users need to keep appointments for kidney dialysis and reducing their service hours places an additional burden on them.

The board did not consider the TAAC proposal for a \$10 annual renewal fee for standing orders, which might generate additional revenues to offset some other options being considered.

Ehrlichmann asked Hilary to assume the chair.

Bette Undis said the county cannot cover the people who were voted out of the service in Area II. Her personal situation will be adversely affected as well.

Ann Gerber, a Metro Mobility user, expressed amazement that an issue affecting the lives of people with disabilities was passed so quickly. Regular-route buses can only accommodate two wheelchairs and it is possible that if three wheelchair users want to board, one of them will not be allowed to ride. Hilary said the issue has been discussed for a long time and two public hearings were held. The proposal presented and approved at this meeting is more favorable for Metro Mobility users than the earlier recommendation. The issue is that there is no money. Gerber said she has been informed that RTB has funds for the program. Hilary said everyone is suffering and there is no good way to do this.

Gerber questioned the purchase of regular-route, lift-equipped buses. Ehrlichmann said that action is required by federal law. The potential exists to expand the number of wheelchair spaces on those buses.

Andrews said more options will be presented to the Policy Committee on May 28 and the TAAC recommendations are part of that presentation. The recommendations before the board today are those presented earlier for public hearing as the first phase of the reductions. Additional recommendations involve the means to reduce demand on the program.

Maggie Willy spoke against the service reductions.

Steve Dory, Courage Center, explained the long distances he and other Courage Center clients must travel and the affect of the elimination of the Over-Eight-Mile Coupon program on people with extremely limited disposable income. Hilary said it is important to attend those meetings where testimony can have the most effect. This meeting was not a public hearing. Dory said he was informed of that but wished to observe. Hilary said that with the reduced service people could consider saving rides for those events they must attend. Andrews said the Metro Mobility appropriation is \$25 million; \$1.7 million less than RTB requested. There is specific language in the bill prohibiting use of any other funds outside the appropriation for the program. In the past other funds were diverted to the program. That is the dilemma facing the board. The program must be structured so that RTB spends only that much over the next two years.

Ehrlichmann said the disability community was not strongly visible at the Legislature and he urged them to challenge RTB at the Department of Human Rights or the courts if the community does not like what we have done.

There being no other business, O'Toole moved and Caranicas seconded that the meeting be adjourned. The motion was unanimously approved and the meeting was adjourned at 5:35 p.m.

I hereby certify that the foregoing constitutes a true and accurate record of the Regional Transit Board's meeting of May 20, 1991.

Respectfully submitted,



Mary Fitzgerald
Secretary

Approved this third day of June 1991.



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Suzanne Hanson, Public Information Manager
Regional Transit Board
292-8789

METRO MOBILITY FARE AND SERVICE CHANGES TAKE EFFECT JULY 1

ST. PAUL, MN (June 7, 1991) -- Faced with significant funding cuts from the state Legislature, the Regional Transit Board (RTB) has approved a fare increase and a number of service changes for the Metro Mobility paratransit program effective July 1.

For rides up to 8 miles, the new fare will be \$2.00. All rides over 8 miles will be \$3.50. The old fare was \$1.00 for a ride up to 8 miles. Rides over 8 miles were subject to additional mileage charges. Extra mileage charges varied by provider but total fares could not exceed \$3.75. The new fare standardizes the charge for rides over 8 miles so riders no longer need to shop around for the lowest fare.

The largest service change will be a reduction in service hours in suburban areas experiencing low ridership. Approximately 200 trips out of a daily average total of 7000 trips occur in the affected suburban communities. Therefore, as of July 1, Metro Mobility service will be available only during peak hours, which are 6:00 to 9:00 a.m. and 3:30 to 6:30 p.m., in these communities: Apple Valley, Arden Hills, Birchwood, *Bloomington, Burnsville, Centerville, Chanhassen, Chaska, Circle Pines, Dellwood, Eagan, Eden Prairie, *Edina, Lilydale, Lino Lakes, Maple Grove, Medicine Lake, Mendota, Mendota Heights, Plymouth, Prior Lake, Rosemount, Savage, Shakopee, Sunfish Lake, and White Bear Township.

*Bloomington and Edina east of Normandale Boulevard or Highway 100 will remain in the full-service Metro Mobility area. Metro Mobility service will be limited to peak hours west of Normandale Boulevard or Highway 100 in Edina or Bloomington.

-- more --

Metro Mobility/page 2

"Unfortunately, the state's budget shortfall means many programs and services are being cut," RTB Chair Michael Ehrlichmann said. "We fought for full funding of the program, but Metro Mobility received only \$25.3 million for the next biennium, which is significantly less than the \$28 million we needed to keep the program operating at last year's level. The Legislature also stipulated that no money from other transit programs could be used to provide Metro Mobility service. It's simply impossible to fit a \$29 million foot into a \$25 million shoe. We are more than willing to listen to any better ideas of how to meet these budget demands."

Two more cost-saving measures will take effect July 1. Escorts will no longer be allowed to ride Metro Mobility for free and providers will no longer receive a subsidy for escorts.

In addition, there will be a change in how standing orders are placed. Standing orders are rides delivered to and from the same points at least three times a week. Riders will now pay an annual \$10 renewal fee in addition to the \$10 initial fee to set up a standing order.

In developing the changes, the RTB worked closely with members of the disability community, senior citizens and others who rely on Metro Mobility. The RTB held public hearings this spring to get riders' input on proposed changes and worked with its Transit Accessibility Advisory Committee to find ways to operate Metro Mobility within the allotted budget.

"After reviewing the range of options, the RTB felt that these changes represent the best balance between fiscal responsibility and dedication to meeting riders' transportation needs," Ehrlichmann added.

