
Minutes City of Tempe Transportation Commission November 18, 2008

Minutes of the City of Tempe Transportation Commission held on Tuesday, November 18, 2008, 7:30 a.m., at the Don Cassano Community Room, 200 E. Fifth Street, Tempe, Arizona.

(MEMBERS) Present:

Don Cassano, Jayson Matthews, Judi Nelson, Amanda Ormond, Steven Saiz, Peter Schelstraede, Edward Smith, David Strang, Bryan Young

(MEMBERS) Absent:

Bill Haas, Marcellus Lisotta, Catherine Mayorga, Kevin Olson, Marco Valenzuela, Joan Westlake

City Staff Present:

Joe Clements, Dawn Coomer, Carlos de Leon, Dana Janofsky, Greg Jordan, Glenn Kephart, Jyme Sue McLaren, Elizabeth Mieth, Amanda Nelson, Robert Yabes

Guests Present:

Bill Blair (TTI), Pen Johnson (Resident), Corey Woods (Council member)

Jayson Matthews called the meeting to order at 7:40 a.m.

Agenda Item 1 – Consideration of Meeting Minutes

Edward Smith made a motion to approve all minutes. David Strang seconded the motion. The following minutes were approved:

- Transportation Commission Minutes – October 14, 2008
- Multi-Modal Planning and Project Review – October 8, 2008

Agenda Item 2 – Public Appearances

Pen Johnson publicly acknowledges all the hard work of the commission and staff for the Don Cassano Community Room. Council member Corey Woods agreed and expresses his appreciation to the commission.

Agenda Item 3 – Light Rail/Transportation Center Grand Opening

Jyme Sue McLaren and Amanda Nelson provided the following information:

- Friday December 26, 2008 will be the Media Preview Pass Event at the Tempe Transportation Center from 6 am to 9 am.
 - Email invitations will be sent out
- Friday December 26, 2008 will be the Appreciation Dinner at the Phoenix Sheraton from 5:30 pm to 9 pm.
- Saturday, December 27, 2008 will be the Grand Opening Ceremony at the LRT Operations and Maintenance Facility from 8 am to 9:15 am.
 - Attendees will be encouraged to park in downtown Tempe and Shuttle to the LRT Facility since there is limited parking.
 - Metro Board has approved free rides until New Years Day
 - The expected number of people to attend will be approximately 100,000 people in downtown Tempe area.
 - Advertising that the event will be from 8 am to 6 pm. Trains will be running until 8 pm.

Amanda Nelson opened the floor for questions or concerns from the commissioners. Commissioner Bryan Young expressed concern on how the LRT Grand Opening affects the bus routes. Greg Jordan stated that the bus routes will be detoured starting Friday, December 26, 2008.

Commissioner Amanda Ormond expressed concern about long lines forming at stations. Jyme Sue McLaren stated that buses will be running parallel along the LRT route to bring people where they need to go. Amanda also asked will there be sizable parties at each end of the LRT route? Jyme Sue responded that there will be parties at each end of the line. Amanda asked what do you hope people to do at this event? Jyme Sue hoped that people would ride the entire route and also get off at each station to let others experience the trains as well.

Agenda Item 4 – Council Transportation Committee Work Plan

Carlos de Leon asked the commission to provide input of the Council Transportation Committee work plan, which includes the following tasks:

- Work to uphold measures that mitigate the noise impact on neighborhoods under the flight paths for Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport
- Promote aviation system planning to enable the region to diversify growth in aviation and commercial operations to airports throughout the valley
- Encourage the implementation of noise reduction measures for new developments in redevelopment areas around the Town Lake
- Review measures to ensure safety of aircraft operations over Town Lake area
- Ensure that light rail transit (LRT) design, construction and operational activities meet community needs
- Coordinate local and regional transportation decisions

- Assure the safe and efficient movement of people and vehicles along the street system.
- Recognize and encourage pedestrian and bicycle travel as an important part of the transportation system.
- Expand community partnerships

Commissioner Amanda Ormond inquired is the intent of the committee to review and monitor? Carlos de Leon stated that on a broad level is it to review and monitor. On a project level the committee reviews performance and operations.

