

DESTINATIONS



Destinations is the official newsletter of Valley Metro

Light Rail Comes to Life in Simulation

Though no tracks have been laid yet for the Valley's future light rail system, a virtual version of the train traveled down Central Avenue on July 17. The concept video simulation, unveiled at a news conference with Phoenix Mayor Skip Rimsza and Phoenix Councilwoman Peggy Bilsten, depicts the train pulling into the future station on Central Avenue just north of Thomas Road.

During the news conference, some of the Valley's most prominent leaders expressed their support for light rail in a video highlights reel taken from a Phoenix Channel 11 program on light rail that was broadcast for the first time that night. Arizona Diamondback Luis Gonzalez, Bank One President Kristine Garrett, Suns owner Jerry Colangelo, former ASU President Lattie Coor, and United Phoenix Firefighters

Valley Leaders Voice Support for Light Rail

Association President Billy Shields were some of those featured in the testimonial video. Future broadcast times for the light rail program can be found on the Phoenix Channel 11 website at www.phoenix.gov/11/phx11.html.

"We are incredibly proud of the community's involvement in and support for the Light Rail

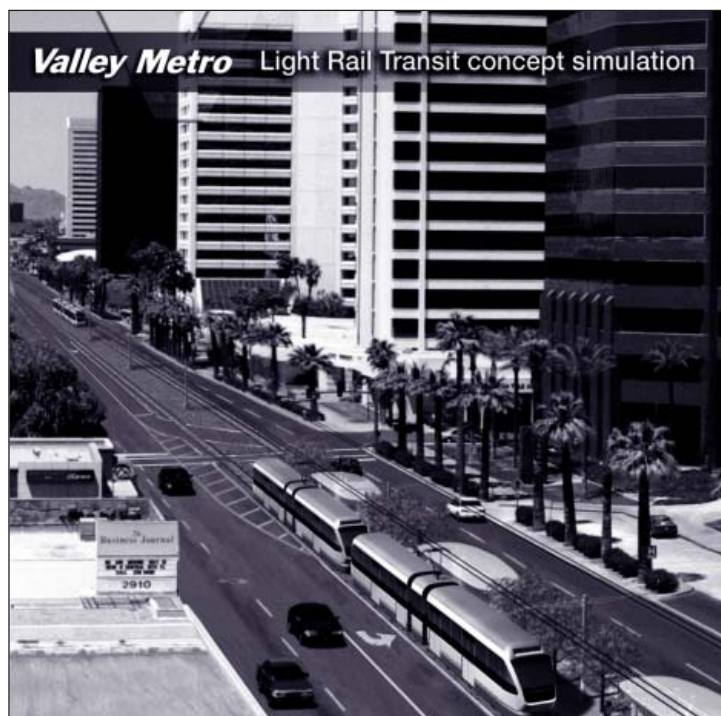
Project," said Mayor Rimsza. "When prominent individuals like Luis Gonzalez and Lattie Coor endorse the project, it reinforces the tremendous value of light rail for the future of our community."

The concept video simulation will be used to educate residents about the light rail system, a key element in Phoenix's voter-approved transit plan. The simulation will be revised periodically to include virtual stations, landscaping, and other developments in the design of the system.

"It's exciting to see the train come to life—even if it's virtual reality for now," said Councilwoman Bilsten. "This is the best way to help residents learn about what they'll be seeing once we open the system in 2006."

To reduce travel time, light rail trains will travel in their own dedicated lanes separated from auto traffic. Each vehicle will be about 90-feet long and will comfortably carry up to 150 passengers. Vehicles can be linked into trains of up to three vehicles, comfortably carrying up to 450 passengers at

— See *Simulation*, page 2



In this photo simulation, a light rail train pulls into the future station on Central Avenue just north of Thomas Road.

Valley Metro is a political subdivision of the state of Arizona overseen by an 11-member board of elected officials and was created by voters in 1985 with the passage of Proposition 300.

For the hearing and speech impaired, RideShare and ADA information is available on TTY by calling (602) 495-0936.

Light Rail Project Gets New Name

The Light Rail Project has a new identity. On August 9, the project's organizational name changed from Valley Connections to Valley Metro Rail. The change was made to reflect the project's connection to the Valley Metro family and the formation of the new rail governing board, Valley Metro Rail, Inc.

