

**Board Report**

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**EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE  
AUGUST 18, 2016****SUBJECT: 10-YEAR EXTENSION OF DISABLED TAP CARDS AND ELIMINATION OF  
REDUCED FARE APPLICATION FEES****ACTION: RECEIVE AND FILE****RECOMMENDATION**

RECEIVE AND FILE **report on extending expiration of reduced fare TAP Cards for customers with permanent disabilities** from three years to ten years and eliminating remaining reduced fare application fees.

**ISSUE**

Staff members from TAP Operations and Customers Programs and Services have been collaborating to extend the Disabled Reduced Fare TAP card expiration period from the current three years to ten years for individuals who have permanent irreversible, degenerative, physical and mental disabilities. In addition, to provide a more uniform treatment of Reduced Fare products, staff plans to eliminate the \$2 application fee for Disabled cards and \$1 fee for College/Vocational cards to be consistent with Senior and Student K-8 applications.

**DISCUSSION**

Customers who have disabilities can apply for a reduced fare TAP card by applying online at TAPTOGO.net, at Metro Customer Centers or by calling 866-TAPTOGO and requesting an application be sent to them. A photo and proof of disability are required. The cards are registered and can be replaced if lost or stolen. Card holders can ride Metro and other transit systems at a significantly reduced rate. Currently the cards are good for up to three years depending on the nature of the disability (i.e., temporary or permanent).

Persons with disabilities may qualify for a reduced fare TAP card automatically with one or more of the following: (1) Medicare Card, (2) Valid California Department of Motor Vehicles Placard receipt or Disabled Veterans ID (service connected), (3) Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) benefits, or (4) Special Education Student in a Los Angeles County Program. Applicants who meet any one of these criteria must supply photocopies of the document as proof of eligibility and a current CA driver's license or CA ID card. Applicants who do not meet the automatic qualifying criteria, but have varying degrees of disabilities such as impairments associated

with mobility, physical, visual, mental and hearing, may submit a Disabled TAP Card Application, complete with the medical certification by their health care professional. Social Security Disability guidelines are used to determine the term of the disability: three months, six months or three years. To renew, applicants are required to submit a new medical certification when their card expires.

Currently, applicants who have permanent irreversible, degenerative, physical and mental disabilities such as HIV/AIDS, legally blind, legally deaf, Autism, Downs Syndrome, Cerebral Palsy, Rheumatoid Arthritis, amputation of a limb, or are Medicare recipients, veterans with a service-connected disability, or special education students, qualify for a three-year Reduced Fare card.

The permanently disabled community has asked that the expiration of their reduced fare cards be extended from three years to ten years. Given the permanence of these types of disabilities, staff and the TAP partner agencies concur.

Implementation of this extension will benefit our customers by reducing trips to the doctor for re-certification, reduction in costs for new photos and savings in time and processing applications and paperwork.

Staff will also eliminate the remaining Reduced Fare applications fees - \$1 for College/Vocation and \$2 for Disabled - making the process consistent with Senior and Student K-12 applications. Application fees for the College/Vocational and Disabled were originally charged because of the additional time necessary to process these types of applications.

#### Statistics:

- 115,161 active Disabled TAP cards in the system
- 8,673 Disabled applications in CY2015
- 12,184 Disabled applications so far in CY2016.
- 27,666 College/Vocational (C/V) applications in CY2015
- 7,184 C/V applications so far in CY2016

Removal of the Disabled and College/Vocational Application fees could result in a revenue loss of approximately \$60,000 per year for Disabled applications and approximately \$30,000 per year for College/Vocational applications. However, staff believes foregoing the fee revenue is nominal overall for the benefit of simplifying the application process.

The removal of the application fees does not trigger a requirement to undertake a Title VI and Environmental Justice Analysis since it was previously determined that the fee is de minimis.

#### **FINANCIAL IMPACT**

Removal of the Disabled and College/Vocational Application fees could result in a revenue loss of approximately \$60,000 per year for Disabled applications and approximately \$30,000 per year for College/Vocational applications. The lost revenue of \$90,000 a year would require use of transit operating funds to back-fill the loss. Sources to back-fill the loss in revenues include fares and operating eligible sales tax revenues like Propositions A, C, and Measure R.

Staff believes foregoing the fee revenue is nominal overall for the convenience it will provide to our customers and the benefit of simplifying the application process.

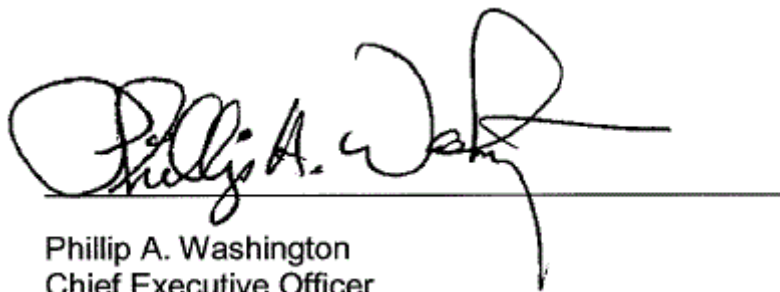
### **NEXT STEPS**

The time extension is planned to begin October 1, 2016. Customer Programs and Services will continue working with TAP and partner agencies, Operations and Security to ensure that the public is well aware of the changes by updating information on the Metro.net and TAPTOGO.net websites, and revising the Disabled TAP Identification Card Application. Staff will also continue working with our partners in the disabled community to educate their constituents about these changes.

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