

Proposed April 2020 Transit Service Changes
November 20, 2019

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Valley Metro

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5:00 p.m.

Valley Metro

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Phoenix, AZ 85003

Prepared By:

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1 JESSICA PARKS:: Okay, guys. Thank you so
2 much for coming today. This is the proposed April 2020
3 Transit Service Changes public hearing.

4 We are going to be doing public comment at the
5 end of the presentation. So if you have comments, and
6 you want to have your comments entered in the official
7 record, you can either fill out a comment card and we'll
8 call your name, or if you want to sit with our court
9 reporter, who's transcribing the meeting, you can feel
10 fee to sit with her, and she can take your comment as
11 well and put it in the official report.

12 Just a quick safety briefing. The exists are
13 here and here. That's the closest exist to the
14 elevator, and the stairwell is just down the hall. If
15 you need water at any time, there's water right behind
16 the purple table. And the bathrooms are located just
17 down the hall and then across right over here.

18 So, again, thank you so much for attending today.
19 We are going to be going over a little bit about why
20 service changes are made, an overview of the process
21 and, of course, a full overview of the proposed service
22 changes themselves for April. We're going to talk about
23 your opportunities for public input. This is definitely
24 one of them.

25 So, again, thank you for coming and participating

1 in the process. And then we're going to take comments
2 at the end of the presentation.

3 So why service changes? Service changes occur
4 twice a year. Once in April, and once in October.
5 Overall we have service changes twice a year to give
6 Valley Metro and our city partners a way to modify and
7 to adjust the transit system as the valley grows.

8 So as the valley is growing, population is
9 moving. People work and live in different areas. We
10 want to see the transit system flow to those areas and
11 get them where they need to go. So we try to develop
12 the most effective regional transit system and have our
13 biannual service change process as part of that.

14 Valley Metro and our city partners take a look at
15 the population, they take a look at feedback, and they
16 take a look at where we see our riders coming and going
17 every day. We also accept comment from the public. And
18 that is where our service changes will come from. And,
19 again, they're introduced here through our public
20 outreach process.

21 We are in the middle of that process. The 4th
22 through the 6th we are compiling comments. So if you
23 haven't left a comment or if you don't plan on leaving
24 one today, I highly encourage you to do so either online
25 or through, you know, again our court reporter is here,

1 if you want to take one with her.

2 That report does go to the board, and they take a
3 look at all of the feedback we collect through this
4 outreach period. Board action is anticipated in
5 February of 2020. So any Valley Metro routes -- so
6 those ones that are funded or operated through Valley
7 Metro require our Board of Directors' approval.
8 Anything through City of Phoenix is required through
9 City of Phoenix City Council. And those changes, if
10 approved, go into effect April 27, 2020.

11 So, again, a little bit about our public outreach
12 plan. We are in the public hearing right now. So this
13 is one opportunity for public comment, but not your last
14 opportunity. If you have friends or anybody else who is
15 affected by any of these changes, you're able to go
16 through and leave comments online at
17 valleymetro.org/service-changes, and we'll have that up
18 on the screen towards the end of the presentation.

19 So that being said, again, thank you for
20 attending. We appreciate you guys participating. I have
21 Joe Gregory, our Valley Metro Service Planning Manager,
22 is going to talk to us a little bit about schedule
23 adjustments for April 2020.

24 JOE GREGORY: Thank you, Jessica. So we'll
25 first get started on a few schedule adjustments.

1 So here's the map that shows all of the changes that are
2 being proposed right now. We'll go through each of
3 these individually and go through them in more detail,
4 but just kind of an overview of all the changes that are
5 being proposed.

6 So, of course, we'll start with the -- with the
7 schedule changes. The first one is on Route 542.
8 That's the Chandler Express. Right now there's some
9 inconsistencies in the p.m. outbound trips. And we
10 wanted to make it a more consist schedule. So you see
11 here the -- here's the existing p.m. trips. So you see
12 there's a -- like a 3:25, a 3:35, and there's a big gap
13 to the 3:58.

14 So there's been some complaints about that.
15 People didn't want that large gap in there of almost a
16 half hour before the next trip. So we tried to even out
17 the trips a little bit more. And so now there's a 3:25,
18 3:35, 3:45, and then 4. And we're trying to -- so we're
19 proposing to even those out and hoping to be able to
20 serve the customers a little bit better and make sure
21 that we're getting them as soon as they get out of work
22 and can start getting them home.