In the future, a new *operational* identity may be created for the system for marketing or operational purposes. Or, the Valley Metro Rail name may be adopted as the operational name as



well. That decision will be made by the new governing board once it begins meeting this September. Regardless of what operational name is chosen, however, Valley Metro Rail will remain the project's organizational name.

Transit Safety Chief Accepts New Job in D.C.



◀ Martin began his new transit security/safety job in Washington, D.C., on September 3.

David J. Martin, chief of Transit Public Safety for ATC Phoenix, has accepted a new position in Washington, D.C., with the Federal Transit Administration's Office of Safety and Security.

Martin served for more than 13 years in the field of transit public safety in Phoenix. At his new post in Washington, he will assist in implementing transit security and emergency management programs for rail, fixed guide-way, bus, and other similar transit systems. By doing so, he hopes to help bring safety and security measures to a new level in the Phoenix metro area, as well as other cities throughout the U.S.

Martin moved to Phoenix in 1975 after his father, a former Michigan state trooper, came to Arizona to retire. He has served as a paratrooper in the Army's 82nd Airborne Division Intelligence Unit, where he was a Spanish language interpreter. He also worked for two years in the Tempe police department.

What will Martin miss most about Phoenix? The people. "I've had a lot of special moments here—events that were life-changing," says Martin. Those moments include his marriage to wife Pam, the birth of his son Wesley, who is now four years old, and the achievement of receiving both his bachelor's and master's degrees.

His parting words to fellow colleagues? "Security is everybody's job. If everyone uses their eyes and ears, the system will be more secure."

Simulation

– Continued from page 1

a time. The simulation depicts a two-car train, which will be the standard configuration other than during special events, when three-car trains will be used.

The station platforms will be 300-feet long and 16-feet wide, about the length of a city block and the width of two sidewalks. Trains will run about every 10 minutes during peak travel periods and about every 20 minutes off peak for up to 20 hours per day, seven days a week. About 30,000 passengers per day are expected to ride the system initially, increasing to 45,000 passengers per day by 2020.

The 20-mile system will travel through Phoenix, Tempe, and Mesa. Groundbreaking for construction is scheduled to take place in late 2003.

City by City

Transit updates from across the Valley Metro service area



Region

College Students Can't Fail with Valley Metro's Semester Pass

Valley Metro's Semester Pass makes life easier for full-time college students. Collegians enrolled at participating schools simply swipe-and-ride for unlimited bus rides on local routes.



The pass offers a substantial discount over regular bus fares and saves students money on gas, parking, and car maintenance. The Semester Pass costs \$120 for the fall and spring semesters and \$80 for the summer semester.

Undergraduate and graduate students taking a specified number of credit hours, as well as graduate teaching assistants, are eligible.

You can pick up your pass at the ASU Cashier's Office, ASU West Parking Services, Grand Canyon University's Fleming Library, and all Maricopa Community College bookstores.

For more information, visit www.ValleyMetro.org or call (602) 253-5000. For TTY text telephone service, call (602) 261-8208.

Bus Passengers Get Cool Reception in West Phoenix

A certain air of coolness greets Valley Metro bus passengers in West Phoenix these days. Two newly renovated transit facilities offering shade for people and cars, as well as other new amenities, were reopened in July.

Hundreds of cars no longer sit under the hot sun at the 79th Avenue Park-and-Ride, located at 79th Avenue and Interstate 10. New shade canopies cover about half of the facility's 618 parking spaces.

Passengers at the renovated Desert Sky Transit Center at 7611 W. Thomas Road (below) can wait for their bus in comfort on a new passenger platform equipped with evaporative cooling and a larger shade canopy.

Renovation of both west side transit facilities was provided for in the Phoenix Transit Plan.



Chandler

Bus Service Changes to Be Introduced September 30

Several significant changes to bus service within the city of Chandler will be introduced on September 30.

Route 72—Scottsdale/Rural will now provide service to Chandler Fashion Center, with buses to the mall running every 30 minutes on weekdays and Saturdays.

