**Meeting Summary DRAFT**

**VMAAG (Valley Metro Accessibility Advisory Group) Meeting**

Thursday, January 16, 2020

Papago Conference Room

4600 E. Washington Street, Suite 101

2:30 – 4:00 p.m.

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| **VMAAG Members** | **Valley Metro Staff** | **Contractors/Agencies** |
| ***Present***John Federico ***Phone***Howard May***Not Present*** David AndreenKathryn ChandlerPaula ConsidineKatie GriffithDarrell HillikerMegan HomrighausenLynn Houston Jean MorikiPaige RaetzLarry WangerToni Young | ***Present***Carol KetchersideGuillermo GonzalezBecky JohnsonBrenda KreitingerJames RosaLisa ScottWyatt Skar | ***Present***Joe Bower, City of PhoenixJhashe HollowaySteph Stearns, MAGTrisha Tezer***Phone***Jennifer Lugo**Public Participants*****Present***None***Phone***Sandy McGinnisEmmanuel CaddyMary Hartle |

1. Welcome and Introductions – Carol Ketcherside
* Everyone on the phone and in the room stated their presence. Carol Ketcherside introduced herself and asked that all attendees, present and on the phone, to introduce themselves.
* Trisha Tezer, who is Kate Riley’s replacement at TransDev, was introduced. Kate is still with TransDev, but in a different capacity. Also, Wyatt Skar has been permanently promoted as the new Paratransit and RideChoice Manager replacing Arleen Schenck. We have recently posted his previous position as Paratransit and RideChoice Program Representative; if you know of anyone who may be interested in this position, please let them know the position is posted. We are still actively working on recruiting the permanent manager for this group.
1. Invitation for Comments from the Public
* Emanuel Caddy: Made a trip to a few weeks ago to Glendale with an associate, who was also blind, and unfortunately the business was not open that day. The driver dropped them off at their destination as he/she could not take them back to where the ride originated or to another location. What can we do to avoid this predicament in the future so riders are not stranded?
* Carol Ketcherside: Asked if someone with Transdev could call him and figure out what happened and Jhashe Holloway volunteered.
1. Review of September 26, 2019, VMAAG Meeting Summary
	* Since the draft meeting summary was just sent out and the group and Valley Metro staff have not had the opportunity to review them, please send any revisions to Lisa Scott by end of business on January 21, 2020.
2. Northwest Extension Phase II (NWEII) Light Rail Project Follow-up
	* As a follow-up to the Stakeholder meeting with Ability 360 on December 17, 2019 that VMAAG was invited to, were there were any comments?
	* The PowerPoint shown at the Stakeholder meeting has been sent to VMAAG members.
	* There is a 3D model which displays the elevated station at Metro Center Mall and the crossing of I-17. Slides in the PowerPoint show pictures of the project at various angles.
	* The model is currently located in the Jacob’s offices downtown (same building as Valley Metro, 101 N. 1st Avenue). It is very large and cannot be easily transported. If you would like to see it in person, please contact Lisa Scott to set up a time.
	* Howard May: Wants to see it.
	* The location of the station will be between Howard College America and the old Macy’s entrance at Metrocenter.
3. Achieving Transit Accessibility Now (ATAN) – Steph Stearns, Transportation Planner II, Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG)

**What is ATAN?**

* Short-term strategy to improve ADA accessibility and other amenities at bus stops.
* Program Goal: provide safe and equitable accessibility to the transit system across the region with immediate results and long-term sustainability.
* Participants in the program include member agencies, 27 cities and towns, three Indian communities, ADOT, and both Maricopa and Pinal Counties.

**Who can apply for ATAN?**

* The lead agency on the project must be a member agency of MAG.
* Member agencies may team up on an application together.
* Private non-profits may team up with a member agency on an application.

