

TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE MINUTES

November 19, 2001

The Transportation Committee of the City of Mesa met in the lower level meeting room of the Council Chambers, 57 East 1st Street, on November 19, 2001 at 3:00 p.m.

COMMITTEE PRESENT

Jim Davidson, Chairman
Pat Pomeroy
Claudia Walters

COUNCIL PRESENT

Mayor Keno Hawker

OTHERS PRESENT

Mike Hutchinson

(Agenda items were discussed out of order, but for purposes of clarity will remain as listed on the agenda.)

1. Discuss and consider the Central Phoenix/East Valley Light Rail Transit (CP/EV LRT) project's present design elements, associated costs and how costs will be shared among the participating cities of Mesa, Phoenix and Tempe.

Transit Administrator Jim Wright addressed the Committee and introduced Wulf Grote, Central Phoenix/East Valley Light Rail Transit (CP/EV LRT) Project Director. Mr. Wright stated that the purpose of the presentation is to update the Committee on the status of the project including current cost estimates and cost sharing strategies. Mr. Wright noted that the project is a partnership with the Federal Transit Administration (FTA).

Mr. Grote advised that the project is currently in the Preliminary Engineering/Environmental Impact Statement phase. He noted that it is anticipated that this phase will be completed during the spring of 2002 and that following Federal approval of this phase, Federal funds will be released to proceed with the Final Design phase of the project. Mr. Grote also commented on the remaining timeline associated with the project and said that the project is scheduled for completion in 2006.

Mr. Wright stated that the three primary goals of the project are to: 1) provide regular service at headways that attract riders; 2) be acceptable to the community; and 3) meet safety and security standards. Mr. Grote referred to and commented on maps on display in the Council Chambers that depicted the currently proposed project alignment and stations throughout Phoenix, Tempe and into Mesa, along the Main Street corridor from the Tempe border to the East Valley Institute of Technology (EVIT). He noted that a station is proposed at McClintock Drive in Tempe although the station is not depicted on the map.

In response to a question from Committeemember Pomeroy regarding projected travel times from Mesa, Mr. Grote advised that it is anticipated that during rush hour, the travel time between the EVIT and downtown Phoenix will be comparable to traveling by auto.

Committeemember Pomeroy voiced concerns regarding the number of stations that are being proposed in the City of Tempe and negative impacts on travel times. He stated the opinion that fewer stations along the system will increase overall ridership.

Mr. Grote explained that the City Councils of Phoenix and Tempe determined where the proposed stations would be located in their respective cities. He reported that the number and locations of stations would be reevaluated in the near future to determine affordability as part of the Preliminary Engineering process and he added that it is possible that one or more Tempe stations will be eliminated because of the costs involved.

Committeemember Pomeroy commented on the importance of carefully locating *Park and Ride* lots throughout the system.

In response to a request from Committeemember Pomeroy, Mr. Grote outlined the proposed locations of *Park and Ride* lots and he noted that such lots proposed at the EVIT and Price Freeway stations will be significant in size.

Chairman Davidson voiced opposition to the number of proposed Tempe stations, particularly to the station proposed at McClintock Drive.

Mr. Wright commented on funding issues associated with the project including the City of Phoenix referendum benchmark of \$43 million per mile. He said that the current estimated total project cost is \$947 million and he noted that 50% of the total cost is being funded by the FTA (up to a maximum of \$500 million based on 2000 valuations). Mr. Wright noted that the estimated total cost of the project has been reduced from previous projections and he outlined the numerous modifications utilized to reduce costs.

Discussion ensued regarding proposed modifications to the *Park and Ride* lots; the fact that although the proposed modifications reduce the number of lots from 11 to 9, the total number of parking spaces (3,700) was not reduced; and the fact that the proposed savings of \$12.5 million in conjunction with consolidating *Park and Ride* lots is due to a reduction of property costs.

Chairman Davidson requested that staff determine whether funds allocated for freeway artwork can be reallocated for public transit use.

Mr. Wright outlined the various components of the project and their respective costs. He noted that the \$140.4 million projected cost for Light Rail Vehicles represents 40 vehicles at \$3.5 million each.

In response to a question from Committeemember Walters regarding the projected \$11.4 million Start-Up & Testing costs, Mr. Grote explained the process that will take place in connection with testing the vehicles and training operators. He noted that Federal funds may be used in connection with those costs because they are considered capital expenses as opposed to operating expenses.

