Metro Transit

FORWARD

Fare Policy Proposal
Transportation Committee
November 9, 2026

Agenda

- **Proposed Fare Changes**
  - Express Bus, Youth Fare
  - Metro Micro
- **Technology Features**
  - Tap to Pay, Fare Capping
- **Title VI Findings**
- **Proposed Action**



Fare Simplification – Initial Proposal

Items as Originally Approved by Council on March 25, 2026 (Business Item 2026-43)



Proposed Fare Changes

Express all-day = $3 full fare, $1 reduced

Youth eligibility 6-12 to 6-18

Metro micro = $4 full fare, $1 TAP



Technology Features

Tap to Pay

Fare Capping

Outreach and Engagement Overview
March 26 – May 26

- **Public Comment:** 500 respondents – 72% Support, 20% Against, 7% Neutral
- **Public Hearings:** Two in-person hearings and one virtual hearing, 36 total attendees
- **Onboard engagement:** Express Routes 94, 850, 768, and 250 and Metro micro (5 zones), 150+ customers + Great Day in Transit April campaign, 2,800 customers
- **Community pop-ups:** 11 events at key destinations (transit centers, downtown gathering spaces), 300+ community members
- **Stakeholder briefings and presentations:** 5 stakeholder presentations throughout region
- **Targeted stakeholder outreach:** Notices and partner packets sent to 86 municipal staff, 540+ pass program administrators, 5 regional transit providers, 35 Metro micro stakeholders

Express Bus Service and Youth Pricing: Current Policy and 2026 Proposal

Policy Category	Current Fare or Policy	2026 Proposal
One fare for express buses – All the time (Regular and Reduced)	• Peak Express Fare: $3.25 & Off-peak Express: $2.50 • Reduced Express $1.00* *only during non-peak hours for youth, seniors (65+), and Medicare Card holders	• **$3.00** to ride an express bus **at any time** • **$1.00** reduced express fare **at any time** (Applies to Transit Assistance Program (TAP) customers, limited mobility customers, youth, seniors (65+), and Medicare card holders)
Youth pricing	Youth ages 6-12 are eligible for $1.00 reduced fares	Youth ages 6-**18** are eligible for $1.00 reduced fares

Metro Micro Public Feedback

- **Respondents who reacted positively** expressed enthusiasm about standardization and introduction of open-payments.

- **Respondents who reacted negatively** frequently cited the following reasons for opposing the proposal:
  - Metro micro is a substitute to fixed route service/extension of Metro Transit regular route system
  - Initial $4 fare proposal and discontinuation of reduced-fares for certain groups poses affordability and fairness concerns
  - Combined effect of fare increase and no pass acceptance may prevent customers from connecting to fixed-route system

Metro Micro Proposed Fares

Current Fare			Revised Proposed Fare	Discussion
	Non-rush	Rush	***$3.00*** *– Adult* ***$1.00*** *- TAP/Mobility/Senior/Youth* **Transfers**: To & from* fixed route no micro-to-micro transfers *Surcharges may apply ***Accepted Passes:*** *7-Day & 31-Day*	Direct response to public feedback by aligning the proposed fare to $3.00 for Adults ***and*** $1.00 for ***all Reduced fares***.
Adults	$2.50	$3.25		
Reduced Fare: Youth, Seniors, Medicare card	$1	$3.25		
Mobility Fare	$1	$1		
TAP	$1	$1		

Technology Features – More Ways to Pay

Pay with debit/credit cards or mobile wallets like Apple Pay and Google Pay.





Tap to Pay – 2027

Technology Features - Fare Capping

Policy Category	Current Fare or Policy	2026 Proposal
Fare Capping	*Technology dependent	**Fare caps can replace prepaid passes.** • Pay as you go, never overpay • Unlimited rides after meeting the daily or monthly fare cap **Local Fare Cap** • Daily Cap- $4 Regular fares, $2 Reduced • Monthly Cap - $64 Regular, $32 Reduced **Express Fare Cap** • Daily Cap- $6 (New), $2 Reduced fares • Monthly Cap- $96 , $32 Reduced *Note, Metro micro fares would not count toward the fare cap.

Title VI – Key Takeaways

Fare changes after completing analysis with youth age expansion

- No Disparate Impact (impact based on race)
- Disproportionate Burden (income) is still evident
- Mitigation steps include:
  - Route 94 being replaced by Gold Line Extension
  - Fare capping
  - Combining multi-year effort for fare simplification and expansion of TAP and other programs.

Fare capping

- No identified DI/DB impacts

Proposed Action

That the Metropolitan Council approve the proposed fare policy changes as outlined in the 2026 Proposal column of Attachment 1 to this item, to be effective February 1, 2027.

Thank You!

Tom Randall – Tom.Randall@metrotransit.org

Dustin Crescini – Dustin.Crescini@metrotransit.org