**What is eligible for ATAN?**

* There must be at least one accessibility improvement per bus stop location
	+ ADA push button, curb cuts, bus stop pad, etc.
* An unconstrained list of amenities is eligible thereafter
	+ Shade trees, bus shelters, bike racks, benches, sidewalk improvements to and from the bus stop, etc.
		- Team-up – Chandler and Gilbert wanted to share an app to improve bus routes.
		- Non-profit group in Glendale interested fixing up bus stops, as a point of interest, and are working with Glendale to share the costs.
* Once one improvement is made, from a curb cut to a bus stop pad, there is a list available for more improvements. It takes more than a stable surface to make a good bus stop.

**How does ATAN work?**

* MAG announces a call for projects.
* Applications are technically evaluated by MAG Transit Committee.
* Member agency is awarded the local funds (20% local match required)
	+ An example would be if the City of Phoenix wanted $100,000 for improvements, they would have to come up with 20% or $20,000.
* Member agency completes work.
* Member agencies are reimbursed for completed work.

**What has ATAN Done?**

* Partnership with Valley Metro
* As of January 2020
	+ Five rounds of funding totaling $2.5M have been issued
	+ Eight member agencies have received awards
	+ 370 planned improvement locations
		- 210 of which have already been constructed
* **ATAN Bus Stop Improvements**
	+ Map of metropolitan of Phoenix and surrounding areas.
	+ Red dots show what has been done and what will be done.
	+ The current members who have been award projects are Chandler, Gila River Indian Community, Glendale, Mesa, Peoria, Phoenix, Tempe, and Tolleson.
* **Accessible Stop Example**
	+ Showed a slide with the “bare bones” minimum measurements for the curb cut/slope and the bus stop pad.
	+ Before and after slides of various bus stop improvements.
* **Lessons Learned/Next Steps**
	+ 15-month timeline is tight for completing all improvements
	+ Rising construction costs posed a challenge to completing projects on budget (cost overruns are the responsibility of the sponsoring agency)
	+ Challenge in finding “shovel-ready” projects
	+ MAG will be working with member agencies and stakeholders in 2020 to address ADA improvement bus stop needs
		- There were five rounds of funding totaling $3.5M when it started and the money is gone and we are working with member agencies to revamp the program. The City of Phoenix and Valley Metro have completed a bus stop inventory to see what stops are accessible.
		- A brochure titled” **Achieving Transit Accessibility Now”** was handed out as an example of the work that was done in Tolleson. All the completed projects are highlighted and can be viewed online at the ATAN website: <https://www.azmag.gov/Programs/Transportation/Transit/Achieving-Transit-Accessibility-Now-ATAN>. Use the TIP viewer follow link zoom into the city of and location of the bus stop to see what ATAN projects have been completed.

***Questions and Answers:***

**Becky Johnson:** Where do you get the money from for the ATAN projects? Are they from grants or other sources?

**Steph Stearns:** With the Public Transportation Fund (PTF) 1/2-cent sales tax to fund freeways and highways.

**Carol Ketcherside:** To further explain federal funding comes with all sorts of restrictions which make using it on small capital projects cumbersome and inefficient. MAG and Valley Metro swapped the funds Valley Metro used the federal funds on major capital construction projects and made PTF funds available for the ATAN bus stop improvements.

**Howard May:** If you find a bus stop that is concerning for the city, do you contact the member city about it?

**Steph Stearns:** Yes, contact that city.

**Howard May:** I would like to see policies and standards for certain bus stops. Some have little space, some look the same as others, and some look different.

**Carol Ketcherside:** Bus stops are the responsibility of the cities which they reside in. Valley Metro puts out design guidelines with ADA functional requirements, but there is a wide variety across the valley, many cities want a unique look.

**John Federico:** There are more upcoming Tempe public meetings on the calendar and I will send them to Lisa Scott to forward them to VMAAG participants for next week.

1. New Regional Fare Collection System (FCS) – Joe Bowar, Deputy Public Transit Director, Facilities and Contracts Division, Public Transit Department, City of Phoenix

### We are so close to getting started on this project. Currently, we are using fare boxes that were designed in 2005. This was proprietary equipment and software system that was designed and installed by Scheidt & Bachmann and it was state-of-the-art at that time and proprietary. It was also difficult to add features and make changes. Anytime you wanted to modify or change it, it was time consuming and expensive.

