



Tempe Streetcar Frequently Asked Questions

Q. What is streetcar?

- A. Streetcar operates on tracks, typically mixed with automobile traffic, and can be powered by overhead power lines and/or battery. Streetcar stops every few blocks similar to local bus service, but has a greater ability to attract new riders and alter the surrounding land use.

Q. How does streetcar benefit the local community and region?

- A. Streetcar will...

- Increase transit ridership in the Mill Avenue corridor
- Connect neighborhoods to downtown Tempe
- Encourage redevelopment of underutilized parcels
- Encourage reinvestment in neighborhoods
- Stimulate an urban living environment
- Attract a new rider market
- Provide seamless connection to the existing transit network
- Enhance mobility of employees, students, visitors and special event-goers in this area

Streetcar has the ability to strengthen the region's urban core by drawing in and serving more riders, strengthening and revitalizing existing neighborhoods, enhancing the unique character of the area and creating higher-density development in a way that bus cannot.

Q. What is the problem being solved by streetcar? We already have bus service on Mill Avenue.

- A. There is a significant and growing demand for transit service around ASU, downtown Tempe and the region's central core. The streetcar would provide an enhanced mobility option in this area. It would work in complement with the existing transit network to move people more efficiently around Tempe and the region.

Streetcar also provides an economic development advantage that bus service typically does not. Fixed rail generates greater reinvestment in neighborhoods and surrounding areas and can achieve greater ridership. In our early studies for this project, it was determined that for every \$1 invested in rail transit, you can expect \$1.30 in return in other community benefits. This is evident with the light rail starter line as it is experiencing \$7 billion in public and private investment within a half-mile of the line.

Q. What is the cost to build Tempe Streetcar and how will it be paid for?

- A. The 2.6-mile Tempe Streetcar project is estimated at \$130 million (in year of expenditure dollars). It will be paid for using a mix of regional, Proposition 400 sales tax revenue, as designated in the *Regional Transportation Plan*, and a matching level of federal grant money. More than half of the funding is committed; METRO is actively pursuing federal grants to fulfill the balance.

Q. What is the operations cost of Tempe Streetcar and how will it be paid for?

A. The estimated operations and maintenance cost for Tempe Streetcar is \$3 million annually (in year of expenditure dollars). All operations cost is the responsibility of the city of Tempe; a portion of the cost will be offset by passenger fare revenue, federal preventative maintenance funds and possible advertising revenue.

Q. Why plan for streetcar when transit services are being reduced?

A. Tempe Streetcar is a long-term solution to building a transit system suitable for the future growth of this community and region. And as such, it is identified in the *Regional Transportation Plan*. It is necessary to continue planning for the capital investments and services needed for the future.

Q. What will the right-of-way impacts be?

A. In 2013, METRO will enter the design phase for the Tempe Streetcar project, which will reveal the possible impacts to the neighboring environment.

At this point in time, the precise right-of-way impacts are unknown, but the design, at various stages, will be taken out for public review and comment. METRO does not anticipate that the impacts will be as significant as they were for light rail; a streetcar operation fits easier into an existing street network.

Q. What will the construction impact be?

A. Streetcar employs a more simple construction technique and requires less infrastructure than light rail. Streetcar construction is usually more confined to the trackway and requires less underground work and right-of-way.

In evaluating other cities with streetcar, in many cases, adjacent travel lanes and/or sidewalks were able to remain open during construction. This project's construction impacts will be better known as design is conducted.

Q. How will Tempe Streetcar impact bus service?

A. The existing transit network will need to be restructured in order to allow all modes to work optimally. This is the case anytime you add new service to an area. Bus service will not be reduced because of streetcar, but redeployed to work in complement with this new mode.