

Fare and Service Change Policy

In order to provide appropriate levels of service, the City of Moorhead's public transit system (MATBUS) may bring forth proposed changes in routes and fare structure. Before enacting any changes in fares or service, MATBUS will evaluate the changes to determine if they are temporary, minor, or major. If the change is found to be major, MATBUS will follow a procedure to solicit public comment and City Council approval. These evaluation definitions and procedures are outlined in the following document.

Definitions

Temporary Service Change

Temporary service changes are those that are in effect for a limited time period, due to road construction, special events, etc., and are not intended to be permanent.

The Transit Manager shall make temporary service changes administratively. If a temporary service change is to become permanent, the Transit Manager will evaluate the change to determine if it is minor or major and follow the procedures outlined below.

Minor Service Change

A route or service change is considered minor if it affects less than 25% of the route's mileage and/or annual revenue hours.

Minor service changes shall be made upon approval of the City Council.

Major Service Change

A route or service change is considered major if any of the following apply:

1. Elimination or addition of a route
2. Any change in routes affecting greater than 25% of the route's mileage and/or annual revenue hours.
3. Changes that would reduce or eliminate service to schools, elderly/public housing, hospitals or social service agencies.

All major route changes will be subject to the public hearing process and implemented after approval by the City Council.

All fare changes will be considered a major service change, except short-term fare-free or reduced fare promotions. Short-term promotional fares will be presented to the City Manager for approval in advance of the change.

Public Comment/Hearing Procedure

The City of Moorhead must solicit and consider public comment before implementation of all changes in fares or major changes in service.

Public hearings will be held for all fare and major route changes. Public hearing dates are set and hearing notices appear in the official Moorhead newspaper approximately two weeks prior to the actual hearing. Hearings are held during the City Council's regularly scheduled meetings at Moorhead City Hall. Hearings are open to the public; anyone wishing to speak at the hearing is afforded the opportunity. If someone is unable to attend the hearing, written comments are accepted prior to the hearing.

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The Transit Manager will summarize all comments received prior to the public hearing. The summary and an analysis of the proposed change(s) will be provided to the City Council during the scheduled public hearing for consideration.

Notification Process

The public will be notified of an upcoming public hearing through a variety of methods, in order to ensure adequate opportunity for public comment and participation in the public hearing.

The notification methods will be required as follows:

- Newspaper – The public hearing notice will be published in the City’s official newspaper at least once, with the first notice appearing in the newspaper a minimum of two weeks prior to the public hearing.
- City Website – A notice of the hearing will be published with the City Council agenda, which is published on the City of Moorhead website (cityofmoorhead.com).
- MATBUS Website – A notice of the hearing will be published on the MATBUS website (MATBUS.com).
- Rider Alerts – A notice of the hearing will be distributed through a MATBUS Rider Alert. Members of the public can sign up for Rider Alert emails through the MATBUS website.
- Social Media – Notice of the hearing will be published on MATBUS’s social media pages (Facebook and Twitter).
- Transit Center Posted Information – Notice of the hearing will be posted at the main transportation hub, the Ground Transportation Center at 502 NP Avenue, Fargo, ND. Additional information and hard copy comment sheets will be made available at the dispatch window and/or an informational display.

Notification Format

The public hearing notice will include the following information:

- Time, date and location of the public hearing
- Description of proposed changes
- Statement that the public will have the opportunity to comment at the hearing
- Contact information for the person that may be contacted for additional information, or to provide comments prior to the public hearing
- Instructions on how to request accessible formats of the information or accommodation during the public hearing

Council Action

At the conclusion of the public hearing, the City Council will vote to approve or deny the proposed change(s). If passed, the approved change will be documented through a written resolution and filed in public record.

Policy Date

This policy is dated September 10, 2018.