



## Minutes City of Tempe Transportation Commission October 11, 2011

**Minutes of the City of Tempe Transportation Commission held on Tuesday, October 11, 2011, 7:30 a.m., at the Transportation Center Don Cassano Community Room, Tempe, Arizona.**

**(MEMBERS) Present:**

Alana Chavez-Langdon, Matthew Garcia, Ben Goren, Charles Huellmantel, Marcellus Lisotta, Phillip Luna, Catherine Mayorga, Gary Roberts, Steven Saiz, Peter Schelstraete, David Strang, Bryan Young

**(MEMBERS) Absent:**

Pam Goronkin, Augustus H. Shaw IV

**City Staff Present:**

Dana Janofsky, Greg Jordan, Yvette Mesquita, Shelly Seyler, Sue Taaffe, Robert Yabes.

**Guests Present:**

German Piedrahota (AECOM); Terry Gruver (INFRACONSULT); Mario Diaz (Valley Metro RPTA); Carol Ketcherside (Valley Metro RPTA); Don Cassano

David Strang called the meeting to order at 7:35 a.m.

**Agenda Item 1 – Public Appearances**

None

**Agenda Item 2 – Approval of Minutes**

Commissioner Strang called to approve. Peter Schelstraete made a motion to approve, Commissioner Lisotta seconded the motion. All approved except Commissioner Huellmantel and Commissioner Luna who abstained. The following minutes were approved:

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**Agenda Item 3 – Tempe Transit Program Origins**

Presented by Don Cassano.

Don Cassano presented background information about the origins of the Transportation Commission. In the early 1990's the Transportation Commission was established to provide a stronger voice for transit in Tempe. As part of the Tempe Transit Tax, which passed in 1996, the Transportation Commission was charged to be the citizen group to oversee the tax utilization and make recommendations to Council.

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**Agenda Item 4 – State of the System: Today’s Transit and Transportation Systems**

Greg Jordan and Shelly Seyler presented.

Greg Jordan made a presentation to the Commission. He presented Tempe’s bus and rail ridership from 2000 to 2011, Transit productivity by city for fiscal year 2010-11, and transit boarding per capital by city. Greg presented items that were identified in the 1996 Transit Tax and noted if the items have been achieved, needed more work, or have been delayed or deferred. He also discussed the Comprehensive Transportation Plan, Tempe’s Asset Management, and the Transit Fund’s Financial Forecast for fiscal year 2012-16.

Commissioner Roberts asked what drives peak frequency and is ridership driving frequency. Greg responded that today, service frequency is based on existing demand, but service will have to be improved to build ridership; great service drives ridership. Higher service raises demand. Commissioner Roberts also noted that higher service increases costs.

Commissioner Saiz asked is there ways to raise awareness of choices so that the public is not surprised about possible future reductions in service. Greg replied that there is a public involvement process.

Commissioner Saiz asked if there is a “State of the System” discussion for public like a state of the city address. Greg responded that it is great idea and Development Services are revising the comprehensive transit report to help drive a new plan. Sue Taaffe also explained that forums used to be held, but did not have a large showing. System users only wanted to know about the changes in service.

Commissioner Goren stated we need to think of how to invest in the future.

Shelly Seyler made a presentation on the state of the Transportation System. The presentation was made to Council in May of this year. She discussed declining revenues of the Highway User Revenue Fund and the benefits of asset management. Shelly explained the city’s transportation system is valued at \$2.8 billion and consists of 1241 lane miles of streets with annual reinvestment target of \$8 million. Components of the system include streets, lighting, signs/signals, sidewalks, ROW and pathway landscaping. The City bridges are valued at \$128 million and include 32 vehicular bridges. They are on average 35 years old, and the annual reinvestment target is \$750,000. Tempe’s bridge sufficiency rating is an average of 85%. Shelly described the pavement quality index and showed examples of the various ratings. She also showed examples of tired infrastructure versus ones replaced/fixed by the preventative maintenance program.

**Agenda Item 5 – Overview of regional Transportation Plan (RTP)**

Carol Ketcherside, Director of Planning at Valley Metro presented.

Carol made a PowerPoint presentation that discussed the transit history of the region, the Valley Metro Regional Transportation Authority (RPTA), the Valley Metro system components, and the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) which is developed by MAG in partnership with agencies such as RPTA and ADOT. She also discussed the transit element of the RTP. The initial RTP represented more than \$5 billion investment in regional transit over 20 years and created a new “Supergrid” regional bus network and the transit Lifecycle Program which is the financial model by the board which must be balanced. Carol discussed the Valley Metro System today which includes 915 buses and 50 LRT cars and has 67.6 million annual boardings which are 2x the amount since 1992, but is less the past few years due to fewer people going to work and service cuts. Commissioner Chavez- Langdon inquired how many of the fleet run on alternatives fuels. Carol answered 95%.

