

**Washington Metropolitan Area Transportation Authority
Board Action/Information Summary**

Action
 Information

MEAD Number:
99699

Resolution:
 Yes No

PURPOSE

To obtain Board approval:

1. To modify Contract No. C05108 to extend the use of 75 surplus vehicles through FY07; to transition to door-to-door service; to implement cashless payment technology; to purchase 19-passenger vehicles to improve scheduling efficiency; to obtain contractor membership in CTAA enabling bulk fuel purchases.
2. To purchase up to 65 new MetroAccess vans.
3. To procure consulting services to revise the MetroAccess certification process and recommend geographic boundaries and operations strategy for zoned MetroAccess services.
4. To initiate and award a competitive procurement for technology enhancements for high-level data extraction, route analysis and planning, and cashless fare payment.
5. To authorize an increase in staff as follows: One eligibility manager and two agents, one business analyst, three field monitors, and one planner.
6. To establish a website to be an information clearinghouse for regional paratransit information.

DESCRIPTION

On average, 500 new customers are certified for eligibility for MetroAccess each month. Average weekday ridership has increased 6.26% since May. Growth is likely to accelerate with the doubling of residents 75+ years in age by 2030 who, along with younger adults with disabilities, wish to participate in community life.

The Department of Community Transportation Services (CTS) recommends a holistic approach to improving MetroAccess service while offering attractive and more efficient mobility options for people with disabilities. Job Access Reverse Commute (JARC) funds would be used, except where otherwise noted, to implement the recommendations listed below.

Service Improvements

- Purchase up to 65 new MetroAccess vans that would provide enough maintenance spares, be strategically placed for quick recovery from service delays, and allow the return of 30 sedans MV has leased beyond the expectations of the contract to maintain service quality.
- Cover transition costs of door-to-door service. This includes customer education, training for MV drivers and call center staff, customer education and associated literature.
- Establish a web-based regional clearinghouse for paratransit information.
- Allow cashless fare payment and automated billing to human service agencies already referring MetroAccess rides.
- Increase staffing by one eligibility manager, one business analyst, two eligibility agents and three field monitors to guarantee service quality.

Demand Management

- Include conditional eligibility in the certification options process and enable applicants to learn how to use fixed-route transit within their capabilities, identify physical barriers preventing their access to transit facilities, and inform applicants of both existing and new transit options.
- Hire a consultant to revise the MetroAccess certification process and, with future Board concurrence, to implement those revisions.
- Provide attractive and affordable paratransit alternatives through partnerships with experienced paratransit providers operating vehicles larger than MetroAccess vans. Regularly scheduled group shopping and recreational trips during off-peak travel times have proven attractive to senior citizens and people with disabilities. These *Metro Partner* trips would be initially targeted to current MetroAccess users.
- Purchase five 19-passenger vehicles to provide group rides more efficiently.
- Enable *Metro Partners* to provide the almost 1,000 daily rides MetroAccess currently serves to and from day support and vocational programs for people with disabilities. These trips require the hand-to-hand level of service already provided by several potential *Metro Partners*.
- Provide SmarTrip® cards to Medicaid recipients who are able to use fixed-route transit to their medical appointments through a trial project. Jurisdictions will significantly reduce transportation expenses and recipients will be able to use the card for other trips.
- Hire a consultant to develop a transition plan for zoned services, such as used in San Diego and Chicago, for later Board review. Zoned transportation is a more efficient use of vehicles and manpower. This strategy will encourage shorter trips, increase driver familiarity with their territory and increase customer satisfaction.

Resource Management

- Extend the use of 75 vehicles through FY07 that were scheduled for removal from the fleet in January 2006.
- Purchase four aboveground fuel tanks through MetroAccess vendor membership in the Community Transportation Association of America (CTAA). Dedicated MetroAccess vehicles based at four of the seven sites do not have access to bulk fuel purchases and consequently are fueled at retail price. Cooperative fuel purchases through CTAA membership will realize annual cost savings of \$345,000 per year after amortization in 10 months of aboveground fuel tanks.
- Hire a consultant to develop protocols for CTS/MetroAccess staff to audit MetroAccess contractor performance and invoicing.
- Purchase technology enhancements to support the above activities.

FUNDING IMPACT

\$6.1 million JARC. Non-JARC FY08 funds will be requested to maintain the database and train personnel of community-based organizations in its use.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Board authorize the following actions:

1. Modify Contract No. C05108 to extend the use of 75 surplus vehicles through FY07; to transition to door-to-door service; to implement cashless payment technology; to purchase 19-passenger vehicles to improve scheduling efficiency; to obtain contractor membership in CTAA enabling bulk fuel purchases.
2. To initiate & award a contract for the purchase of up to 65 new MetroAccess vans.
3. To initiate & award a contract for consulting services to revise the MetroAccess certification process and recommend geographic boundaries and operations strategy for zoned MetroAccess services.
4. To initiate and award a competitive procurement for technology enhancements for high-level data extraction, route analysis and planning, and cashless fare payment.
5. To authorize an increase in staff as follows: One eligibility manager and two agents, one business analyst, three field monitors, and one planner.
6. To establish a website to be an information clearinghouse for regional paratransit information."