Commissioner Bryan Young hoped the bullet point "Review measures to ensure safety of aircraft operations over Town Lake area" would focus more on city street fluidity than air traffic. For future considerations he would like to know the impact of the community due to reduced air traffic e.g. Is there less noise complaints from new residents moving into neighborhoods.

Commissioner Jayson Matthews is working with Council member Corey Woods on his Housing committee on Transit oriented design and housing options.

Agenda Item 5 – Results of September 2008 Tempe Transit Telephone Survey

Amanda Nelson provided the following information:

- The percentage of Tempe residents reporting to have ridden a bus in Tempe in the past year has increased to 39%, the highest percentage ever reported (up from 29% in 2006). Ridership at all frequency levels has increased since 2006.
- Residents most likely to have ridden the bus 20 or more times in the past year continue to be single (24%), those under the age of 35 (31%), residents with a high school education (24%) and those with an annual income under \$40,000 per year (26%).

Commissioner Bryan Young inquired if these percentages include bus as well as the Orbit. Amanda Nelson stated that they do.

- It appears that the increase in overall ridership is primarily due to a dramatic increase in the number of new riders in Tempe. There has been a significant increase in the percentage of residents who have been using the system for less than one year (31%, increasing 14 percentage points from 17% reported in 2006).
- This year it appears more riders are taking the bus out of choice and not because they "have to."
- Work continues to be a top destination for riders, although dropping this year to 31% from 39% in 2006; it is similar to percentages found in previous years.
- When bus riders were asked to rate their level of satisfaction on seven different aspects of riding the bus, the percentage of riders giving high ratings on all attributes is up in comparison to 2006. Comfort and safety on the bus receive the highest satisfaction ratings from Tempe bus riders.
- Approximately two in three riders indicate they are likely to be riding the bus one year from now.
- More than three in five residents indicate they are satisfied with the bus service in Tempe (61% give a "4" or "5" rating). More than three in four current bus riders (76%)

report they are satisfied with the service and 46% of non-riders indicate they are satisfied.

Commissioner Amanda Ormond inquired how the 61% satisfaction rating compared to other cities and if this number good. Carlos de Leon replied that there will be more research done on this question. In general based on other satisfaction surveys done in the City of Tempe the highest level of satisfaction is 75%.

- Residents mention “needing more routes” and “more frequent buses with extended hours” as the two main reasons they gave the Tempe bus service low satisfaction ratings (rating it a “1”, “2”, or “3”).
- Residents are most likely to indicate that providing more shade at bus stops.

Commissioner David Strang inquired on residents mentioning needing more routes and shade how these concerns affect Council in planning e.g. extended hours. Carlos de Leon replied that two new questions were added to the survey, the overall satisfaction in terms of services being provided but also how important these services were to the community and specifically what you want improved.

Commissioner Amanda Ormond expressed concern on shade and asked if trees are considered for shade. Robert Yabes stated that yes trees are considered. The main problem is right of way, if a bus stop can be placed under a tree it is.

- Residents were then asked if there were any additional transit improvements they felt the City of Tempe should consider. Among the 101 residents responding, extending the light rail system was the top mention (15%).
- Awareness of Tempe in Motion (TIM) among residents is measured at 48% this year, up significantly from 38% reported in 2006.
- Three in four residents aware of TIM (73%) are also able to correctly identify the meaning of “TIM” as Tempe in Motion (compared to 69% in 2006, and 67% in 2004).
- Residents who are aware of TIM are most likely to indicate they became aware through signs on the buses and street banners (both mentioned by 20%), similar to previous years’ findings (20% and 19% mentioned in 2006).
- When asked where they had seen the advertising, television is the most prominent response (53%), followed by street banners (15%), newspaper or print ads (7%), and bill inserts (7%).
- More than half of Tempe residents (54%) report being aware of the city’s neighborhood circulator bus program, more than twice the percentage of residents that reported being aware of the circulator program in 2006 (25%).
- Among those aware of the neighborhood circulator, 82% are able to correctly identify the name of the bus as “Orbit.”
- Almost every resident indicated they are aware of the Metro Light Rail Transit System (98%).
- The percentage of residents who report having access to a bicycle increased slightly this year to 56% from 53% in 2006 and mirrors percentages reported in previous years.
- Among those who have a bike, the frequency of use is at the highest reported level, with five in seven riders (71%).
- Those who have a bike, but only ride it occasionally were asked why this was the case. The weather and heat were the common reasons.