* We have used the same system for 13 years and it has exceeded its useful life. The age of the system (beyond its use of life from a technology perspective) is putting us way behind the rest of the industry with respect to fare collection. On the positive, being slow with our technology, we have avoided the problems and mistakes made by other transit agencies. We did regional workshops in 2015 working on this project.
* New Features and Equipment
	+ New Fare Options
		- Creative in the fare
	+ Mobile ticketing
	+ Reloadable smart card
		- Manage accounts
	+ Enables innovative fares – fare capping
		- If you ride fixed local and purchase a 31-day bus pass it is $64 and you have to pay up front. With the reloadable card once you reach the cap the rest of the rides are free. Day pass caps at 2 rides and the rest of the rides are free. With the monthly pass once the cap is reached, the rest of the rides are free. So, this will help low income residents.
		- The tracking caveat is you have to create an account.
		- These new features will be a big plus for people who are transit dependent.
		- Instant web-based fare purchases.
	+ ADA compliant
* Public-facing web site (ADA compliant)
	+ Website public facing to manage account or on your smart phone / home; it’s web based and you can add value to the card and it’s available instantaneously.
* Institutional web site (ADA compliant)
	+ ASU and other institutions can manage their fare card accounts separately.
	+ Post-pay, bill out after the fact to real type.
	+ All ADA standards will be met.
* Validators onboard all buses
	+ New validators have a smaller footprint than fare box and you will be able to tap it with your card or phone and should reduce the use of cash.
	+ Fare boxes will still be available to take cash only and the equipment will be smaller and lower tech.
* New validators and ticket vending machine (TVM) will be installed at light rail platforms.
* Project funding
	+ Funded with regional sales tax (Prop 400) and FTA funds.
	+ Capital and maintenance costs based on features of the system.
	+ Costs shared by the City of Phoenix, Valley Metro and regional partners
	+ $40M regional and $20M PTF County funds
	+ 19-year contract for maintenance and support of the system so it has a shelf life.
	+ Software and equipment are about $26M spread out over a long period of time.
	+ City of Phoenix, Valley Metro, FTA (Federal Transit Administration), and MAG will be involved as it will take a regional effort to implement this program.
* Features
	+ Phase 1 – Mobile Ticketing with Validators.
		- Enables mobile ticketing users to purchase fares, manage their account, and validate on both bus and light rail, including reduced fare customers.
		- Apps to select vendor will be created, links to take you to Uber or Lyft trip planner, Valley Metro alert on security site.
	+ Phase 2 – Reloadable Smartcard with Ticket Vending Machines
		- Provides users to purchase fares, manage their account, and validate on both bus and light rail, including reduced fare customers. Purchase and load value online.
	+ Key installation of new ticket vending machines with a 15-month lead time and the city is buying 200. Takes time to roll out.
* Parallel to this, the City is rolling out reduced fare registration ID program, similar to the Valley Metro ADA Reduced Fare program.
* Problem we have in the region is reduced fare fraud. We make it very easy to purchase reduced fare tickets. Create a registration program to require the customer provide an ID with credentials to website or in person. They can then access their account and reload funds to their smart card. They will have an ID so we know they are able to purchase and get the reduced fare. This will keep fraud down to a minimum.
* No fare increase is being discussed at this time.
* Project Timeline
	+ January 2018 – January 2019 – RFP Development & Issuance
	+ January 2019 – December 2019 – Procurement Review & Evaluation
	+ December 2019 – Issued Notice to Award to VIX Technology
	+ February 27, 2020 – Citizens Transportation Commission
	+ March 4, 2020 – Transportation, Infrastructure & Innovation Subcommittee
	+ March 2020 – City Council
	+ January 2022 – Phase 1 Launch
	+ January 2023 – Phase 2 Launch
* Took two years to draft a scope of work and the request for proposal was 450 pages.
* Selected VIX Technology.
* Phase 1 – January 2022 there will be 3- to 6-month pilot program to work the bugs out of system.
* We have to put ticket validators on 900 buses and at 75-80 platform locations, plus use interim time to design card and log one year. Installing all the TVM’s will be labor intense. Also, with the expansion of the Tempe Streetcar, Northwest Extension Phase II and South Central Extensions, the program will keep growing.
* Total project cost is estimated at $57M and it is going to be our building block for the future.