PROPOSED AND ADOPTED:

SUBJECT: COMMUNITY TRANSPORTATION INITIATIVES

PROPOSED
RESOLUTION
OF THE
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
OF THE
WASHINGTON METROPOLITAN AREA TRANSIT AUTHORITY

WHEREAS, On February 16, 2006, the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) Board of Directors created the MetroAccess Ad Hoc Advisory Committee (the "Committee") to review WMATA's paratransit service; and

WHEREAS, The Committee recommended that MetroAccess provide door-to-door service; and

WHEREAS, The WMATA Board of Directors approved the initiation and award of a consultant contract, for the financial analysis of the cost-bearing recommendations in the Committee's final report; and

WHEREAS, That consultant's report states, "Our analysis of available data concerning service delays and no shows, combined with peer data and other industry practice knowledge we offer about ADA paratransit, leads us to conclude that the net result of changing WMATA's policies on wait time from 10 to 5 minutes and changing the level of service from curb-to-curb to door-to-door, will be negligible;" and

WHEREAS, Partnerships with human services transportation providers can create more cost-effective and mobility options for customers through coordination of services and the use of vehicles owned by WMATA's *Community Transportation Partners*; and

WHEREAS, As stated in the final policy statement issued in October 2006, by the Federal Interagency Coordinating Council on Access and Mobility (ICCAM), "If program policy permits, vehicles acquired by one program may be shared with or used by other Federal programs and/or community organizations to provide transportation services to their benefiting population;" now, therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the WMATA Board of Directors approves the establishment of door-to-door service as the primary mode of passenger assistance on MetroAccess; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the WMATA Board of Directors authorizes the establishment of partnerships in support of coordinated paratransit services (including vehicle sharing) transportation and authorizes the General Manager to execute memoranda of understanding with partner organizations setting out the terms of such partnerships as warranted; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the WMATA Board of Directors supports staff efforts to explore revising the MetroAccess eligibility/certification process maximize riders' use of fixed-route public transit to the extent of their abilities; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the WMATA Board of Directors supports staff efforts to improve MetroAccess on-time performance and operations efficiency by the implementation of service zones if found to be operationally and fiscally appropriate; and be it finally

RESOLVED, That this Resolution shall be effective immediately.

Reviewed as to form and legal sufficiency,



Carol B. O'Keeffe
General Counsel

PROPOSED AND ADOPTED:

SUBJECT: APPROVAL OF FEDERAL FUNDS FOR PARATRANSIT

PROPOSED
RESOLUTION
OF THE
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
OF THE
WASHINGTON METROPOLITAN AREA TRANSIT AUTHORITY

WHEREAS, The Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) established the Job Access and Reverse Commute Grant Program (JARC), authorized under Section 3037 of the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century and the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) subsequently received federal appropriations under this program; and

WHEREAS, Pursuant to the requirements of the Regional Job Access and Reverse Commute Transportation Program, WMATA, in cooperation with participating local jurisdictions and regional agencies, utilized JARC funds to establish a One-Stop Trip Information, Referral and Dispatching Center to provide a centralized source of information on available transportation services in the region; to provide qualified low income customers of the funding partners with transportation to and from employments sites that are not accessible by public transportation; and to provide reverse commuter transportation; and

WHEREAS, TEA-21 required certain obligations from the applicant, including the provision that the non-federal share of the project costs or matching funds were to be provided by participating funding partners, local jurisdictions or their agencies on a 50/50 participatory basis; and

WHEREAS, WMATA had difficulty in sustaining a JARC program because certain states and local governments were unable to provide a required 50/50 match; and

WHEREAS, The Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2005 authorized WMATA to reprogram unused JARC funds from previous years for paratransit purposes; and

WHEREAS, As a result, approximately \$6.1 million of previously appropriated federal JARC funds are available to be spent for paratransit purposes and the required federal match can be met by state and local contributions from Compact members already provided for paratransit purposes at WMATA; and

WHEREAS, Many MetroAccess paratransit trips provided by WMATA serve individuals who are traveling to and from employment, consistent with the FFY-05 appropriations language; and

WHEREAS, WMATA recently created a new Department for Community Transportation Services, which is responsible for the MetroAccess paratransit services and other community-related services associated with paratransit; and

WHEREAS, Staff proposes amending the paratransit mode of the FY 2007 operating budget to include the \$6.1 million in previously-appropriated JARC federal funds that are available to WMATA for use in paratransit service; and

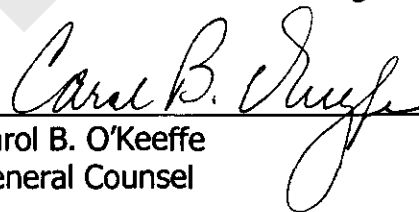
WHEREAS, Staff proposes that the Chief Operating Officer for Community Transportation Services, shall have access to the \$6.1 million in JARC federal funds once it is drawn down by WMATA now, therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the Board of Directors approves amending the paratransit mode of the FY 2007 budget to include the \$6.1 million in JARC federal funds that are available for paratransit purposes at WMATA; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Board of Directors directs the Chief Operating Officer for Community Transportation Services to expend JARC funds as detailed on Attachment A, and in accordance with applicable federal regulations, and authorizes the initiation and award of contracts and modifications to contracts in support of the expenditure of these funds for the listed projects; and be it finally

RESOLVED, That this Resolution shall be effective immediately.