- The two main reasons residents gave neutral or low satisfaction ratings for the biking and walking paths are because they think there should be more bike lanes (22%) and that the current paths are not safe (20%).

Commissioner Jayson Matthews inquired if there was an elaboration on why the current paths were unsafe. Amanda Nelson replied that there was no elaboration on why the current paths were unsafe.

Agenda Item 6 – Regional Fare Policy

Greg Jordan provided the following information:

- Valley Metro is proposing a new Fare Policy to take effect July 2009 Fiscal Year 10.
 - Base Cash Fares
 - Local - \$1.25 to \$1.50
 - Express - \$1.75 to \$2.50
 - Day Passes
 - Local - \$2.50 to \$4.50
 - Express - \$3.50 to \$6.50
 - 31-Day Pass
 - Local pass from \$45 to \$50
 - Express pass from \$68 to \$76
- Regional Revenue & Ridership Impacts
 - Status Quo (2010-2013)
 - Revenue – \$219 million
 - Ridership – 295 million
 - VM Recommendation (2010-2013)
 - Revenue - \$282 million (+\$62 million)
 - Ridership – 271 million (-24 million boardings)
- Tempe Revenue & Ridership Impacts
 - Status Quo (2010-2013)
 - Revenue – \$21 million
 - Ridership – 35 million
 - VM Recommendation (2010-2013)
 - Revenue - \$27 million (+\$6 million)
 - Ridership – 37 million (-3 million boardings)

Commissioner Steven Saiz inquired what is the demographic that makes up the loss of 3 million in ridership. Staff will follow up.

- Advantages
 - Raises Fare Revenue
 - Improves Recovery
 - Improves Boarding Speed
 - Consistency with Peer Cities
 - Less Aggressive Approach
- Disadvantages
 - Reduces Ridership
 - Excessive Recovery Ratio
 - Negative Economic Impact

- Uncritical Peer City Analysis
- Limited Policy Analysis
- Recommends Face Prices not Multiples
- Aggressive Approval Process

Commissioner Bryan Young inquires about fraud in e.g. 31 day pass usage. Staff will research.

- ADA Fare Policy
 - Raise fare from \$2.00 to \$2.50 in FY10 and by \$0.25 in each year through FY 2013.
 - Objectives
 - Standardization of ADA Fares
 - Maximize fare allowed by ADA regulations (2 times the cash fare for a comparable fixed route trip)
- Regional Paratransit Technical Advisory Committee exploring implications of free bus for ADA certified individuals.

Greg Jordan stated that there are two rationals for raising ADA fares, to standardize across the board and because they are below the maximum allowed by policy. Commissioner Jayson Matthews requested this be revisited for further discussion.

The commission reached consensus that the fare policy moves forward to public hearing.

Agenda Item 10 – Capital Projects Update

Robert Yabes provided the following information:

- Broadway Road Streetscape Project initial public meeting November 19, 2008.
- Western Canal Multi-use Path is awaiting approval of for SRP agreement for right of way use on the canal bank.
- Rio Salado South Bank Multi-use Path is almost done. The path will open December 15, 2008.

Agenda Item 8 – Future Agenda Items

- Reduction of the number of Sky Harbor flights
- Acknowledgement of outgoing commissioners
- Update on Tempe South Corridor Extension Study
- Update on Traffic Camera System

David Strang moved to adjourn the meeting, Judi Nelson seconded the motion. Jayson Matthews declared the meeting adjourned at 9:05 a.m.

The Commission's next regular meeting will be held Tuesday, December 9, 2008 at 7:30 a.m. in the Don Cassano Community Room, 200 E. Fifth Street, Tempe, Arizona.

Prepared by:
Elizabeth Mieth

Reviewed by:

Carlos de Leon
Deputy Public Works Manager

UNAPPROVED