Mr. Wright discussed various elements of the system including the types of trackwork that will be used. He reported that the 20.3 mile system will consist of 10.5 miles of ballasted track (open tracks secured to ties in a bed of crushed rock), that the .2 miles of track over the Tempe Town Lake bridge will be directly attached to the bridge, and that the remaining 9.6 miles of

track will be paved (concrete poured between the tracks). He referred to photographs on display in the Council Chambers that depicted vehicle stations and examples of ballasted and paved trackwork in Dallas, Portland, San Jose and Salt Lake City. Mr. Wright also commented on other system elements including track alignment through the median areas of streets, landscaping improvements at stations, various bridge structures including a bridge over the Tempe Town Lake, and the maintenance and vehicle storage facility.

Discussion ensued regarding the light rail system in Sacramento, California.

In response to questions from Committeemember Walters regarding travel times and station spacing in conjunction with other operating systems, Mr. Grote advised that an analysis of systems in the western United States revealed that station spacing ranges from .8 stations per mile to 1.3 stations per mile. He reported that if all the proposed stations were implemented, the CP/EV LRT system would be at the high end of the range at 1.3 stations per mile.

Mr. Wright discussed contact wire applications, the electrical power substations that are required to power the system, and placement of the substations approximately every mile along the system. He referred to photographs that depicted various types of contact wires, poles and substation structures. He also commented on safety measures and accessibility features that will be incorporated into the system.

Mr. Wright reported that a cost sharing agreement has not yet been reached between the Cities of Phoenix, Tempe and Mesa. He referred to *Table 1 Draft Cost Sharing Options* (See Attachment) contained in staff's report and stated that staff recommends Option 5. He added that preliminary responses at the staff level indicate concurrence by Tempe and Phoenix with Option 5.

Mr. Grote commented on various potential project modifications that are available to reduce the overall cost of the project.

Mr. Wright noted that as the system is extended, the cost per mile would drop due to shared infrastructure that does not need to be duplicated such as the maintenance and storage facility.

Committeemember Walters voiced a preference for power poles that are as inconspicuous as possible.

Further discussion ensued regarding the number of stations proposed for the project.

Chairman Davidson and Committeemember Pomeroy reiterated the opinion that an excessive number of stations are being proposed in Tempe and Phoenix.

Discussion ensued regarding the possibility of express runs/skipped stations; the possibility of securing subsidized project funding from the utility companies that will benefit from the project; and the fact that Federal funds will be distributed consistent with the investment by each City (matching Federal funds per funds invested by each City).

Chairman Davidson stated support for Option 5 of the *Draft Cost Sharing Options* and thanked Mr. Wright and Mr. Grote for the presentation.

Deputy City Manager Paul Wenbert stated that staff would provide the Committee with an update regarding the project in January 2002.

(Mayor Hawker joined the meeting at 3:25 p.m.)

2. Discuss and consider enhancement alternatives to the aesthetic treatment and landscaping currently being proposed by the Arizona Department of Transportation for the US 60 Freeway widening project from Price Road to Val Vista Drive.

Deputy Engineer Jeff Kramer addressed the Committee regarding this agenda item and referred to staff's report concerning this matter that was provided to the Committeemembers. He noted that due to the fact that cost projections regarding staff's three proposed alternatives (concerning Bolt-on Overpass Graphics) are not yet available and the fact that the Committee has limited time to discuss and consider this agenda item, staff would return to the Committee in the near future with a full presentation.

Mr. Kramer commented on new developments not contained in staff's report, including the fact that the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) has indicated opposition to staff's proposal that the design/build contractor for the freeway improvements bid and install any proposed bridge enhancements, and instead indicated that the bridge enhancements be included and installed by the specific bridge contractors as each bridge project is bid and constructed. Mr. Kramer noted that another option not contained in staff's report is to install bridge enhancements after freeway improvements are complete as a City of Mesa project under a permit from ADOT.

Discussion ensued regarding the possibility of incorporating a Freestanding Art Element as an entryway treatment near the Price/US 60 interchange area.

Committeemember Walters stated that an entryway Freestanding Art Element should not be ruled out as a freeway enhancement but added that decisions regarding enhancements could not be made without cost projections.

Chairman Davidson expressed concerns regarding the possibility of future problems associated with graffiti on freeway structures and enhancements.

3. Discuss and consider the selection of a color for the structure along the Loop 202 Santan Freeway Corridor.

Senior Civil Engineer Steve Ketchum addressed the Committee and provided an overview regarding this agenda item. He advised that the Town of Gilbert has proposed that the San Tan Freeway corridor structures be painted a different color to distinguish the freeway from the Superstition, Red Mountain and Interstate 10 Freeways. Mr. Ketchum reported that City of Mesa staff and the City of Chandler concur with the proposal, and that the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) is also agreeable with the stipulation that the primary color of the structures be uniform throughout the freeway corridor.

