

Transportation Committee

Business Item
Item: **SW 2009-156**

Meeting date: May 11, 2009

For Metropolitan Council Meeting: May 13, 2009

ADVISORY INFORMATION

Date:	April 30, 2009
Subject:	Authorization to Terminate Route 255
District(s), Member(s):	District 10 - Kris Sanda District 13 – Richard Aguilar
Policy/Legal Reference:	Council Policy 1-3 Transportation Planning and Transit Services, Procedure 1-3a Transportation Service Changes and Restructuring, Policy 1-3d and Policy 2-1 Public Accountability to the Public,
Staff Prepared/Presented:	Arlene McCarty, Director MTS (651)602-1754 Gerri Sutton, Asst Dir – Contract Transit Services (651)602-1672 John Harper, Supervisor – Contract Transit Services (651)602-1744 Rebecca McBride, Project Administrator (651)602-1722
Division/Department:	Metropolitan Transportation Services (MTS)

Proposed Action

That the Metropolitan Council authorize the termination of Route 255, providing reverse commute service between downtown St. Paul and the Wells Fargo Operations Center in Shoreview, effective May 30, 2009.

Background

The Metropolitan Council implemented Route 255 on January 2, 2003 in response to the opening of the new Wells Fargo Operations Center in Shoreview. At that time, Wells Fargo relocated a significant number of entry-level positions from downtown Minneapolis locations, and also added positions. MTS and Metro Transit responded by implementing reverse commute service to Shoreview from downtown Minneapolis on Route 250 and from downtown St. Paul on Route 255. Ridership from St. Paul was modest at implementation, has continued to decline through the years, and now stands at less than 10 rides per day

Following approval by the Council on February 25, 2009, a public hearing was held at the Wells Fargo Operations Center on April 14th, 2009 to solicit comments related to the route elimination. Staff from MTS and Metro Transit were available to offer alternative transportation options. Public comments regarding the elimination of this route were accepted through 5:00 pm, Friday, April 24th.

A report of public comments from the Public Hearing is available in the Metropolitan Council Data Center. Summary information on the Public Hearing includes:

- Eleven people attended the hearing, including seven riders of the route. Council member Sanda addressed the hearing attendees.
- Three riders testified at the public hearing and one written comment was submitted to the Data center.
- Public comment was a general understanding that the route cannot operate at current levels but would appreciate keeping one trip in the morning and one in the evening.

Rationale

Due to very low ridership and much higher than acceptable subsidy per passenger, staff recommends eliminating Route 255. The ridership is too low to justify retaining one morning and evening trip

Funding

The Council spends approximately \$125,000 per year to subsidize this route. The funding previously assigned to this route will be redistributed to support the operation of other routes.

Known Support / Opposition

Opposition to route 255 termination comes from the current ridership. They have requested to keep one trip each morning and evening.