

DESTINATIONS

Destinations is the official newsletter of Valley Metro

Bus Rapid Transit Study

New service for Mesa Main Street ties into METRO service

Valley Metro and the city of Mesa are developing the plans for arterial Bus Rapid Transit (BRT), a premium high capacity transit service that uses technology and enhanced vehicle features to make customer ride faster and more comfortable.

Arterial BRT operates on local streets in contrast to the planned freeway BRT service that is similar to RAPID operating in the city of Phoenix. The approximate 11-mile Main Street line, between the Sycamore/Main Street Light Rail station and Power Road, is the first of five arterial BRT lines that will operate with funds from Proposition 400. Future arterial BRT corridors include portions of Arizona Avenue, Baseline Road, South Central Avenue and Grand Avenue. A Valley-wide Technical Advisory Committee is working to set standards for arterial BRT service on all lines in coordination with plans for the Mesa Main Street BRT pilot project.



BRT bus from Toronto, Canada

Arterial BRT lines will feature sleek, modern vehicles, operate on city streets, link upgraded stations and have fewer stops than existing fixed-route service. Traffic signal priority and dedicated lanes can help BRT vehicles negotiate traffic and offer passengers a faster ride.

Curitiba, Brazil pioneered development of a very successful BRT concept in the 1960s. In North America, BRT service is found in nearly every major Canadian city and in Mexico City. Closer to home, Las Vegas, Kansas City, Boston, Oakland, San Jose, and Eugene, Oregon all operate, or will soon operate, BRT services.

Recent open houses in Mesa showcased the BRT plans. Valley Metro will order new vehicles in early 2007 and the new service will begin with the start of light rail service in December 2008.

Valley Metro Featured in Busline

The September/October issue of national transit industry magazine, Busline, spotlights Valley Metro on its cover and in its feature story.

Included on the cover are board members: (front row) Tempe Mayor **Hugh Hallman**, Phoenix Councilwoman **Peggy Bilsten**, Peoria Councilwoman **Pat Dennis**, (back row) Valley Metro Executive Director **David Boggs**, Scottsdale Councilman **Wayne Ecton**, and Board Chairman and Town of Gilbert Councilman **Les Presmyk**.



Transit Plans Shift into High Gear



There are more than bus wheels turning at Valley Metro these days. The ideas, plans and strategies to develop

tomorrow's transit system are rolling through the agency.

"It's a new day," says Dave Boggs, executive director at Valley Metro. "Right now, we are laying the foundation for the next twenty years and the transit element of the Regional Transportation Plan."

Boggs is referring to the plans and studies underway that will shape not only the agency, but the service it provides. Valley Metro is responsible for carrying out the projects that are included in the transit portion of the Maricopa County Regional Transportation Plan (RTP).

Exciting and exploratory are the two words Boggs uses to describe the state of the agency right now. "We are on the cusp of developing a lot of new service for our passengers, and we are putting the right pieces in place to get the job done," says Boggs as he describes the next steps for the agency.

A snapshot of recent activities includes:

- Hiring deputy executive directors of finance, operations and planning
- Hiring a manager of safety and security
- Completion of the 2007 agency-wide marketing plan
- Developing new methods for financial reporting and monitoring
- Procuring a new customer contact system
- Review of the Transit Life Cycle Program
- Finalizing the agency business policies and practices
- Rolling out new customer service applications for bus riders
- Finalizing the 20-Year Strategic Plan
- Progress on the following studies:
 - Service Effectiveness and Efficiency
 - Regional Paratransit
 - Regional Fare Policy
 - Mesa Main Street BRT

"Building a new agency is hard work, but we've got the staff to make it happen and will continue to add new talent to serve our passengers even better," Boggs says.

Valley Metro is a political subdivision of the state of Arizona overseen by a 14-member board of local elected officials. It was created by voters in 1985 with the passage of Proposition 300.

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

Clear Channel Outdoor Wins Bus Ad Contract

In Phoenix, a bus isn't just a bus, it's also an advertising opportunity. Advertising has been displayed on the city's buses since 1971, helping boost funding for its transit system.