***Questions and Answers:***

* **Guillermo Gonzalez:** How will I be able to purchase tickets for my parents?
* **Joe Bowar:** As an example, the utility companies can list a number of people on the account and this feature will be available.
* **Guillermo Gonzalez:** What about an organization that buys fares for others.
* **Joe Bowar:** That will be the institutional part of the website and will take the workload off of staff.
* **Joe Bowar:** Reduced fare is heavy on logistics and to get everyone underage, over 65, and to roll this program out will take 9-12 months for everyone to be registered through outreach. High school students are pretty savvy and will be able to upload the proper id.
* **Carol Ketcherside:** Can you use that account on Paratransit?
* **Joe Bowar:** Not sure how practical that would be, but it would be done through a change order. But, within 2 years – by the time we can use the reloadable card, we will be able to use our credit cards, called “open payments”.
* **Guillermo Gonzalez:** Are there any plans to have the new fare collection systems on Paratransit vehicles?
* **Joe Bowar:** It’s not an intrusive piece of equipment and it would be simple to put a fare reader on those vehicles.
* **Joe Bowar:** The big issue is PPI security, their requirements to go to open payments are more rigorous for compliance, and first and foremost we don’t want hacking.
* **Howard May:** I was part of the beta trial in the past. Day passes, will they still be a feature we have? What’s the sunset for those passes and are their refunds?
* **Joe Bower:** We are looking at 2-6 months out. Haven’t decided on the refunds. Hopefully, customers have not saved up a years’ worth of passes, but this will be communicated through public outreach. Realize that at some point during this transition there may be an old or new fare box on the bus.
* **Carol Ketcherside:** The day you announced VIX program we were at a workshop and used this technology in another city. Getting on the bus and paying a fare was achievable no matter how the fare was obtained.
* **Joe Bowar:** We will be revamping the retail network and have Valley Metro gift cards available at retail stores where you now see all the racks of gift cards. You can put money on it and the individual can create an account and reload money onto it. A lot of thought of how we get everyone to use the features so you can pay as you go and fare capping is a cool feature. If you are transit dependent and cash limited and this is a solution, if they create the account
* **Howard May:** What were results for the Beta testing?
* **Joe Bowar:** There were lessons learned. The contractor we selected (VIX) did the fare system in Dallas and when they came to demo it, we were able to see the same shell of an app for Valley Metro. It also won some mobile app awards in 2019 and the same team in Dallas that worked on it with VIX will be here in Phoenix.
* **Emanuel Caddy:** Will this be similar to the Phoenix DAR card?
* **Joe Bowar:** We have to work on that and its capability and I would predict by January 2023 it will all be changed as far as open payments and how we use everything.
1. Other Items and Announcements –
* Guillermo Gonzalez updated and announced the Gilbert Meetings:
	+ Held two outreach meetings in Gilbert and the next one is on January 23, 2020 from 2–4 p.m. at the Southeast Regional Library, 775 N. Greenfield Road.
	+ Open House & Public Hearing will be held on Tuesday, February 11, 2020

at the same address:

* Open House: 2 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.
* Public Hearing: 2:30 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.
1. Next Meeting
	* Thursday, February 27, 2020 at 2:30 p.m. at the Mobility Center, Papago Conference Room, 4600 E. Washington Street, Suite 101.
2. Adjournment – Meeting adjourned at 3:25 p.m.