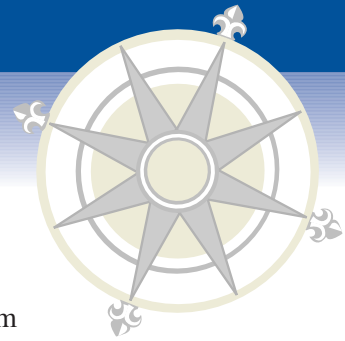
New service to the mall will also be provided on Route 156—Chandler Blvd., with buses stopping at the mall every 30 minutes on weekdays. In addition, weekday service frequency on the section of Route 156 east of the mall will be increased from every 90 minutes

to every 60 minutes.

Finally, due to budget constraints and to better utilize available resources, Sunday service in Chandler on Route 72 will be eliminated. Also, midday service frequency in Chandler on Route 81—Hayden/McClintock will be reduced from every 30 minutes to every 60 minutes.

For more detailed information on these service changes, visit www.ValleyMetro.org or call Valley Metro Transit Information at (602) 253-5000. For TTY text telephone service, call (602) 261-8208.

Scottsdale



What's Driving You Crazy, Scottsdale?

Maybe it's the traffic ... maybe it's chauffeuring your mother-in-law around town ... or maybe it's driving your teens to the mall.

Whatever it is that drives you crazy about driving, the Scottsdale Transit Plan may have the answer for you.

The city's transit plan will serve as the foundation for improving public transit in Scottsdale and will cover transit operations, capital projects, land use, and funding strategies. The plan will also incorporate the findings of the Scottsdale/Tempe Rapid Transit Study, which is assessing the potential for a mass transit corridor in Scottsdale.

It's very important to hear from Scottsdale citizens about where city transit should be in the next 10 to 20 years. What will public transit look like in Scottsdale's future? Here's a chance for you to be a visionary! So tell us what's "driving you crazy," and give us your vision of a better future. All of us benefit when you become involved.

To learn more about the transit plan and how you can help shape it, please contact Debra Astin, transit planner for the city of Scottsdale, at (480) 312-2526; fax: (480) 312-7128; e-mail: dastin@ci.scottsdale.az.us; or mail: 7447 E. Indian School Rd., Ste. 205, Scottsdale, AZ 85251.

Phoenix

City Retires First Wheelchair Accessible Bus

The city of Phoenix Public Transit Department retired its first wheelchair accessible bus at a ceremony held on July 16. The bus was repainted in its original Phoenix Transit System design and is on permanent display at Central Station, located at First Avenue and Van Buren Street.

City bus #4401 went into service in 1981. The GMC RTS Model 04 boasted a hydraulic wheelchair lift and a then state-of-the-art mechanical securement system. Before the city of Phoenix received its first order of 15 accessible buses that year, many elderly and disabled Valley citizens could not ride a city bus because the only way to board was up a flight of steep steps.

By 1998, all buses operated by the city and all other transit agencies in the Valley Metro system were accessible. Buses are now equipped with ramps and other design features such as low floors and the ability to "kneel" to the curb, lowering and tilting the bus by decompressing its air shocks.

Speaking at the dedication ceremony were Gary Corcoran, chair of the Mayor's Commission on Disability Issues and member of the Citizens Transit Commission; Bill Stokes, disabled community advocate; Councilwoman Peggy Bilsten, chair of the

Transportation, Aviation, Transit and Technology subcommittee; and Ed Zuercher, director of Phoenix's Public Transit Department.



Councilwoman Peggy Bilsten, Gary Corcoran, Public Transit Department Director Ed Zuercher, and Bill Stokes in front of historic bus #4401.

Regional Transit System Study Underway

Valley Metro/RPTA, with the assistance of LKC Consulting Services, Inc., S.R. Beard and Associates, and Hexagon Transportation Consultants, is developing a Regional Transit System (RTS) Study.

The RTS Study will update Valley Metro/RPTA's 1999 Long-Range Transit Plan and will also form the basis for the transit element of the Regional Transportation Plan being developed by the Maricopa Association of Governments in cooperation with Valley Metro/RPTA.

The 12-month study will identify regional transit-related investments and programs that would be undertaken over the next 20 years to address the

current and future transportation needs of the Valley's residents.

