

# BOARD DIRECTED POLICY

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**To:**

**From:**

**Subject:** Martin County Public Transit – Public Involvement Policy

**Effective Date:**

**Created by:** William Powell, Transit Administrator

**BCC Meeting:** October 5, 2021

**Agenda #:** 22-0070

**Item #:**

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## PURPOSE

Martin County Public Transit (MARTY) will solicit public input prior to or during the development of any transit enhancement resulting in a major service change or fare increase. The public input process includes, but is not limited to, public forums, public hearings, or written or electronic comment forms. MARTY Staff will develop recommendations as to the appropriate type and level of public input based on Federal and State program requirements.

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## POLICY

A public hearing is mandatory when a fare increase or major service change is proposed prior to change adoption. A determination is made related to each proposal as to the appropriate scheduling of the public hearing. If service changes are temporary in nature the MARTY Staff may approve these types of temporary changes. For fare increases or major service changes, the public hearing will be held prior to the initiation of the proposed action. Martin County will consider and implement the principles of equality for all citizens pursuant to requirements of the Federal Transit Administration, as reported in Circular 9030.1b, Section V.5.o, to the extent reasonably possible.

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## DEFINITIONS

A fare increase shall be defined as any change to an existing, established fare rate or fare type applicable to a regular fixed route, commuter express, or paratransit that results in a higher fare rate than is currently in effect.

A major service change shall be defined as any action that reduces service hours and/or service miles by 50 percent of the entire system.

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## PROCEDURE (optional if only preparing Policy)

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## **BOARD DIRECTED POLICY**

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A fare increase shall be defined as any change to an existing, established fare rate or fare type applicable to a regular fixed route, commuter express, or paratransit that results in a higher fare rate than is currently in effect.

A major service change shall be defined as any action that reduces service hours and/or service miles by 50 percent of the entire system.

Any fare increase or a major service change for transit service shall commence with a Notification of Intent published in a daily newspaper with countywide circulation.

The Notice of Intent shall state that any fare increase for transit or major service change will become effective in 30 days unless a request for a public meeting is received within 15 days of the publication of the notice. The Notice of Intent shall provide the proposed change in fare or service and the method for providing public comment or requesting a public meeting. Requests for a public meeting may be submitted through any means supported by the Martin County Board of County Commissioners including written correspondence, on-bus comment forms, phone, fax, or email.

Information to be available during the public input period shall include the current and proposed fare structure and service provision, a summary of the proposal, and the current and proposed transit budget.

### **Day 15**

The public comment period expires. Following the public comment period, a summary of public comments shall be prepared by the Staff of the Martin County Board of County Commissioners. The summary of public comments shall also contain an analysis of how the public comments were considered by staff in the fare or service proposal and provided to the Martin County Board of County Commissioners.

### **Day 20 (No Request for Public Meeting Received)**

A Notice of Change shall be published in a daily newspaper with countywide circulation within 20 days of the published date of the Notice of Intent and following transmittal of the fare proposal, summary, and all public comments to the County Administrator of the Martin County Board of County Commissioners. The County Administrator or the Board of County Commissioners can request a public meeting within ten days after receipt.

The Notice of Change shall state that any fare increase for transit or major service change will be implemented within 10 days of publication. The Notice of Change shall provide the proposed change in fare or service.

### **Day 30 (No Request for Public Meeting Received)**

If no request for a public meeting is received, the fare or service proposal becomes effective. A Notice of Provisions shall be published in a daily newspaper with countywide circulation on the date of commencement of the fare increase or major service change. The Notice of Provisions shall provide the new fare or service provisions.

## **BOARD DIRECTED POLICY**

### **Day 20 (Request for Public Meeting Received)**

A Notice of Change shall be published in a daily newspaper with countywide circulation within 20 days of the published date of the Notice of Intent and following transmittal of the fare proposal, summary, and all public comments to the County Administrator of the Martin County Board of County Commissioners. The County Administrator or the Board of County Commissioners can request a public meeting within ten days after receipt.

The Notice of Change shall state that the fare increase for transit or major service change will be considered at a public meeting of the Martin County Board of County Commissioners. The Notice of Change shall provide the proposed change in fare or service. The Notice of Change shall be advertised in a daily newspaper with countywide circulation providing the date, time, and location of a public meeting to consider the proposed change in fare or service.

### **Day 30 (Public Comment Received)**

All members of the public shall be given an opportunity to comment at the public meeting. At the meeting, the Martin County Board of County Commissioners may adopt the proposal with or without revisions or table the considerations for additional consideration. The Martin County Board of County Commissioners must consider all public comments at the public meeting.

If tabled, the Martin County Board of County Commissioners shall direct staff on the additional information and alternatives desired. A tabled meeting must be reheard within 20 days and no later than 30 days from the date of publication of Notice of Change.

If the fare or service proposal is adopted at the first public meeting, the fare or service proposal becomes effective after ten days.

### **Day 40 (Public Comment Received)**

If the fare or service proposal is adopted at the first public meeting, a Notice of Provisions shall be published in a daily newspaper with countywide circulation on the date of commencement of the fare increase or major service change.

### **Day 50**

If held, the tabled public meeting shall be duly advertised containing the date, time, and location of such meeting and the proposed change in fare or service. All members of the public shall be given an opportunity to comment. The Martin County Board of County Commissioners must consider all public comments at the public meeting.

At the meeting, the Martin County Board of County Commissioners may adopt the proposal with or without revisions or deny the proposal. If approved at the meeting, the fare or service revisions become effective after a ten-day grace period. If denied, the fare or service proposal cannot be reconsidered for six months.

### **Day 60**

If the fare or service proposal is adopted at the second public meeting, a Notice of Provisions shall be published in a daily newspaper with countywide circulation on the date of commencement of the fare increase or major service change.

The following timeline is a general guideline of the process to receive, consider, and respond to public comment for fare increases and/or major service changes for transit services provided with the assistance of the Federal Transit Administration:

## BOARD DIRECTED POLICY

Deadline      Action

If No Public Comment Or Request For Public Meeting Is Received

Day 0            Publish Notice of Intent.

Day 15          Open Meeting of Staff on draft fare/service proposal.

Day 20          Publish Notice of Change; transmit Summary of Public Comment.

Day 30          Publish Notice of Provisions; proposed fare/service change becomes effective.

If Public Comment Or Request For Public Meeting Is Received

Day 0            Publish Notice of Intent.

Day 15          Open Meeting of Staff on draft fare/service proposal.

Day 20          Publish Notice of Change; transmit Summary of Public Comment.

Day 30          Public Meeting of Martin County Board of County Commissioners.

Day 40          If approved at Public Meeting, Publish Notice of Provisions;  
proposed fare/service change becomes effective.

If Public Meeting Is Tabled

Day 50          Tabled Public Meeting is reheard.

Final action must be taken to adopt or deny proposal.

Day 60          If approved at Tabled Public Meeting, Publish Notice Provisions;  
proposed fare/service change becomes effective.

Day 240        If denied, fare or service proposal may be reheard.

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### **Suppression History:**

Supression History here

(example: 264 – December 15, 2019)