

AGENCY INITIATIVE: UPDATE TRANSIT FARE PASSES

H.F. 1327 (Tabke) / S.F. 1053 (Port)



The Metropolitan Council (Council) offers several passes to pay transit fares. These passes are available through employers, schools, and organizations. Our transit fare pass products are regional passes and can be used on all bus and rail trips region-wide, not only Metro Transit-provided services. This proposal would allow the Council to create passes that better reflect our current transit system and would provide some additional flexibility to create transit fare programs and passes that respond to our riders' needs.

Why is this legislation needed?

- [Minnesota Statutes 473.408: Fare Policy](#) (1) requires the Council to establish fares and fare collection systems that accomplish legislatively prescribed purposes; and (2) identifies several specific types of fares the Council may implement. By listing certain types of fares that the Council may implement, section 473.408 limits the Council's ability to create other types of transit fare pass programs.
- The current language in statute is obsolete because it restricts discounted fare pass programs to regular route bus rides. Over the last 15+ years, Metro Transit has added light rail, commuter rail, and bus rapid transit to our transit system, and the Council continues to explore ways to make public transit more accessible and user-friendly.
- In practice, Metro Transit's monthly passes (473.408, Subd. 6), employee passes (Subd. 7), charitable organization discount passes (Subd. 8), and youth discount passes (Subd. 9) are used on Metro Transit modes beyond regular route bus. Since riders often transfer between modes (e.g., from light rail to bus), in practice, it is not feasible to restrict the use of transit passes to only regular route bus. And restricting passes to only regular route bus would make them less useful and less attractive to riders.
- In addition to removing the regular route bus limitation, the proposed language would provide the Metropolitan Council with some flexibility to create innovative transit fare pass programs to meet the needs of our riders consistent with the fare policy prescribed in state law. With changing travel behavior due to COVID, Metro Transit is seeking ways to rebuild ridership that could benefit from new types of fare pass programs.
- This legislation would allow the Met Council to establish transit fare programs and passes that could include a discount pass program for: public and private employers, public and private organizations, school districts, demonstration projects, and special events.

Contact

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