



City of Racine, Wisconsin

AGENDA BRIEFING MEMORADUM

AGENDA DATE: Transit Commission, October 27th, 2022

SUBJECT: Communication sponsored by Mayor Mason, on behalf of the Transit & Mobility Director, requesting approval of RYDE Racine's waiving of fares for veterans of the United States Armed Forces utilizing fixed-route transit service.

PREPARED BY: Trevor Jung, Transit & Mobility Director

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The RYDE Racine urbanized service area is home to approximately 8,000 (12,000 countywide) individuals who have served the United States in the Armed Forces, about 6% of the area's population. Veterans have made great sacrifices for our community and nation putting their lives on the line in the interest of the country. Although, as many veterans come home after their period of service, they face unique challenges related to finding safe and affordable housing, securing economic stability, and accessing social services.

While these challenges do not distinguish between those who have served or not, nor do they grant immunity to any subset of the veteran population. Too often veterans face economic hardships and, in some cases, mental and physical challenges that hinder one's ability to either drive independently or find the assistance they need. Examples of subsets of the veteran population that may benefit most from the proposed policy change include wounded veterans, veterans with disabilities, low income and homeless veterans, and student veterans.

It is the intention of RYDE Racine staff to aid in breaking down barriers for the veteran community related to economic stability and accessing social services by providing fixed-route transit service free of charge to veterans with proof of service.

Upon boarding, Veterans must present a veterans photo identification card or valid Wisconsin driver's license, with a veteran's designation, and their fare will be waived.

Examples of other transit systems that provide this benefit to veterans in Wisconsin include Kenosha Transit, with Fox Cities Valley Transit and Green Bay Metro providing the same benefit to veterans with service-connected disabilities.

BUDGETARY IMPACT: Loss of veteran adult fares at two dollars per ride and senior citizen or disabled fares at one dollar per ride.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: That the Transit & Mobility Director be granted approval for RYDE Racine to waive fares for veterans of the United States Armed Forces utilizing fixed-route transit service.