

## TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY BOARD MEETING

# APPROVED

HELD ON FEBRUARY 19, 2013

### TAB Members Present

Ron Barnes, Chairman  
Dawn Fortuna, Vice Chairperson  
Bruce Hallsted  
Kay Henry  
Jim LeCheminant  
Troy Peterson  
Mike Schmidt

### TAB Members Absent

Ian Bennett (Excused)

### Others Present

Dan Cleavenger  
Randi Davis  
Renate Ehm  
Sabine Ellis  
Amanda McKeever  
Alan Sanderson  
Jodi Sorrell

Chairman Ron Barnes called the February 19, 2013 Transportation Advisory Board meeting to order at 5:31 pm.

Item 1.        Approval of the minutes of the Transportation Advisory Board meeting held on December 18, 2012.

Vice Chairperson Dawn Fortuna moved to approve the minutes as written. Board Member Kay Henry seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Item 2.        Acknowledge outgoing Board Member, Mr. Matt Tolman.

Chairman Barnes thanked Board Member Matt Tolman for his service to the Board and wished him well in the future. Mr. Tolman expressed his gratitude for serving on the Board and explained he was resigning in order to prevent any future conflicts of interest due to a new position.

Item 3.        Items from citizens present.

None.

Item 4.        Hear a presentation and discuss East Valley Dial-a-Ride Service Delivery Model Change Updates.

Interim Transit Services Director Jodi Sorrell began by briefly explaining that the Board would be updated on the Dial-a-Ride service delivery changes that took place in July of 2012 and the status of those changes. Ms. Sorrell introduced Valley Metro's Bus Service Delivery Director Jim Wright who began by giving a brief history on how the service delivery changes came to be.

Mr. Wright outlined the brokerage service goals established prior to implementation and gave an overview of ADA paratransit services and costs. Mr. Wright explained that Total Transit (Discount Cab) was awarded the contract.

Mr. Wright then described the public outreach conducted in the service cities and then began explaining the challenges the program initially faced. Some of the challenges included high call volumes and the complexities of the Dial-A-Ride program being new to the provider.

Mr. Wright said that since the service changes, there has been a 12% increase in ridership, the revenue miles are up, and the average trip length is down. He explained that there has been a 23% reduction in the overall cost per trip and that some of the goals are already coming to be realized. Mr. Wright said that it is expected that this will result in \$1.2 million savings for the City of Mesa.

Mr. Wright explained that Valley Metro is now evaluating whether the current brokerage model is correct. Mr. Wright said that the subcontractors are only performing 20% of the trips versus the intended 50% of trips.

Mr. Wright then described results of the customer surveys that were conducted in late 2012. He explained that the survey results show that there is similar satisfaction with phone staff, drivers, and vehicles. Mr. Wright noted that one area of improvement is door to door service, but that overall, 66% of survey respondents feel the service is somewhat to much better than it was six months prior.

Mr. Wright concluded that this is a pilot program and that further evaluation will be done and then offered to answer any questions for the Board.

Chairman Barnes remarked that the survey results were impressive and Board Member Bruce Hallsted said that he felt it was impressive that the service is more cost efficient and increases satisfaction.

Board Member Troy Peterson concurred and asked if any trends have been seen in the change in trips and passengers. Mr. Wright responded that the numbers are increasing month by month and have not plateaued. Mr. Wright said that in Fiscal Year 2012, there were between 750 and 800 rides each day, and in February 2013 there were between 1000 and 1025.

Board Member Peterson asked about the brokerage model percentages and Mr. Wright explained that the contract requires the broker to subcontract 50% of the rides. Mr. Wright said that while Total Transit brokered 50% of the trips to subcontractors in the first six months of the program, the subcontractors were only able to provide 20% of those trips. Mr. Wright said that they will work to get the contract in line with reality.

Chairman Barnes commended Valley Metro for implementing a program he considers to be visionary in order to improve efficiency. Chairman Barnes said that the ADA was approved in 1990 and there has been little improvement to services in 23 years. Chairman Barnes thanked Mr. Wright.

Item 5. Hear a presentation and discuss Valley Metro Title VI Fare and Service Equity Analysis Policies as they relate to fixed-route bus and light rail.

Interim Transit Services Director Jodi Sorrell introduced Robert Forest and Ben Limmer from Valley Metro and explained that Title VI policies would be discussed. Valley Metro Corridor and Facility Development Manager Ben Limmer began by explaining that in the fall of 2012 new Title VI rules and policies were released that must be implemented by April 1, 2013. Mr. Limmer explained he would be presenting Valley Metro's policies and collecting any feedback on those policies the Board may have.

Mr. Limmer read the definition of Title VI and explained that transit routes are funded with federal funds and must follow the policies. Mr. Limmer said that Valley Metro is building policies on behalf of the region and working with the City of Phoenix, who is the federal recipient of those transit funds. Mr. Limmer then explained the process for the policy implementation and where they were in the process.