23 The other one is the Peoria On-the-Go Circulator.
24 This is called POGO. This is a small circulator that
25 runs five days a week right now between 6:00 a.m. and

1 6:00 p.m. in Peoria. It also serves the Arrowhead
2 Transit Center in Glendale.

3 We are looking at changing some of the run times
4 to make sure that the bus isn't holding at some of the
5 time points for too long. Time points are the stops
6 that you see in your schedule or you see on the website.
7 Those are the ones that you can kind of see that it's
8 going to be at a certain place at a certain time. And so
9 we really make sure that drivers hold on to those time
10 points. And so if they get to one early, what they're
11 going to have to do is sit there at the stop until they've
12 caught up to the schedule basically. And, you know, if
13 you're on that bus and you can -- if you're sitting
14 there for five minutes at a time at some of these stops,
15 you can get a little impatient. So we're trying
16 alleviate some of those and make the route run a little
17 bit faster.

18 And for the next couple changes, I'll turn it
19 over to Kevin Tang from the City of Phoenix, and he'll
20 talk about a few of the Phoenix changes.

21 KEVIN TANG: All right. Thank you, Joe, and
22 thank you everyone for coming. Yeah, so I'm going to go
23 over three proposed changes from the City of Phoenix
24 services.

25 So the first one we have is on Route 7 that runs

1 on 7th Street. And we have a routing change proposal on
2 the south end of the route. Particularly at around
3 Baseline Road.

4 Right now the route makes a deviation from
5 7th Street on Baseline to Jesse Owens Parkway and then
6 comes right back to 7th Street. The proposal here is to
7 have the route go straight on 7th Street. Which then
8 will eliminate the routing on Jesse Owens and on
9 Baseline. And with that routing that we will -- the bus
10 will make a stop at both the intersection and Baseline
11 Road and at Jesse Owens Parkway and 7th Street.

12 The next one we have is on Route 60. That's on
13 the Bethany Home Road. And we made a modification on
14 this route like a year or so ago, where the route on
15 Bethany Home Road turns south on 16th Street using
16 Missouri Avenue, 24th Street and 20th Street has a
17 one-way loop to turn back, back on to Bethany Home Road.

18 We -- the proposed change here is actually to
19 modify the route to go straight down 16th Street and to
20 service the Camelback Road between 16th Street and 24th
21 Street. And the reason for that is that this routing
22 will better serve the shops, and the shops and offices
23 by 16th Street where the current routing does not really
24 offer that service.

25 And also from a year or so of service on Missouri

1 Avenue, we haven't really seen much usage of the routes
2 at that section.

3 And finally the last service change from City of
4 Phoenix is minor routing modification on the SMART
5 Circulator. The SMART Circulator services the Sunny
6 Slope area, and we have three changes that we're
7 proposing. And they're all a little deviation here or
8 there.

9 So the first one I wanted to talk about is we're
10 proposing to pick a deviation on 8th Avenue between
11 Cinnabar and Cheryl to go to the Mountain View Park.
12 We've heard from the public, and also from the council
13 district office, that they would like -- they would like
14 us to propose that change that can better service the
15 Mountain View Park.

16 And then another one that we have is for a
17 routing change between the Sunny Slope Manner which is
18 on Ruth, and that's not really shown here, but it's
19 right here at the bottom. We're proposing a routing
20 modification so that it goes west on to Central Avenue,
21 north on Central and then east on Dunlap, so that it can
22 get closer to the Walmart.

23 And then finally we have a routing change where
24 we're changing a routing from 5th Street to 3rd Street.
25 And then that way we can better serve the food bank and

1 also the John C. Lincoln Hospital that's on 3rd Street.

2 And that's all the -- oh do you want this one?

3 That's all the Phoenix changes, and I'll hand it back to
4 Joe.

5 JOE GREGORY: Thank you, Kevin. This is a
6 good reminder to, you know, be careful out there. Don't
7 ever chase the bus. That's one of the most dangerous
8 things that anyone ever does. So be very careful. Try
9 to be out there five minutes early, signal the bus, and
10 just try to be safe out there. I mean there's -- we're
11 one of the most dangerous cities in the U.S. as far as
12 pedestrian fatalities. So everyone just try to take
13 care of yourselves out there.

14 So we'll get back to the routing changes for the
15 Valley Metro routes. The first one is Route 81. So
16 this would change the north-end turn around. Currently
17 it continues north through the Mustang Transit Center.
18 That's the little black dot here with the T.C. and it
19 turns around a little bit north of there and comes back
20 and heads south.

