Meeting Summary VMAAG (Valley Metro Accessibility Advisory Group) Meeting Thursday, January 26, 2023 WebEx / 2:30 - 4:00 p.m.

VMAAG Members Public Participants Valley Metro Staff De De Gaisthea Guillermo Gonzalez Present Catherine Morgan John Federico Andrea Chacon **Howard May** Barbara Paez Willie Marks Katherine Schmidt Greg Troutman Nichole Myers Kyle Straight Rhita Bercy Lee Ann Jones Hezequias Rocha Brittany Hoffman Christina Hernandez Miriam Cifuentes **Not Present** Katie Griffith Trevor Ebersole Jean Moriki

Valley Metro Contractors Debby Thacker James Rosa, MTM Alex Tsotsos

- 1. Welcome and Introductions Kyle Straight (chair of VMAAG Steering Committee)
- 2. Member Roll Call Andrea Chacon, Administrative Assistant II, Accessible Transit Services, Agency Business and Technical Services, Valley Metro
- 3. Invitation for Comments from the Public

Members of the public are invited to provide comments on any item not on the agenda.

No comments were shared.

4. Review of November 17, 2022, VMAAG Meeting Summary Catherine and Kyle thanked Andrea for a detailed summary.

No other comments were mentioned. Motion to approve minutes.

5. Super Bowl LVII Transit Operations Plan – Brittany Hoffman, Public Information Specialist, Valley Metro

Brittany provided an overview of Valley Metro's transit operations plan for the upcoming Super Bowl LVII. Valley Metro has been focusing on the increase of travel demand on the light rail. We had our highest ridership day last time Phoenix hosted the Super Bowl in

2015 with 125,000 people traveling on the light rail. We are prepared for that number of people and many more with additional bus service.

We needed to make sure we have seamless connection from the light rail station out to the stadium in Glendale. There are a plethora of activities happening downtown leading up to the game and wanted to be prepared with extra service.

Valley Metro will also have increased light rail security presence with Phoenix Police Transit, TSA, as well as K9s. The additional security is a rider enhancement for people to be able to travel safely to all the Super Bowl events.

Valley Metro has a team of volunteer ambassadors at downtown stations and high-volume park-and-rides. Printed maps, pocket guides, and clear bags will be distributed to riders. Volunteers will be able to educate riders on using the Valley Metro app which also features mobile fare, etc. Customer service will be extending their hours to be able to help answer any questions. Light rail and busses will also be operating later hours.

Kyle thanked Brittany for her presentation and had 2 questions.

His first question was about mobile fare payment. Kyle was looking for clarification on when you pay from your phone, then you get the QR code to scan and he also heard about a reloadable card for fare.

Brittany answered by saying we are currently in Phase I where anyone can buy a pass on their phone and scan the code at the fare readers. Phase II will have reloadable cards where people can add funds. Brittany mentioned that there will be another presentation on Phase II to the group later.

Guillermo mentioned he will bring up this topic as a future presentation option to the Steering Committee once we have more information. Right now, we are in the very early stages of information.

Howard asked if the new fare reading machines have headphone jacks. He said he had a hard time finding the headphone jack but did find brail.

Brittany mentioned the new fare readers do not have headphone jacks, but the new fare vending machines will have headphone jacks which is also part of Phase II.

Howard also asked how Valley Metro is going to handle the camping situations at the bus stops, specifically around the 19th Ave.

Brittany mentioned our security team is aware of the influx of homelessness across the Valley. People who are homeless are drawn to transit for the same sense of security with cameras being on the platforms, etc. Having additional security available around the 19th corridor as well as working with the City of Phoenix will help. We want to make sure we're being a good partner with other cities and with homeless people to find solutions.

6. Northwest Extension Wayfinding Mockup Summary – Catherine Morgan, VMAAG Co-Chair, Howard Mays, VMAAG member

Catherine mentioned she attended the mockup with her sister and brother in-law who is vision impaired and shared their feedback. They were both impressed with the details making it safe for all, especially those with limited vision. Appreciated the professionalism from all the agencies involved and were also impressed with seeing women involved in places of high positions, and enjoyed seeing the project in its early stage.

Howard appreciated the opportunity to be involved in the mockup testing of the platforms. The normal domes were the only thing he could spot with his cane, but the new groove was difficult to detect with his equipment.

Guillermo thanked Catherine and Howard for their amazing insight on the project. What was found is the wayfinding they were proposing didn't work and there wouldn't have been a way to figure that out without our VMAAG group. You all really did help us and is a perfect representation of what VMAAG is by giving us accessibility advice on a variety of our projects.

Catherine and Howard said it was an honor and privilege to attend. Howard mentioned he would continue to volunteer his time on additional projects as needed.

Kyle thanked both for their presentation.

7. Customer Complaints Review – Willie Marks, Supervisor, Customer Service, Valley Metro

Willie reviewed the feedback on ADA, Fixed Bus, and Rail Services which entails service requests, kudos, and complaints. ADA, Fixed Bus, Light Rail, showed a decrease in complaints in December. Complaints also decreased from October-December of 2021 to October-December in 2022.

Kyle thanked Willie for giving her report and is delighted to see the number of complaints decrease and thanked Willie and the agents for all that they do.

No additional questions were asked.

8. Paratransit Updates – Miriam Cifuentes Parker, Paratransit & RideChoice Program Supervisor, Accessible Transit Services, Agency Business and Technical Services, Valley Metro

Miriam addressed the Paratransit complaints which are mostly regarding on-time performance. We are currently working with our contractors to increase drivers and additional staff to help with delays as well as professionalism. We continue to work on complaint investigations and we're working on system-wide improvement with the contractors. We are focusing on operational enhancements that will bring us a better overall customer experience.

No additional questions were asked.

9. RideChoice Updates – Trevor Ebersole, Paratransit & RideChoice Program Supervisor, Accessible Transit Services, Agency Business and Technical Services, Valley Metro

We are seeing a slight increase of ridership on a monthly basis, and our on-demand trips have a 99% on-time. We are working with the contractor regarding the accuracy of reporting the numbers regarding trips. We do not receive many complaints with the RideChoice program but the ones we do receive revolve around reservations with language barriers, pick up delays, and no shows. The program now has 17 providers with 125 wheelchair accessible vehicles. We are working on securing more providers, specifically the outskirts of metropolitan area to really enhance services.

No additional questions were asked.

10. Comments by Members and Announcements

No additional comments or announcements were made.

- **11. Next VMAAG Meeting** March 23, 2023, from 2:30 to 4:00 p.m.
- **12. Next Steering Committee Meeting** February 9, 2023 from 2:30 3:30 p.m. *VMAAG Members Only
- 13. Adjournment