Mr. Limmer explained the major service change policy and described the three step process for determining Title VI impacts. He then gave examples of the impact determinations. Mr. Limmer did the same for the fare equity policy and then described community involvement in terms of determining appropriate thresholds for the policy. He explained community outreach plans and concluded by describing the timeline in order to have the policies established by April 2013.

Chairman Barnes thanked Mr. Limmer for his information and asked the Board for any questions.

Vice Chairperson Fortuna asked if the intent of Valley Metro's policies is to report if or when there are Title VI impacts or if there will be any recourse if there are impacts. Mr. Limmer responded by giving a recent example of where local routes were impacted more than regional/rapid routes and what was needed to be done in order to meet the Title VI policies. Mr. Limmer explained that the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) is making it a top priority to make sure that service providers have Title VI policies in place.

Vice Chairperson Fortuna asked if the reduction in service for The Downtown Buzz had Title VI impacts and Ms. Sorrell responded that when changes were made, they did not change 25% of the whole route. Ms. Sorrell added that the East Mesa Circulator may have Title VI impacts if the route is made permanent after the pilot program ends.

Mr. Limmer then responded to Chairman Barnes' question on how the fare equity was determined and explained how the regional fare structure works. Mr. Limmer concluded by explaining that the City of Mesa buys its service from Valley Metro and cannot determine a different rate for its service area than the rest of the region.

Item 6. Discuss and take action on staff recommendation to increase the speed limit from 45 mph to 50 mph on Ellsworth Road from Elliot Road to the south City limits.

Senior Transportation Engineer Sabine Ellis began by explaining that Mesa's City Council makes the final decision to establish speed limits and that the Board is being asked to make a

recommendation for Ellsworth Road from Elliot Road to the south City Limits. Ms. Ellis showed the segment of road under discussion on a map and explained that there are County islands along the segment. She explained that a speed study was conducted based on a citizen request and then presented the results of that study. Ms. Ellis explained that 44% of the vehicles were driving more than 55 mph, 17% were more than 60 mph, and 5% were more than 65 mph. Ms. Ellis explained that this showed that the speed limit does not match the travelling speed of the majority of the drivers.

Ms. Ellis then described the existing and future land uses and features along this segment including the Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport, the future Mesa Proving Grounds mixed-use project, the future Pacific Proving Grounds North project, and the future State Route 24 (Gateway Freeway).

Ms. Ellis explained that staff recommends increasing the speed limit to 50 mph. She then described two alternatives, which are to not increase the speed limit or to increase the speed limit higher than staff's recommendation to closer align to the travelling speeds.

Board Member Kay Henry asked about a current construction project along this segment of street that requires drivers to slow down to 35 mph and Traffic Engineer Alan Sanderson responded that the project will likely be complete prior to the implementation of the speed limit change. Board Member Henry asked if the County had any say in the speed limit on any portion of the segment and Ms. Ellis explained that Ellsworth Road is controlled by the City of Mesa.

Board Member Peterson asked if there are any plans for additional access to the street segment. Mr. Sanderson responded that there are major streets identified and there are conceptual details for the DMB Eastmark site, but it is too early in the planning process to have specific details. Mr. Sanderson said that the Pacific Proving Grounds project is planning for access limited to Ray Road only, and that on the west side, along the airport, there are a few major entrances. Board Member Peterson said that he supported increasing the speed limit higher than staff's recommendation as it seemed to him that the access to this road will be more limited than other areas of development and suggested modifying the speed limit when development occurs.

Mr. Sanderson explained that speeding citations are typically issued at 11 mph over the speed limit. Mr. Sanderson said that citations would be issued at 66 mph if the limit is 55 mph. He added that state statutes require how speed limit changes of more than 10 mph are handled and changes of more than 10 mph must have stepped up increments.

Vice Chairperson Fortuna asked if there will be safety concerns as more features are added to the segment such as the freeway and traffic signals. Mr. Sanderson responded that the spacing is such that it allows good progression for through traffic. Mr. Sanderson explained staff is hoping to reduce rear end crashes due to back-ups at Elliot Road. Mr. Sanderson said there is no timeframe on the Pacific Proving Grounds Development and that Eastmark is starting in the far south east corner of its parcel. Mr. Sanderson said he did not anticipate any large volumes until the area is further developed. Mr. Sanderson also explained that with planned traffic signals so close together, the speed limit will probably need to be readjusted in the future.

Board Member Hallsted stated that he concurred with the discussions and had no concern about the speed limit being 50 mph. He said that with development, dynamics will change. Board Member Hallsted added that the speed limit drops to the south, into Queen Creek. When Board Member Hallsted asked how long it would be before the speed limit would need to be readjusted, Mr. Sanderson responded that it would be several years.

Board Member Jim LeCheminant moved to accept staff's recommendation. Board Member Mike Schmidt seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:53 p.m.