
TO: Transit Select Committee **MEETING:** September 19, 2019

FROM: Erica Beauchamp **FILE:** 8600 01 TSP
Superintendent, Transit Planning
& Scheduling

SUBJECT: handyDART Taxi Saver Program

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the handyDART Taxi Saver program frequency be changed to 60 days, and the purchase amount be increased to \$80.00, maintaining the requirement of a minimum of one handyDART trip within the 60-day period.

SUMMARY

The Taxi Saver Program provides registered handyDART clients with Taxi Saver coupons at a 50% reduction, allowing greater convenience and more resources for spontaneous travel when handyDART is unable to accommodate their travel needs. Feedback from handyDART clientele indicates that the purchase amount of \$60.00 and frequency of every 90 days are inadequate to service clients' travel needs. It is recommended to increase the purchase amount to \$80.00 and the frequency to every 60 days, while maintaining the requirement of one handyDART ride within this time.

BACKGROUND

handyDART Service Overview

handyDART is an accessible, door-to-door, shared transit service for persons with permanent or temporary disabilities (physical and/or cognitive) that are unable to use a fixed-route transit system either part or at all the time, without assistance from another person. Many handyDART customers use a combination of transit for their travel needs, incorporating both fixed-route and handyDART services in their travel, depending on their abilities, travel needs and destination.

Taxi Saver Program Overview

The handyDART Taxi Saver program is a supplementary element of the overall handyDART transit service and is not a stand-alone service. The Taxi Saver program is cost shared with BC Transit paying 66.69% and the RDN is responsible for 33.31%. The purpose of the program is to provide an alternate transportation option for registered handyDART clients when handyDART services are unable to accommodate the client's travel needs. Eligibility for the Taxi Saver program include being a permanent handyDART client, be 12 years of age or older, and have obtained a handyPASS by applying to the handyDART office.

Currently, an eligible handyDART client with a handyPASS, can purchase \$60.00 in Taxi Saver 'coupons' for \$30.00, a 50% subsidy towards the cost of needed taxi rides. handyDART coupons can only be purchased through the handyDART office. The client uses the coupons to pay the dollar meter rate of the taxi fare, paying the remainder in change/cash.

Currently, the Taxi Saver program allows an eligible client to make a Taxi Saver purchase of \$60.00 of coupons once every 90 days, provided they have utilized the handyDART ride service once within that time. This amount and length of time between ability to purchase Taxi Saver coupons is lengthy for handyPASS clients, who must sometimes utilize a taxi to attend appointments, and do their shopping, among other travel needs.

ALTERNATIVES

1. That the handyDART Taxi Saver program frequency be changed to 60 days, and the purchase amount be increased to \$80.00, maintaining the requirement of a minimum of one handyDART trip within the 60-day period.
2. That the Board provide alternate direction.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The 2019 RDN budget for Taxi Savers is \$18,000 and is cost shared with BC Transit at a rate of 66.69% BC Transit and 33.31% for a cost to the RDN of \$6,000. Increasing the purchase frequency to every 60 days and the purchase amount to \$80.00 requires the taxi saver budget to be increased to \$36,000, an increase of \$18,000. With BC Transit cost sharing this yields a total budget for the RDN of \$12,000 annually, to be included in the 2020 Financial Plan.

STRATEGIC PLAN IMPLICATIONS

Transportation and Transit - Provide opportunities for residents to move effectively through and around the Region.



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August 28, 2019

Reviewed by:

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