On August 30, the Phoenix City Council awarded Clear Channel Outdoor, Inc. the contract for advertising in and on buses in an effort to

draw more national and local business. Under the contract, Clear Channel Outdoor will market and sell interior and exterior advertising space on the buses in the Phoenix fleet. Phoenix's fleet are the only buses in the system to offer advertising space.

More information may be found by visiting www.clearchanneloutdoor.com.

City by City

Transit updates from across the Valley Metro service area



“GO!” and Park in Glendale

Construction begins in 2007 on a new park-and-ride facility that will offer Northwest Valley residents a place to leave their cars to catch the bus, carpool or vanpool to work. The park-and-ride will be located at 99th and Glendale avenues just west of Loop 101.

Both local bus routes and bus rapid transit routes will serve the new facility. In its first phase, the park-and-ride will have 390 spaces, with future expansion allowing for an additional 250 parking spaces.

Site amenities include bike lockers, passenger shelters, benches, a security building and on-site security during the hours the bus operates.

The project is being funded by the city of Glendale’s Glendale Onboard and the Federal Transit Administration. The park-and-ride is scheduled to open in December 2007. For further information contact the project consultant, Edwards and Kelcey, at (602) 277-8161.



Tempe’s TIM Gets a Makeover

In September, the city of Tempe celebrated the 10-year anniversary of the Tempe in Motion transit program. To commemorate this special milestone, Tempe in Motion—known as TIM—received a new look with an updated logo. The “cool” new logo is featured on all buses operated by the Tempe transit system that also belong to the Valley Metro family of services.

Scottsdale Circulator Connects Neighborhoods

Scottsdale’s transit division now offers the Neighborhood Connector, a new circulator bus service. Operating between the new Granite Reef Senior Center and Scottsdale’s downtown and Civic Center Mall area, the free trolley service provides another transit option for those needing to reach key destinations in the southern part of the city.

“We are so pleased that the ridership on the Neighborhood Connector route has more than doubled. It shows how important it is to our community,” said Debra Astin, Scottsdale Transit Manager. According to Astin, daily ridership has increased from 74 passengers in June to 238 passengers in October.

The Neighborhood Connector runs seven days a week between 6:30 a.m. and 9 p.m. It picks up and drops off passengers wherever the trolley can safely stop along the route. For more information, go to www.scottsdaleaz.gov/Trolley/.



Duane Rajanen, trolley driver, entertains passengers by telling stories while driving the Scottsdale Downtown Trolley and Neighborhood Connector routes.



Winners of 2006 Clean Air Campaign Awards

More than 360 guests attended the 2006 Clean Air Campaign Awards luncheon where organizations and individuals were awarded for their outstanding efforts to improve air quality in Maricopa County over the past year. The annual event, held this year at the Hyatt Regency Scottsdale Resort and Spa at Gainey Ranch, honors and recognizes all local employers who participate in the Maricopa County Trip Reduction Program.

The special luncheon ceremony was hosted by Valley Metro Board of Directors Chairman and Town of Gilbert Councilman, Les Presmyk and Valley Metro Executive Director, David Boggs. Doug Nintzel, Arizona Department of Transportation spokesperson, was emcee.



In its 20th year, the Clean Air Campaign recognizes employers and individuals who make an outstanding effort to help improve air quality at an annual luncheon.

