

# DRAFT

October 12, 2005

## **Minneapolis Regulatory Services**

**And**

## **Minneapolis Police Department**

### Memorandum of Understanding

Mayor Rybak has recommended in his proposed 2006 budget plan that the Traffic Control unit of Regulatory Services should be transferred to the Police Department effective at the start of fiscal year 2006. According to the mayor's 2006 budget proposal, all 42 positions and \$3.2 million in operating expenses will be transferred to the Police Department. According to that report, Parking Services will transfer \$3.2 million to the general fund from the parking fund. Revenues in excess of meter services cost will continue to be contributed to the general fund.

The transfer of the Traffic Control unit to the Police Department makes sense because it has the following advantages:

- Improved Coordination – Traffic Control currently works with the Police Department. They have established an understanding of each others role. Traffic Control and Police work together at bar closing on weekends. They coordinate efforts at special events. Traffic Control also responds to emergency requests from the Police Department.
- Similarity in Duties – Traffic control units have patrol routes, employ use of radio communication between the office and vehicles, have uniformed staff, drive vehicles marked with Police department-like decals, and have authority to issue tickets for violations.
- Presence in the City – similar to the Police Department, staff from traffic control are routinely approached by visitors who may have questions about where to go, or where to get services. Traffic Control, like police, represents the image of our city to those who visit.
- Diversity Goals – Traffic Control positions are entry level in nature. This makes the potential applicant pool very large. Traffic control staff could receive additional training to advance within the Police Department.
- Traffic Control is revenue generating. In addition to the meter revenue mentioned in the mayor's 2006 budget proposal, fees are also produced through the issuance of more than 250,000 tickets each year, which generate an additional \$5 million in revenue for the general fund. Other fees include fines from administrative citations, and fees collected by Licenses division for Taxi-related licenses, both of which are added each year to the general fund.

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The following is a profile of Traffic Control responsibilities and how the staff time is allocated to cover duties. This profile is not exhaustive, but provides an overview of tasks that Regulatory Services will hand over to the Police Department should this transfer of positions and responsibilities be approved by the City Council and the mayor:

## Traffic Control Profile

Staff-

33 Traffic Control Agent I's

28 Day Shift

5 Middle Shift

5 Traffic Control Agent II/Taxi Inspector

Approximately 75% of time dedicated to oversight of Taxi Inspection Program

2 Office Support Specialist I's

1 Assistant Supervisor

1 Supervisor

## Daily Staff Commitments

**Taxicab Ordinance Enforcement** – Approximately 75% of all five TCA II's staff time is dedicated to oversight of this program.

**Morning Rush Hour** – 1-2 staff assigned daily to 7-9 am rush

**Afternoon Rush Hour** – 9-15 staff daily assigned to direct traffic 4:30 pm to 5:30 pm

**Meter Coin Collections** – 6 staff assigned daily to collect coin from meters. Includes use of ½ ton van with lift gate, shuttling staff to collection zones, collection of coin from zones, and delivery daily to a counting station.

**Abandoned Vehicles** – 2 staff assigned daily, one in the north and one in the south.

**Patrolling:** Staff not assigned to Meter Coin collections and abandoned vehicles are assigned to patrol districts, including critical parking areas.

## Event Requirements of Staff

Traffic Control agents provide traffic flow coordination at sporting events for the Twins, Vikings, Gophers, Timberwolves, and other events held at the Metrodome and Target Center. Events at the convention center also require staffing, especially at teardown and setup of trade shows. Additionally, special events such as Cirque Du Soleil and the Aquatennial require staff commitments.

Requirements of staff at events can range from 1-2 agents at an event to 9-10 at Vikings games, and 5-6 at Twins games.

## Seasonal Staff Commitments

During street cleaning season, in the fall and the spring, up to 6 TC I's are assigned for up to six weeks of patrolling, tagging, and enforcement duty.

During the summer, staff are assigned at the Farmers Market on Saturdays and Sundays.

Also in the summer, up to 5 Traffic Control staff are assigned to assist the Police Department with bar closings on weekends. Staff time commitments have gone as late as 3:00 am.

In the event of a snow emergency, staff are required to report to work, even on their day off, or on a vacation day, to assist with tagging vehicles that have not been moved for our snow plows.

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## Staff Work Assignments

*Taxicab Oversight* – TC Agent II's are responsible to conduct background searches on all new taxicab driver applicants. Also required to check driver's licenses records, and decide whether to approve or deny the application.

## **Taxicab Program Duties**

Inspection of Taxi Vehicles – taxi companies are required to bring their in service vehicles, which are licenses for use in the City of Minneapolis, for semi-annual inspections.

Respond to Complaints – complaints are filed by taxi customers, taxi drivers, taxi companies, other city departments and council members. Our staff are required to record these complaints and take steps required to bring resolutions that are based on ordinance.

Taxicab Service Committee – Supervisory staff attend monthly meetings city staff and industry representatives involved in taxicab program (1.5 hours per month plus travel time)

Ordinance Revisions – staff are required to conduct research and review of the program continuously. Includes revisions of ordinance to reflect state and regional requirements, review of meter rates every two years, new mandates. etc. Also involves notifying the industry of changes to ordinance, and new requirements.

Training Program – responsible to work with contractor that provides driver training. Ensure drivers are getting training that is required. Conduct enforcement to ensure compliance as needed. Ensure contract compliance with school that provides the training.

Enforcement Actions: Issue administrative citations to drivers or companies found not in compliance with city ordinance. Involves time-intensive preparation of cases in the event of an appeal that must be presented before an impartial hearing officer.

## *Meter Coin Collection* (duties stated above)

*Patrolling* – staff not assigned to abandoned vehicles, meter coin collection, and the taxicab program are assigned patrol districts. Currently, there are 14 districts that need to be patrolled daily. Duties include chalking of vehicles in parking zones without meters, meter parking enforcement, checking for illegal parking in fire zones, construction zones, fire zones, and critical time zones, to name several. Staff also required to patrol 27 special parking zones, which are neighborhoods deemed to have scare parking, in which residents pay for parking permits that they put on their vehicle.

Staff may exit and enter their vehicles while on patrol up to 200 times per day. They write citations, chalk tires, and respond to parking related complaints from the community. Staff records indicate that 250,000 citations are issued yearly, and Traffic Control receives 11,000 complaints each year.

*Rush Hour Traffic Coordination:* Staff are assigned to stand in intersections in order to assist with the traffic flow in and out of critical traffic areas each weekday. Staff are pulled off of their patrol activities in order to staff traffic coordination needs. In some cases, staff assigned to meter collection, should they finish the task early, may be assigned to traffic coordination as well.

*Abandoned Vehicles:* Two staff are assigned, one in the northern half and one in the southern half of the city, to respond to complaints about cars that appear abandoned. Staff will chalk the vehicle tires, make a record of the vehicle location and data, and return 72 hours later to see if

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the car has remained chalked and in the same location. At this point, they tag the vehicle (issue ticket) and send a report to the office, who then sends a report to the impound lot to tow the vehicle.

This letter is an acknowledgement that, should the plan be approved by the council and the mayor, the duties that are currently funded, including duties not specifically listed here will transfer from Regulatory Services to the Police Department.

**THE PARTIES** have caused this Memorandum of Agreement to be executed by their duly authorized representatives whose signatures appear below.

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Ricardo Cervantes  
Deputy Director of Licenses and Consumer Services

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Rocco Forte  
Assistant City Coordinator, Regulatory Services

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Lt. Sharon Lubinski  
Minneapolis Police Department

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William McManus  
Chief of Police

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Date