



REPORT TO CITY COUNCIL

Approved by: 

Department Director


Arnoldo Rodriguez, City Manager

Council Meeting of: September 21, 2022

Agenda Number: D-4

SUBJECT:

Fare adjustments for Madera Metro and Dial-A-Ride

RECOMMENDATION:

Adopt a Resolution Approving a Modified Fare Structure for the Fixed Route Transit System and Limited Dial-A-Ride Transit System and Rescinding Resolution No. 20-58

SUMMARY:

On April 14, 2020 the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) issued Safety Advisory 20-01, pursuant to 49 CFR § 5.25 recommending that transit agencies develop and implement procedures and practices to ensure the safety of transit passengers, employees and the public during the COVID-19 national emergency. The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act provided \$25 billion to transit agencies to help prevent, prepare for, and respond to the pandemic.

In response to this Safety Advisory, on April 15, 2020, Council adopted Resolution No. 20-58 which:

- Temporarily eliminated fares for Madera Metro's fixed route system to avoid drivers and passengers from exchanging fares
- Limited Dial-A-Ride (DAR) to disabled and senior passengers given that measures were being implemented to protect passengers and drivers

Given the evolvement of COVID-19, staff is proposing an updated fare structure. The following summarizes the existing and proposed rates:

- Prior to COVID-19 most riders, including the disabled and elderly, were charged a fare as reflected in Table 1 below.
- The modified fare structure described in Table 2 below will allow most riders to continue using the City's transit system with no fare charged.

- Staff is recommending that the updated fares go into effect January 1, 2023
- The effective date is to allow Madera Community College students to obtain their required school ID, and for the City to sufficiently advertise the new fare requirements.

It is noted that Madera Metro provides service on thirty-two- and twenty-six-foot buses at prescheduled stops. Approximately up to thirty-five passengers may be accommodated per bus. In comparison, DAR provides door-to-door service in a twenty-six-foot transit bus that is capable of accommodating up to twenty-four passenger per bus. Overall, operating costs are higher for Madera Metro in comparison to DAR; however, cost per passenger is greater for DAR in comparison to Madera Metro given that it provides door-to-door service.

Table 1 summarizes the City’s Transit System Fare Structure Pre-Covid:

Table 1: Transit Fare Structure (Pre-Covid)	
Fixed Route Transit Service	<i>Fare</i>
Cash Fare	\$1.00
Monthly Pass (unlimited rides)	\$26.00
Transfer	No Charge
Children Under 3 Years Old	No Charge
Seniors, Disabled, Medicare Cardholders	\$0.50
Dial-A-Ride (DAR)	
Cash Fares (General Public)	\$3.00
Children Under 1 Year	\$1.00
Senior (60+) Disabled – City Area (<i>Trips beginning in the City</i>)	\$1.00
Senior (60+) Disabled – County Area (<i>Trips beginning in the County</i>)	\$2.00
DAR TICKETS	
General Public – Book of 20	\$40.00
Disabled – Book of 10	\$9.00
Senior (60+) – Book of 10	\$5.00

Table 2 summarizes the Proposed Transit System Fare Structure:

Table 2: Proposed Transit System Fare Structure beginning on January 1, 2023	
Fixed Route Transit Service	Fare
General Public – All Ages	No Charge
Dial-A-Ride (DAR)	
General Public (17 years of age and under)	No Charge
General Public (Ages 18+)	\$3.00
College Students	No charge with valid student ID
Senior (60+), Disabled, Veterans	No Charge
ADA/Paratransit (ADAP)	
Senior (60+), Disabled, Veterans (only)	No Charge
ADAP Personal Care Attendant	No Charge
Companions of ADAP Passenger	\$3.00

While staff is recommending that most fares be waived, revenue that otherwise could have been generated with rider fares will be offset with the Low Carbon Transit Operations Program (LCTOP) State Funds which are apportioned to the City annually.