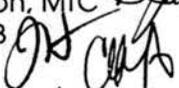
The RTB is studying additional changes that may be necessary in the near future to further reduce the program's cost. These measures include revising the eligibility criteria for certification, developing a complementary, lower-cost program for riders who do not need lift-equipped van service, and improving Metro Mobility administrative procedures.

REGIONAL TRANSIT BOARD

Mears Park Centre
230 East Fifth Street, St. Paul, Minnesota 55101
612/292-8789

DATE: June 14, 1991

TO: Members of the Regional Transit Board
Members of the Metropolitan Transit Commission

FROM: Beverly Auld, Assistant Chief Administrator for Administration, MTC 
Judith G. Hollander, Director of Planning and Programs, RTB 

SUBJECT: Staff Response to Metro Mobility Customer Service Quality and Safety Report

Staff members at both the MTC and RTB are now reviewing in detail the findings and recommendations presented by Mary O'Hara Anderson in her recently released report entitled, "Metro Mobility Customer Service Quality and Safety Report." It is our plan to examine these findings and recommendations and then determine how to best respond in making improvements to the Metro Mobility program.

To that end, we have begun to develop an action plan (see the attached document) and established an RTB/MTC staff committee that will make recommendations for specific actions to be taken by the MTC and the RTB, both singly and jointly. The action plan, once completed, will list the report recommendations and then identify current status of staff activities, the proposed action(s) to be taken, the agency to be responsible, cost of implementation and target dates for completion.

It is our intent to provide regular updates of the action plan to both the RTB and the MTC as well as the Transit Accessibility Advisory Committee.

METRO MOBILITY
 CUSTOMER SERVICE QUALITY AND SAFETY REPORT
 ACTION PLAN

DRAFT

Study Issues	Study Recommendations	Current Activities/Status	Proposed Action	Agency Responsible
Certification Process	Establish certification panel made up of medical professionals.	RTB staff will examine and pursue certification eligibility changes.		RTB
Eligibility Criteria	Establish new criteria for eligibility.	ADA establishes specific criterion for identifying those persons deemed eligible for paratransit service. The determination of eligibility and the processing of potential users will be done in accordance to ADA.		RTB
Escort Policy	Determination of whether or not an applicant needs an escort to travel is the decision of a medical professional.	MMAC has an escort policy. Determination is based on medical professional, endanger to themselves or other passengers, or demonstrated harmful behavior to themselves or other passengers.	MMAC will reexamine escort policy.	MMAC/RTB
Medical Verification Forms	Letter to Metro Mobility applicant with Tennessee Warning statement. Proposed changes in medical verification form.	MMAC certification form contains statements that serve as a Tennessee Warning. These statements currently appear where the applicant signs the form. The proposed medical verification form lacks the medical information required to determine whether or not the applicant requires an escort to travel or can be certified for seasonal use. The proposed form also does not state that the medical professional will provide supporting documentation upon request.		MMAC

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Study Issues	Study Recommendations	Current Activities/Status	Proposed Action	Agency Responsible
Medical Advisory	Educational advisory for medical professionals.	TAAC has recommended to the RTB that a warning to physicians notice be placed on the Metro Mobility application form be reconsidered for the next legislative session.		RTB
MMAC Staffing	<p>Add position qualifications to all position descriptions. Create new staff position with computer programming/ technician skills. Add two qualifications to field observer position; vehicle mechanical background, to years of previous vehicle inspection experience. Rename safety administrator to "compliance trainer." This position would train all special transportation/Metro Mobility drivers and change procedures for this service.</p> <p>Integrate riders' liaison into MTC's customer service unit. This position should require knowledge of data privacy laws. Create new intake administrator position. This position would take calls, document information, route calls to other staff, and give out accurate information about the program. Reassign other tasks to two current supervisors.</p>	<p>Reorganization of MMAC staff structure proposed for July 1, 1991. The safety administrator will become the contract compliance supervisor as part of the staff reorganization. This position will assure compliance of Metro Mobility providers with contract requirements and state standards, and provide safety support to providers, analyze safety data, and take corrective action to assure the elimination of safety problems.</p> <p>The primary responsibility of the field observer is the visual inspection of Metro Mobility vehicles using a checklist to determine compliance with providers contract.</p>		<p>MTC/MMAC</p> <p>MMAC/MTC</p>
Policy Procedure Manual	Document should be revised to include data privacy practices, comprehensive processes for handling service complaints, process for handling vehicle inspection, staff training requirements, hiring procedures, and a comprehensive list of A & B violations.	The manual will be updated with relevant material as the contract is finalized. STS rules and regulations are promulgated and when the vulnerable adult law is finalized and made part of the provider contract.		MTC/MMAC

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MMAC Computer	New computer enhancement options should be explored including the use of the MTC's mainframe computer and additional software packages for all aspects of managing the MMAC. A letter of understanding between the RTB and MTC should be developed with a timeline for completion of the computer enhancements/changes projects.	A study is in process by the MTC management information services department of the MMAC services and functions by July 1, 1991. RTB/MMAC staff work together.		MTC/RTB
Operating Standards for Special Transportation	Letters of support for the proposed revisions should be sent by the RTB to Mn/DOT and the hearing examiner when published. The RTB should support the establishment of a unit within MN/DOT to investigate and take immediate action on safety/vehicle violations.	RTB staff has met with Mn/DOT staff regarding the proposed rules. RTB staff supports the need to support the establishment of a unit in Mn/DOT to investigate vehicle violations.		RTB
Contingency Plan	In the event that a provider of Metro Mobility service is unable to provide service, the MMAC will contact the remaining providers and coordinate trips. A plan should be developed to use MTC accessible buses.			MTC/MMAC