Stuart Boggs is the Valley Metro/RPTA project manager for the RTS Study and heads up the Transit Planning Division within the Operations and Planning Department.

More information on the RTS Study can be found on the project website at www.valleytransitplan.org.



Projections in Growth/Travel Prompt New Transit Plans

If you've spent any time at all in the Valley, it should come as no surprise that Maricopa County is the fastest growing county in the United States. In fact, the Valley has surpassed 3 million in population and could even reach 6 million or more by 2040.

To deal with this sustained growth, the Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG) is developing a Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) that will provide a new policy framework to guide regional transportation investments. The RTP will also establish measures of performance to better monitor and improve the transportation system in the future.

One of several studies underway that will help provide input to the RTP is the MAG High-Capacity Transit Plan. This plan

will evaluate the possible use of existing railroad corridors for commuter rail, estimate the costs and benefits of this service, and assess how it might interact with other types of transit (such as buses and the planned light rail system) as well as roadways.

In some corridors, the operation of conventional commuter rail may encounter significant obstacles. Other high-capacity transit technologies, such as bus rapid transit or light rail, may be more appropriate in those corridors. In addition, there may be other areas without railroad rights-of-way where new high-capacity transit may be warranted.

Initiated in January 2002, the study will be completed by December 2002. Additional information on the High-Capacity Transit Plan and related transportation efforts is available on the MAG website at www.mag.maricopa.gov/project.cms?item=474 or by calling MAG at (602) 254-6300.



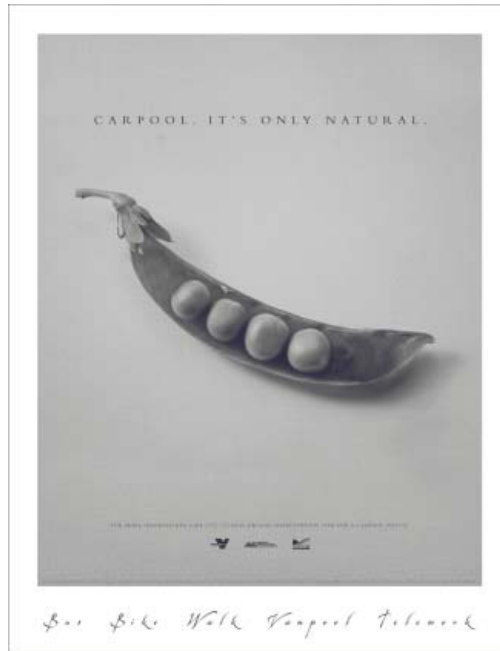
Commuter rail, like the Metrolink service in Los Angeles, is an option being studied in the MAG High-Capacity Transit Plan.

Valley Commuters Urged to Carpool During RideShare Week

RideShare Week is an annual event designed to remind Valley commuters that carpooling, vanpooling, riding the bus, biking, walking, and teleworking—even just one day a week—can not only save you money, but also help to reduce traffic congestion and air pollution.

During this year's RideShare Week, October 7–11, anyone who uses an alternative form of transportation will be eligible for a variety of prizes. The grand prize will be a weekend getaway package, which includes two round-trip airline tickets to anywhere in the United States plus hotel accommodations.

In addition, Valley employers participating in the Maricopa County Trip Reduction Program will face off



during RideShare Week, battling to be the week's "alternative mode champion." Employers will compete against other companies of similar size for the number of alternative mode users during the week. Participating companies will receive daily alerts to see how their company is faring against the competition.

Daily activities during RideShare Week include:

- ▶ Monday 10/7—Employer Challenge Press Conference
- ▶ Tuesday 10/8—Telework Day
- ▶ Wednesday 10/9—Carpool/Vanpool Day
- ▶ Thursday 10/10—Transit Day
- ▶ Friday 10/11—Compressed Work Week Day

For more information on RideShare Week and how you can register to win prizes, call (602) 262-RIDE (7433) or visit www.ShareTheRide.com.

Destinations is the official newsletter of Valley Metro. It is published with a circulation of approximately 6,000 copies. We welcome your letters, comments, and suggestions.

Destinations is also available on audio-tape. If you know of anyone who might be interested in receiving Destinations in that format, please call Valley Metro's Pat Dillon at (602) 534-1806.

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