



Minutes City Council's Transportation Committee November 24, 2009

Minutes of the meeting of the City Council's Transportation Committee held on Tuesday, November 24, 2009, 3:00 p.m., in the 3rd Floor Conference Room, Tempe City Hall, 31 E. 5th Street, Tempe, Arizona.

Committee Members Present:

Vice Mayor Shana Ellis, Chair
Councilmember Ben Arredondo

City Staff Present:

Jan Hort, City Clerk
Carlos de Leon, Public Wrks
Jerry Hart, Fin Svcs
Amanda Nelson, Comm Outreach Mktg Supvr
Jason Hartong, Pub Wks

Glenn Kephart, Pub Wks
Shauna Warner, Neighborhood Admin
Sue Taaffe, Comm Rel
Dawn Coomer, Comm Dev
Shaun Yunt, Pub Wks

Guests Present:

Jayson Matthews, Transportation Commission
John Farry, Metro

Vice Mayor Shana Ellis called the meeting to order at 3:10 p.m. and everyone introduced themselves.

Agenda Item 1 – Public Appearances

None.

Agenda Item 2 – Long Range Transit Fund Financial Update

Carlos de Leon reported that staff is in the process of revising the Transit Fund financial forecast to account for the following variables:

- ✓ Actual sales tax performance for fiscal Year 2008-09
 - Sales tax revenues for FY 2008-09 was \$4 million lower than the projected estimate
- ✓ Revised sales tax forecast for FY 2009-10
 - Sales tax projected revenues for FY 2009-10 has been revised and lowered an additional \$2.7 million
- ✓ A potential reduction in regional transit funding
 - FY 2009-10 projected revenue will be \$1 billion short; of that amount, the bus program will be short \$568.4 million and the light rail program will be short \$433.6 million. The Regional Transportation Plan will need to be delayed, modified or deleted in order for the Transit Lifecycle Program budget to be balanced.
- ✓ Revised transit service operating costs and capital program cash flows

Financial Services staff has assisted in analyzing the budgetary projections and potential impacts on services. Staff will be presenting the long range financial forecast to the City Council at their Issue Review Session scheduled for December 10. Councilmember Arredondo urged staff to include positive aspects of this budget analysis (program preservation features) during their presentation in order to create a more balanced picture to leadership. We are still covering major routes and meeting the community's major needs.

Agenda Item 3 – January 2010 Bus Service Changes

Carlos de Leon stated that, beginning January 2010, the recommended bus service modifications would yield annualized savings of \$3.2 million in FY 2010-11. Additional financial and operational variables include future contract costs, fare recovery, tax credits, and federal grants for operating assistance – all of which pose uncertain budgetary impacts. The Transportation Commission has approved the following bus service criteria:

- Matching service to demand
- Reducing service redundancies
- Operational improvements
- Revenue generation

Although the focus is to reduce the budget, Mr. de Leon stated that this economic crisis serves as an opportunity to maximize system efficiencies. The following are proposed transit changes:

Orbit Mercury: Restructure east loop near Price Road; reduce Sunday hours of operation and frequency. Councilmember Arredondo asked staff to consider including a park and church located within the Victory Acres neighborhood in this re-routing transit option. Budgetary savings will be \$309,887

Orbit Earth: Restructure service in north Tempe; remove service on University Drive; reduce Sunday hours of operation and frequency. Budgetary savings will be \$574,449

Orbit Mars: Restructure route to serve higher demand areas; take over eastern portion of Orbit Jupiter; provide access to downtown Tempe/ASU; reduce Sunday hours of operation and frequency. Budgetary savings will be \$357,749.

Orbit Jupiter: Restructure Orbit Jupiter to serve the western portion of the current route; Orbit Mars takes over the eastern portion; reduce Sunday hours of operation and frequency. Budgetary savings will be \$357,749.

Orbit Venus: Reduce Sunday hours of operation and frequency. Budgetary savings will be \$106,860.