21 The proposal is to actually change it so it turns
22 around within the roundabout that is the transit center.
23 So if you can see here from this map, this is the
24 Mustang Transit Center here. It's a big roundabout. To
25 the east side over here is the Mustang Library. To the

1 west side there is a lot of retail, restaurants, and
2 those types of things.

3 So currently -- I'll step away from the
4 microphone real fast. Currently if you're heading
5 north, you can catch it here at this northbound stop
6 that's on the east side of the -- the southeast side of
7 the transit center. The bus continues through here,
8 goes up, and then it comes back down. Here's the south
9 facing stop up here. So if you're catching it from the
10 south, right now you're catching it from the south stop.
11 With this change, if you're going south, you would need
12 to go to the northbound stop. It would no longer serve
13 that southbound stop.

14 So there's going to be -- so we're proposing
15 this, and there's going to be a number of different
16 outreach efforts that we will have to do if this goes
17 through to make sure that everyone understands which
18 stop they need to go to depending on which direction
19 they're going. So this one, again, will be the change
20 to Route 81.

21 Route 96 would be to change -- modify -- to
22 permanently serve inside the Sycamore Transit Center.
23 Right now it's on a detour that's going inside the
24 Sycamore Transit Center. This would just make that
25 detour permanent.

1 There's some construction going on just east of
2 the transit center, and it's going to take away some of
3 the sidewalk where the bus stop used to be. So we
4 wanted to get out of the way of that construction, make
5 sure that we're not putting any riders in any
6 uncomfortable or unsafe situations. So the bus is going
7 inside the transit center. And that will be now --
8 that's permanent routing after this service change.

9 The next one is Route 136 on Gilbert Road. This
10 would eliminate the deviation that currently serves
11 Boeing. Currently there's four trips, each direction,
12 in the evening and night that serve Boeing. This would
13 eliminate those, and this would just stay on -- so that
14 the route would just stay on Gilbert Road. Just travel
15 north and south on Gilbert Road.

16 The next one is Route 184. This is also kind of
17 a similar situation. This would eliminate the deviation
18 that currently serves Red Mountain Community College.
19 Red Mountain Community College is just right over here.
20 Currently we serve in both directions on every trip.
21 Even on the weekends the buses go into Red Mountain
22 Community College. And we're not seeing a lot of
23 ridership serving that.

24 So the proposal is to eliminate the deviation,
25 and just stay on Power Road. And then the access to the

1 community college would be from Power Road. And they
2 can continue east from Power Road for a little while to
3 access the community college.

4 The next one is Route 685, the Ajo/Gila Bend
5 Connector. This is our rural route that goes from Ajo
6 through Gila Bend and then through Buckeye and then
7 finally into west Phoenix where it connects with the
8 rest of our system.

9 So there's a small portion, actually in the west
10 Phoenix portion, where right now it travels on 95th
11 Lane. That's -- we're having some safety issues with
12 that. There's a lot of semi-trucks and large truck kind
13 of construction vehicles parking there and blocking some
14 of the bus stops and what not. So we're proposing to
15 move out to 95th Avenue to stay away from some of the
16 extra traffic and make sure that we're still serving the
17 same location but without putting anyone into any undo
18 harm.

19 And then the ZOOM. This is the Avondale
20 Circulator. This would begin serving Festival Fields
21 sometime next month. And then -- so it would go into a
22 long term detour to serve the Festival Fields, and then
23 this would make this a permanent change to serve that
24 permanently. So you can see here, at the southwest
25 corner of the route, currently it does not serve the

1 Festival Fields. That's this little area right here.
2 And so we would just take every trip, turn around within
3 the park, and then continue on the rest the trip.

4 Okay. So, again, as Jessica was saying, this is
5 our public hearing. And we're looking for any kind of
6 comments. Do you want to handle this? Okay.

7 JESSICA PARKS: Thank you, Joe and Kevin.

8 So this is the public hearing. We are hoping
9 that you will give us any comments that you have. They
10 do go into the overall report that goes to our board and
11 City of Phoenix's board.

12 You can always e-mail us at
13 input@valleymetro.org. You can also leave a comment on
14 the survey at valleymetro.org/service-changes. If you
15 have any comments during the rest of the year when we're
16 out of this comment period, please feel free to send
17 them to Customer Service at 602-253-5000. That number
18 is up there, and I'll leave it up here for a while. If
19 you guys ever do have any comments about any of our
20 services, we're always looking for it.