Reviewed as to form and legal sufficiency,



Carol B. O'Keeffe
General Counsel

MANAGE SERVICE

DESCRIPTION OF EXPENDITURE	COST	FUNDING	CONTRACT MOD?
Provide resources for transition to door-to-door service including staff training, customer information, and initial standby capacity	\$255,000	JARC	Yes
Purchase of up to 65 new and used MetroAccess vans ¹	\$2,793,032	JARC	No
Extend use of 75 older MetroAccess vehicles through FY07 (insurance and dispatch coverage - other operating expenses are already covered in the FY07 MetroAccess budget).	\$373,856	JARC	Yes
Waive productivity requirement through June 2007 in lieu of enhanced staffing configuration	\$0	N/A	Yes
Establish regional clearinghouse (internet site) for paratransit information arrangement with Council of Governments	\$350,000	JARC	No
Expand regional clearinghouse to include live telephone assistance using volunteers from ethnic and community organizations ²	\$125,000	WMATA FY08	No
Implement technology to enable cashless payment for MetroAccess customers and charge-back to appropriate agencies for human services transportation	\$125,000	JARC	Yes
Increase MetroAccess staff: one eligibility manager; one business analyst, two eligibility agents; three field monitors ³	\$720,000	JARC	No
TOTAL	\$4,781,888		

1 MV contract includes annual purchase of 19 vans and seven sedans

2 Not included in JARC expenditures

3 FY09 operating budget expenditure

MANAGE DEMAND

DESCRIPTION OF EXPENDITURE	COST	FUNDING	CONTRACT MOD?
Purchase of five 19-passenger vehicles after operating agreements are signed with partnering organizations and offer MetroAccess scheduling and other resources to be used by Metro Partners experienced in human service transportation. Purchase price will be amortized by partnering organizations. Create Community Transportation services to attract targeted riders from MetroAccess. Attract low-income riders currently using special Medicaid transportation to Metrobus and Metrorail through provision of SmartCards, thereby freeing capacity on Metro Partners for group rides and reducing Medicaid expenditures by the District of Columbia, Maryland and Virginia.	\$424,250	JARC	Yes
Add one staff position to revise and update general MetroAccess ridership and demand projections, as well as for specific demographic groups.	91,700	JARC	No
Initiate and award consultant contract to develop and implement revised MetroAccess eligibility process to mainstream riders' transit use to the extent their disabilities will allow ⁴	\$50,000	JARC	No
TOTAL	\$565,950.00		

⁴ Future Board approval will be requested

MANAGE RESOURCES

DESCRIPTION OF EXPENDITURE	COST	FUNDING	CONTRACT MOD?
Require dedicated MetroAccess contractors to obtain membership in Community Transportation Association of American, enabling cooperative fuel purchase with an annual fuel cost savings of \$345,000 per year after 10 month amortization of above-ground fuel tanks	\$281,630	JARC	Yes
Initiate and award consultant contract to recommend and develop protocol for CTS/MetroAccess staff to audit MetroAccess contractor performance and invoicing	\$50,000	JARC	Yes
Initiate and award consultant contract to recommend geographic boundaries and operations strategy for zoned MetroAccess services	\$40,000	JARC	No
Purchase and implement technology enhancements to facilitate high-level data extraction, route analysis and planning; call center monitoring; and cashless fare payment option	\$380,532	JARC	No
Increase frequency of vehicle preventive maintenance and inspections ⁵	\$40,000	JARC	Yes
TOTAL	\$792,162		
TOTAL JARC EXPENDITURES	\$6,100,000	\$125,000 FY08 Operating	

⁵ FY08 operating budget expenditure

JARC EXPENDITURE IMPACT ON FY08 BUDGET

DESCRIPTION OF ANNUAL OPERATING EXPENSE	COST
Funds transfer to COG for maintenance of paratransit information website This website will inform customers of alternatives to MetroAccess.	\$125,000
Partnerships to provide peak human service and off-peak discretionary rides in a more attractive and efficient manner Rides provided through partnerships will be diverted from current MetroAccess demand	\$960,000
Increase frequency of vehicle preventive maintenance inspections Increasing oil changes from every 6,000 miles to every 4,000 miles will extend vehicle life	\$80,000
CTAA membership to allow continued bulk fuel purchase	\$6,500
TOTAL	\$1,171,500.
Annual Expenditures not directly offset by MetroAccess Savings	\$125,000

The purchase of new MetroAccess vehicles is not included in this table, as the operating and maintenance cost is already built into the contract and the proposed FY08 budget.