AWARD	WINNERS
Leadership Award	Kim Snyder Graybar Electric
People's Choice Award	Coe & Van Loo Consultants (Bulletin Board)
	Atlas Cold Storage (print)
Outstanding Transit Education	Manuel Pena, Jr. Elementary School Cartwright School District
Outstanding TRP Marketing	Wal-Mart/Sam's Club (electronic)
	Capitol Rideshare (event)
Outstanding Bike Program	Boeing Company
Outstanding Vanpool Program	Mayo Clinic
Outstanding Site Coordinator	Cindy Spence Maricopa County
Outstanding Transportation Coordinator	Regena Robert Graybar Electric
	Patty Korthals Coe & Van Loo Consultants
	Carol Hedges Fry's Food & Drug
Outstanding Alternative Mode Users	Jim Craeger (vanpool) Boeing Company
	Debbie Semolik (bus) McKesson Specialty
	Robert Erwin (carpool) General Dynamics
	Bob Jenson (bike) Shamrock Foods
Outstanding Trip Reduction Program	Xpedx
	Central Arizona Project
	Southwest Gas
	City of Tempe
Clean Air Campaign Blue Sky View Awards	Philips Semiconductors
	Barrow Neurological Institute— St. Joseph's Hospital & Medical Center



“Drive Less. Live More” is the theme behind a media stunt on the corner of Thomas and Central avenues that kicked off Rideshare Week.

Rideshare Week Asked Commuters to ‘Drive Less. Live more.’

Many Valley residents took part in Rideshare Week activities, which included the New Times 10K event and the ASU versus UCLA football game. A stunt to grab media attention kicked off the work week. The staged event featured a couple enjoying their breakfast in a kitchen setting at the corner of Thomas and Central avenues. The message was “Drive Less. Live More.” By choosing to share the ride or telecommute, the point is that they could enjoy a more leisurely breakfast. The event was featured as a news story on Channels 3, 5, 12, Telemundo and stations KFYI, KTAR and KEZ’s Beth and Bill Show on Monday, November 13.

Ridership Grows on Rural Routes

More and more riders are taking the week-day trek across stretches of open desert on two of Valley Metro’s longest bus routes.

Route 685 from Ajo Gila Bend to Desert Sky Mall serves the communities of Buckeye, Goodyear and Avondale along State Route 85. The route features two roundtrips per day.

Route 660 from Wickenburg to Arrowhead Towne Center in Glendale serves communities along U.S. 60. There are three roundtrips each weekday.

Both routes are currently funded in part by Proposition 400 funds and are a part of the Regional Transportation Plan. All vehicles serving the route are ADA accessible.

RIDERSHIP Table/Graph/Chart

2006	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October
Route 660*								162	117	162
Route 685	270	310	318	291	339	303	371	518	560	640

*Service began on Route 660 in July 2006.

Valley Metro kicks off new multimodal advertising campaign

Valley Metro launched its new advertising campaign in October with the new multimodal theme, “Valley Metro is the Best Way to Get From Point A to Point B.” The ads communicate the various ways to improve your commute by carpooling, vanpooling, riding the bus, telework—and for the first time—light rail. The ads also communicate the personal and communal benefits of using alternative modes of transportation, whether it be the money you save, the reduced stress you feel or the contribution you’re making to improving our Valley’s air quality.



METRO Prepares to Unveil Town Lake Bridge

METRO and the cities of Phoenix, Tempe, Glendale and Mesa are gearing up to celebrate one of the most exciting milestones of the light rail project to date—completion of the Tempe Town Lake Bridge. The bridge serves as a major element of the light rail system in that it will allow trains to cross Tempe Town Lake into the east Valley.

The 1,535 foot span, completed by PCL Civil Constructors in July, consists of two abutments north and south, 10 Y-shaped piers and 42 steel trusses, and is built to withstand a 500-year flood. Its art element, an LED lighting system that runs the length of the bridge, is capable of displaying



millions of color combinations and effects.

Building the \$21 million structure required top-notch welding to meet design specifications, as well as the use of cranes and drilling rigs mounted on barges to put it all in place.

The only work that remains on the bridge is the installation of track. The art element is completely

finished and ready to dazzle.

The grand illumination of the Tempe Town Lake Bridge will be part of the Mill Avenue District's 2006 APS Fantasy of Lights boat parade Dec. 9 at the Tempe Beach Park. The event kicks off at 4 p.m. and is free to the public. The bridge lighting is set for 6:55 p.m., just before the start of the boat parade on the lake.

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 audiotape. 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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