Table 3 provides a comparison of previous City LCTOP annual allocations with transit revenues through Transit Fares

Table 3: Transit Revenue Streams			
<i>Fiscal Year</i>	<i>LCTOP Annual Allocation</i>	<i>Dial-A-Ride Fare Revenue</i>	<i>Fixed Route Fare Revenue</i>
2019/20	\$123,774	\$43,860	\$83,000
2020/21*	\$124,327	\$38,637	\$81,500
2021/22*	\$68,516	\$0	\$0
2022/23*	\$161,158	\$0	\$0
*April 15, 2020, Council adopted Resolution No. 20-58 which approved the elimination of fares for Madera Metro’s Transit System due to the COVID-19 pandemic			

DISCUSSION:

City staff, Transit Advisory Board members, and other stakeholders continuously strategize new ways to improve and enhance the City’s public transit system. As City staff reviewed and assessed all transit needs, the need to make transit affordable and reliable has become an ongoing request. To address making transit affordable for all users, staff contacted Madera County Transportation Commission (MCTC) who serves as the City Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and Caltrans – District 6 representative on eligible LCTOP projects.

LCTOP is one of the several programs that are part of the Transit, Affordable Housing, and Sustainable Community Programs established by the California Legislature in 2014 by Senate Bill 862. LCTOP was created to provide operating and capital assistance for transit agencies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, vehicle miles traveled, and improve mobility, with a priority on service to disadvantage communities. “Free Transit Services” is an eligible LCTOP project and will allow the City’s transit system to provide free services to majority of its passengers.

Staff became aware that the City’s vulnerable population (Seniors and Disabled) faced challenges when needing to make a reservation through the City DAR service. In response, City staff implemented changes to clearly distinguish the difference between DAR and ADAP with the revision of ADAP policies and procedures, marketing material, and reservation and eligibility requirements. This change has proven beneficial to these riders. Staff is confident the modified fare structure will complement the latter change and improve the City’s transit service for riders.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

Designating the use of LCTOP funds will not have an impact on the City’s General Funds as all transit operation and preventative maintenance costs are funded with Local Transportation and Federal Transit Administration grant funds.

CONSISTENCY WITH THE VISION MADERA 2025 PLAN:

Being awarded these available funds supports the Vision Madera 2025 Plan as follows:

- Strategy 121
 - Multi-modal transportation: Develop a city-wide multi-modal transportation plan to ensure safe, affordable and convenient transportation modes for residents and businesses within Madera.
- Strategy 433
 - Air Quality: Maintain or improve air quality through innovative programs and cooperative local plans. Ensure adherence to State and Federal air-quality policies.

ALTERNATIVES:

As an alternative, Council may:

1. Request staff to further modify the proposed fare structure.
2. Find alternative revenue streams besides LCTOP.
3. Retract Resolution 20-58 with no recommended modification and return operations to Table 1 Fare Structure

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Attachment A - Resolution Approving New Rate Structure and Rescinding Resolution No. 20-58
 - Exhibit A – Proposed Transit Fare Structure
2. Attachment B - Resolution No. 20-58

RESOLUTION NO: 22 - _____

**A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF MADERA,
CALIFORNIA APPROVING A MODIFIED FARE STRUCTURE FOR THE CITY OF
MADERA FIXED ROUTE TRANSIT SYSTEM AND DIAL-A-RIDE TRANSIT
SYSTEM AND RESCINDING RESOLUTION NO. 20-58**

WHEREAS, on April 14, 2020, the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Safety Advisory 20-01 issued recommendations that transit agencies develop and implement procedures and practices to ensure the safety of transit passengers, employees and the public during the COVID-19 national emergency; and

WHEREAS, on April 15, 2020, the City Council of the City of Madera (Council) adopted Resolution No. 20-58 approving the elimination of passenger fares on City of Madera (City) Transit System Fixed Routes and Limiting Dial-A-Ride (DAR) Service to Disabled and Senior passengers during the Covid-19 National Emergency period; and

WHEREAS, City staff has recommended (i) the reinstatement of passenger fares for the City's DAR Transit System with a modified fare structure; (ii) allowing the General Public to Access the City's DAR Transit System; and (iii) the continued elimination of fares for the City's Fixed Route Transit System; and

WHEREAS, City staff has further recommended the rates as outlined in attached Exhibit A; and

WHEREAS, City staff has developed a plan for the implementation of the continued elimination of fares for the City's Fixed Route Transit System and the DAR modified fare structure with the use of Low Carbon Transit Operations Program (LCTOP) State Funds.