Mr. Ketchum commented on the color selection process to date and reported that staff members from Gilbert, Chandler and Mesa have jointly selected two alternatives. He noted that although the primary color must remain fairly neutral and consistent throughout the corridor, each City may select different, bolder accent colors. He also noted that the natural coloring of the local

terrain and compatible transitioning to the adjoining freeway corridors were also considered as part of the color selection process.

Mr. Ketchum referred to color samples provided to the Committeemembers and stated that the names of the two alternative colors that have been selected are "Chinchilla" and "Warmth." Mr. Ketchum also provided color samples that represented how the two colors would appear after fading over a period of time.

Committeemember Pomeroy stated a preference for the color called "Warmth."

Discussion ensued regarding the two colors; the fact that "Chinchilla" is a browner color than the color used on the Superstition Freeway; and the fact that "Warmth" contains a small amount of red, although not as much red as the color of the Red Mountain Freeway.

Mr. Ketchum advised that City staffs and ADOT would meet in the near future at the Interstate10/Santan Freeway traffic interchange location to view the two color samples painted on concrete surfaces in natural lighting.

It was moved by Committeemember Walters, seconded by Committeemember Pomeroy, to recommend to the Council that either color, "Chinchilla" or "Warmth", be approved for use as the primary color for the structure along the Loop 202 Santan Freeway corridor. (Committeemember Walters stated a preference for the color "Warmth.")

Carried unanimously.

4. Adjournment.

It was moved by Committeemember Walters, seconded by Committeemember Pomeroy, that the Transportation Committee meeting adjourn at 4:03 p.m.

Carried unanimously.

I hereby certify that the foregoing minutes are a true and correct copy of the minutes of the Transportation Committee meeting of the City of Mesa, Arizona, held on the 19th day of November 2001. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held and that a quorum was present.

BARBARA JONES, CITY CLERK

Attachment
pjt

lengths designed for three-car train operations. Passenger amenities at the stations include: 50% of the station area shaded, station furniture and fare vending equipment. All of the stations and related facilities will be compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Park and ride facilities are planned for 3,767 spaces. Two parking structures are planned for the Chris-Town Mall station and the 19th Avenue/Camelback station. The other seven park and ride facilities will be surface lots including one planned for Longmore and Main in Mesa.

Cost and Cost Sharing

The total CP/EV LRT project cost, in 2000 dollars, is estimated to be \$947,378,448. The FTA has indicated that the most funding it will be able to provide is \$500,000,000 based upon the year of expenditure. Due to inflation, the current cost estimate of \$947,378,448 will be \$1,096,400,000 in year of expenditure.

Some components of the system are essential to achieving the priorities described earlier. The essential elements are: LRT vehicles, maintenance and storage facility (MSF), Tempe Town Lake bridge, Deck Park bridge, stations, trackway, power substations, overhead catenary and canal crossing structures.

Project consultants, working with staffs from the participating cities, have developed five options relative to the sharing of costs between the cities funding the project. The cost sharing options are based on the baseline cost estimate of \$947,378,448. The five options are described below and the cost sharing implications are detailed in Table 1.

TABLE 1
DRAFT COST SHARING OPTIONS
 1st Quarter, FY 2000 dollars

		Phoenix	Tempe	Mesa	Total
Option 1	Cost	\$625,426,557	\$270,626,231	\$51,325,660	\$947,378,448
	Per mile	\$ 46,670,000	\$ 46,670,000	\$46,670,000	\$ 46,670,000
	percentage	66.0%	28.6%	5.4%	
Option 2	Cost	\$627,966,172	\$270,875,278	\$48,536,998	\$947,378,448
	Per mile	\$ 46,860,000	\$ 46,700,000	\$44,120,000	\$ 46,670,000
	percentage	66.3%	28.6%	5.1%	
Option 3	Cost	\$640,581,748	\$256,901,702	\$49,894,998	\$947,378,448
	Per mile	\$ 47,800,000	\$ 44,290,000	\$45,360,000	\$ 46,670,000
	percentage	67.6%	27.1 %	5.3%	
Option 4	Cost	\$649,460,946	\$254,150,861	\$43,766,641	\$947,378,448
	Per mile	\$ 48,470,000	\$ 43,820,000	\$39,790,000	\$ 46,670,000
	percentage	68.6%	26.8%	4.6%	
Option 5	Cost	\$643,166,502	\$261,161,842	\$43,050,104	\$947,378,448
	Per mile	\$ 48,000,000	\$ 45,030,000	\$39,140,000	\$ 46,670,000
	percentage	67.9%	27.6%	4.5%	