Carol discussed what RPTA is doing now by showing maps of regional connectivity, arterial BRT corridors, LINK Bus Rapid, and regional Paratransit improvements like in-person eligibility determination,

uniform service standards and policies, ADA platinum pass, and the ADA Mobility Center. Carol discussed the ADOT revenue forecasts which are year by year projections. In 2026 there is an estimated \$2 billion shortfall. Commission Goren asked if the sharp drop is because the tax ends. Carol explained that the tax will be collected only ½ of the calendar year in 2026. Greg Jordan commented that this forecast loads into the city of Tempe's transit budget. Carol explained the funding losses which include a downturn in all tax revenues and the loss of Local Transit Assistance Funds (LTAF) from the State of Arizona. Commissioner Chavez- Langdon asked how other comparable cities out of state are impacted. Carol said that other cities are better funded and are a per capita investment for instance Texas is a dedicated one cent to Transit.

Carol discussed the regional fleet expansion from 660 buses originally planned to now 280 buses with 149 buses through 2010 and the vanpool program originally 520 buses planned, and now 420 with 122 added through 2010. Current planned regional capital facilities include 13 park and ride lots with 3 complete, 4 underway, 3 programmed, and 3 delayed, 13 regional passenger facilities with 1 completed, 2 underway, 1 programmed, and 9 delayed, and 5 regional bus O&M facilities with 2 complete and 3 delayed. Carol showed a map of the light rail extensions and their new projected completion dates that have been delayed 2 – 14 years. The next balanced update of the TLCP will be June 2012.

#### **Agenda Item 6 – Regional Fare Policy**

Mario Diaz, Chief Marketing Officer at Valley Metro presented.

Mario presented the Valley Metro Fare Program Recommendations PowerPoint from the Transit Management Committee Meeting on October 5, 2011.

CH2M Hill conducted a study and fare modeling from April to September and completed it in July 2011. The goals to the fare policy study included recommending fare policies that encourage transit use while achieving the adopted 25% fare revenue target, ridership impacts, public and operator input, route performance on fare revenue target, and implementation of fare change by July 1, 2012. The policy assumptions were to achieve and maintain a 25% fare box recovery ratio and hold base fare increases to \$.25 with each fare change. The recommendation is that the TMC forward to the Board for consideration the implementation of a Public Involvement Program for the following revision to the Valley Metro fare policy - consider changes every 3 years to maintain a 25% fare box recovery target with board action to approve or defer, hold the base fare increases to \$.025, obtain public input for changes that fall outside these guidelines, increase base fare \$.025 on July 1, 2012, 2015 and 2018, eliminate the 3-day pass on July 1, 2012, introduce a 15-day pass on July 1, 2012, and simplify the rural route structure to a flat \$4 per one way trip. The public involvement process will begin in November/December of 2011. July 1, 2012 new fare policy increases will be launched.

Commissioner Garcia asked how fare increases affects ridership. Mario responded that elasticity models show about 2 points.

Commissioner Goren stated that the fares will help pay for a quarter of the operations cost.

Commissioner Strang asked if a reduction in service has a bigger impact than a fare increase. Mario responded a reduction in service has an 18% drop-off.

Commissioner Chavez-Langdon asked if it's geographically known where the changes in ridership occur. Mario explained that you could but they look at overall ridership. Commissioner Chavez-Langdon stated that it is good for policymakers to know where the impacts are.

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Commissioner Chavez-Langdon asked about a mobile app. Marion said that Valley Metro website has 400 thousand unique users for routes and schedules. ASU is looking at developing one but it is not sanctioned.

**Agenda Item 7 – Deputy Director’s Report**

Greg Jordan presented.

Transit Ridership Update

Transit Labor Negotiations – Labor discussion taking place in Phoenix and Tempe. Items in dispute are more severe in Phoenix and a work stoppage there is more likely than in Tempe, In the event of a work stoppage, city staff and Veolia Transportation are preparing to supply Sunday service levels.

Commissioner Goren asked in Phoenix service stops will there be issues in Tempe. Greg stated there would be no direct impact on Tempe in the event of a Phoenix work stoppage, but Tempe residents travelling to Phoenix would be impacted

Tour de Tempe - Oct. 23rd starts at 9 am with registration beginning at 7:30 am

Town Lake Pedestrian Bridge Opening - Oct. 18<sup>th</sup> starts at 6:30 pm

**Agenda Item 8 – Future Agenda Items**

No one added to the list.

Update on staff attending regional meetings.	November
Overview on funding sources	November
Procedures for conflicts of interest	December
Commissioners attending regional meetings	TBD
Capital projects update	November
Calendar of events on agendas	October

Meeting adjourned at 9:10am

The Commission’s next regular meeting will be held Tuesday, November 8, 2011 at 7:30 a.m. in the Don Cassano Community Room, 200 E. Fifth Street, Tempe, Arizona.