Route 62 (Hardy): Moves route 62 off Hardy Drive south of Guadalupe Drive; realigns along Guadalupe Road (replacing a segment of route 92) and extends along University Drive (replacing a segment of Orbit Earth). Route 65 – Mill/Kyrene replaces segment on Hardy Drive south of Guadalupe Road. Budgetary savings will be \$516,451.

Route 65 (Mill/Kyrene): Adjust southern end to replace segment of Route 62; reduce evening and weekend frequency to 60 minutes. Budgetary savings will be \$333,205.

Route 66 (Mill/68th Street): Realign route from Guadalupe Road to Kyrene; extend south to Chandler and Gila River Indian Community; reduce evening/weekend frequency to 60 minutes south of Grove Parkway. Budgetary savings will be \$333,205.

Route 92 (48th Street/Guadalupe): Restructures Route 92 to operate between Arizona Mills Mall and downtown Tempe/ASU along 48th Street, 52nd Street and Rio Salado Parkway. Removes route 92 service from Guadalupe Road (replaced with route 62), Broadway (already served by route 45-Broadway and Orbit Venus), and Mill Avenue (already served by route 65 – Mill/Kyrene/Hardy and 66 – Mill/Kyrene). Budgetary savings will be \$516,451.

Route 30 (University): Realign route 30 on University Drive by removing deviation to 52nd Street. Budgetary savings will be \$516,451.

Route 81 (McClintock): Remove deviation to ASU Research Park on long trips to Chandler; provide access to residential area McClintock Drive between Elliot Drive and Warner road; improve access to employment/commercial center at McClintock Drive and Warner Road. Budgetary savings will be \$18,011.

Route 76 (Miller): Eliminate route 76 in Tempe. Budgetary savings will be \$269,810.

Fixed routes have been reconfigured to ensure that there all Tempe neighborhoods have viable public transit options. Frequency of service will fluctuate between 15 and 30 minutes depending upon usage levels. Route changes were made as a result of extensive public outreach and comment received by staff. School district officials also participated in the public input process.

Residents will be informed via the Tempe transit website, public service announcements, door hangers, bus books and a variety of additional media methods.

Future options may include:

- hour and frequency reductions
- route segment eliminations
- additional restructuring
- introduction of an Orbit fare (2012)
- regional fare increase

Under the current budgetary constraints and the proposed budget cuts noted above, Councilmember Arredondo was assured that fare increases would not be imposed until approximately 2012, barring any unforeseen circumstances. Councilmember Arredondo asked staff to include a color coded map to illustrate all of the transit routes during the December 10, Council presentation and to emphasize the fact that extensive public outreach had been conducted prior to formulating the staff recommendations to Council.

Agenda Item 4 – Transit Advertising

Staff is recommending that the potential for paid advertising be undertaken in the following manner:

- 1) Step 1: Allow for advertising at all Tempe light rail stations, as METRO has already executed a contract with CBS Outdoor.
- 2) Step 2: Issue a Request for Proposal (RFP) for bus fleet interior and exterior advertising allowing Tempe to gain a better understanding of potential revenue. Based on the results of the RFP and experiences from step 1, determine whether to implement advertising on buses. Experiences from step 1 would include evaluating public feedback and actual revenue generated from light rail station kiosk advertising.
- 3) Step 3: Issue a RFP for bus shelter advertising allowing Tempe to gain a better understanding of potential revenue. Based on the results of the RFP and experience from steps 1 & 2, determine whether to implement advertising at bus shelters.

Sue Taaffe stated that the criteria for transit advertising are that the advertising must be a commercial transaction and that there are categories of prohibited types of advertising, such as political. Advertising revenue would go back into the transit fund, which is a federal requirement. Vice Mayor Ellis commented that there may be a need to modify the sign ordinance to accommodate some of the signage being considered.

Agenda Item 5 – Future Agenda Items

Update on finance and transit changes.

The next meeting date was scheduled for January 26, 2010, 3:00 PM.

Meeting adjourned at 4:15 p.m.

Prepared by: Kay Savard
Reviewed by: Carlos de Leon

Jan Hort, City Clerk