NOW, THEREFORE, the City Council, of the City of Madera, California resolves as follows:

1. The foregoing recitals are true and correct and incorporated herein by reference.
2. The City Council approves the new structure as identified on Exhibit A.
3. Resolution 20-58 is rescinded effective January 1, 2023.
4. This Resolution is effective January 1, 2023.

* * *

Exhibit A – Proposed Transit System Fare Structure

The following Table 1 would go into effect beginning on January 1, 2023 following Council’s approval.

<i>Table 1: Proposed Transit System Fare Structure</i>	
Fixed Route Transit Service	<i>Fare</i>
General Public – All Ages	No Charge
Dial-A-Ride (DAR)	
General Public (17 years of age and under)	No Charge
General Public (Ages 18+)	\$3.00
College Students	No charge with valid student ID
Senior (60+), Disabled, Veterans	No Charge
ADA/Paratransit (ADAP)	
Senior (60+), Disabled, Veterans (only)	No Charge
ADAP Personal Care Attendant	No Charge
Companions of ADAP Passenger	\$3.00

RESOLUTION NO: 20 - 58

**A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF MADERA, CALIFORNIA
ELIMINATING PASSENGER FARES ON CITY OF MADERA TRANSIT SYSTEM
(MADERA METRO) FIXED ROUTES AND LIMITING DIAL-A-RIDE SERVICE TO
DISABLED AND SENIOR PASSENGERS DURING THE
COVID-19 NATIONAL EMERGENCY PERIOD**

WHEREAS, on April 14, 2020, the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Safety Advisory 20-01 issued recommendations that transit agencies develop and implement procedures and practices to ensure the safety of transit passengers, employees and the public during the COVID-19 national emergency; and

WHEREAS, the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act provides \$25 billion to transit agencies to help to prevent, prepare for and respond to the pandemic; and

WHEREAS, City staff recommend eliminating fares for Madera Metro's fixed Route system and limiting Dial-a-Ride (DAR) to disabled and senior passengers as a measure for improving the safety of transit bus drivers, transit staff and the public during the COVID-19 pandemic; and

WHEREAS, transit agencies are advised to follow the current Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) recommendations for the spread of COVID-19, which include face coverings, social distancing, frequent hand washing, facility and vehicle cleaning, and other measures to the maximum extent practicable, to ensure the continued safety of transit passenger and employees during this national emergency; and

WHEREAS, City of Madera (City) staff has developed a plan for the implementation of the fare elimination and the modification to its DAR service with its transit operator, MV Transportation, Inc., for the changes to the services to be done seamlessly without significant impact to any service; and

WHEREAS, the reason for needing to limit DAR to disabled and seniors is because the general public would opt to only use DAR service instead of the fixed route, if it was a no-fare service; and

WHEREAS, CARES funding will be disbursed through FTA apportionments to its Urbanized Area (5307) programs, which is the fund that Madera Urbanized Area is eligible to receive on a reimbursable basis in the amount of up to \$6,440,671; and

WHEREAS, City staff shall apply for the CARES funding to offset loss of fare revenues, which funding covers 100 percent of the costs associated with implementing the FTA advisory, with no local match required; and

NOW, THEREFORE, the City Council, of the City of Madera, California, resolves as follows:

1. The foregoing recitals are true and correct.
2. The Council determines to eliminate passenger fares on the City of Madera Transit System (Madera Metro) fixed routes and to limit Dial-a-Ride service for disabled and senior passengers through the duration of the COVID-19 national emergency period.
3. This Resolution is effective on April 15, 2020.
4. The City Clerk is authorized to forward this Resolution to the Finance Director and Grants Administrator.

* * *

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the City Council of the City of Madera this 15th day of April 2020 by the following vote:

AYES: Mayor Medellin, Council Members Garcia, Gallegos, Rodriguez, Montes, Robinson, Holley.

NOES: None.

ABSTENTIONS: None.

ABSENT: None.

APPROVED:



ANDREW J. MEDELLIN, Mayor

ATTEST:



ALICIA GONZALES, City Clerk