21 So now we're going to go ahead and go to the
22 public comment period phase. So we have it set up for a
23 three-minute comment if you would like to have it logged
24 into the overall report, or again, if you want to have
25 your comment specifically with the court reporter, she

1 is sitting over here.

2 But I do have one for Marvin Lofton.

3 Thank you. So if you want to take the dais up
4 there.

5 MARVIN LOFTON: I want to start by saying
6 that what I have observed a week ago this past Monday,
7 which was Veteran's Day, and what I have observed today,
8 is that there are a lot of what I call double buses, I'm
9 sure you've got another name for it, on Route 7.

10 Route 7 is my main route. And this is what my
11 concern is. Going north daily, between 2 and 6 in the
12 evening, there is a heavy problem with buses playing
13 leapfrog from wherever that starts all the way up to --
14 not Indian School -- Thunderbird. And there's got to be
15 a reason for that. At some point over the years I
16 thought it might have been because the kids were in
17 school. And that's not it. It's got to be something
18 else that's going on.

19 So when I saw these double buses, I thought well
20 maybe I might be preaching to the choir, because they
21 would have already done something about it. But it's --
22 it's really tough, especially people getting off from
23 work. Kids getting out of school. People are -- it's
24 not a good idea, and this has been going on for a long
25 time.

1 So if you can revisit that, and see how that can
2 improve as far as scheduling, because that's what it is.
3 You might find it more convenient for your riders with
4 that.

5 The other two things I have real quick is -- you
6 might not be able to help me with. One is street
7 pronunciations. Whoever the lady is that announces the
8 streets drives me crazy when she gets, especially the
9 Spanish speaking streets, screwed up. On 7th Street
10 there are two that I'll name. She pronounces Buena
11 Vista, and I can't pronounce the way she pronounces it.
12 It's crazy. The other one is Acoma Drive, and she
13 doesn't say that either.

14 So I've already called in to customer service,
15 back in February of this year, to register a comment.
16 You might want to revisit that. You got people coming
17 in from out of town, and they're using Valley Metro, and
18 it would just make sense for the streets to be named --
19 pronounced properly.

20 And the last thing that I have is can anybody
21 tell me where we are or who I would need to go to see in
22 regards to getting Bell Road Route 170 to extend to
23 Surprise. I know this has been going on for years. And
24 the hold up -- my understanding is Glendale does not
25 want to pay the bus drivers to go through Glendale. And

1 I don't know where the studies are or what's being done
2 with that, but I'd like to get some feedback on that as
3 well. Thank you.

4 JESSICA PARKS: Thank you, Mr. Lofton.

5 We can definitely -- I think we can address and
6 talk with you a little bit more.

7 Is there any other public comments?

8 Okay. Perfect. Please come to the podium. If
9 you could actually just enter with your name too and
10 where your city of residence is. That would be great.

11 GLEN QUIGLEY: My my name is Glen Quigley.
12 I'm the guy that called in yesterday from Boeing. I'm a
13 regular Route 136 rider. Boeing really would like to
14 see that deviation kept, if at all possible. I know we
15 have a decline in ridership, but we see a lot of
16 constantly inconsistent riders. Like some people ride
17 periodically, then we don't see them for a while, and
18 then they come back. Got a lot of people coming up
19 there.

20 I was wondering if you've considered a
21 north/south route on Higley Drive. Because we're seeing
22 a lot of businesses built up near the Falcon Field
23 Airport. I see some of the pilots in training actually
24 walking year-round. It's something I think to consider
25 possibly, but I just wanted to also say I think I've got

1 some of the best drivers on my bus anyway. And I wanted
2 to say thank you.

3 JESSICA PARKS: Thank you.

4 All right. If there's no other public comment,
5 then we'll go ahead and conclude the presentation
6 portion. But feel free to ask other questions or if you
7 want to log a longer comment with our court reporter,
8 she is sitting over there.

9 Thank you, again, for attending.

10

11 (Public meeting concluded)

12

13 HALEY RITTER: It's always a pleasure to
14 attend Valley Metro open hearings, public hearings,
15 because I'm a daily user of most bus routes throughout
16 the valley and the light rail, as well. I'm an huge
17 advocate for public transportation, and this meeting was
18 very good at helping me understand changes that will be
19 coming up in April 2020. I don't see a big problem with
20 any of the service changes. They all look to be
21 efficient and beneficial to the ridership and the public
22 in general. Thank you very much, Valley Metro, for
23 having these public hearings. And for doing such a
24 great job of keeping the public informed of any changes.
25 Keep up the great work.