



South Central Extension + Future Light Rail Expansion in Phoenix February 2019

What are the benefits of light rail?

- Light rail connects thousands of people to education, entertainment, and employment by providing an affordable and convenient transportation alternative.
- The majority of the economic benefits of the project will remain in the South Phoenix community.
- Area residents will be given priority position for jobs associated with the project, and at times, careers that extend beyond the life of construction.
 - Valley Metro and our contractors have job and workforce development programs in south Phoenix that range from mentoring youth in the field of engineering to developing local craftspeople.
- Light rail reduces traffic congestion and air pollution throughout the Valley.
- Learn more at valleymetro.life.

Why is light rail being built in South Phoenix?

- Families and individuals along the South Central corridor need and deserve infrastructure improvements and additional public transportation options for convenient access to work, school and more.
- Voters approved the extension in 2000, 2004 and in 2015. Prop 104, known as the Transportation 2050 plan, received 75% approval from voters who live along the South Central line. The Phoenix City Council approved the route in 2013, acceleration of the project in 2016 and roadway design in 2014 and again in 2018.
- Light rail has proven to generate economic prosperity for historically underserved communities in metro Phoenix. Light rail makes the unique offerings of South Phoenix more accessible to others, attracting new customers, businesses and jobs to the area.
- The South Central community has a great opportunity, for current and future generations, to benefit from this major public infrastructure investment.

How will businesses be supported during construction?

- South Central Extension is the seventh major light rail project to be built in metro Phoenix. Valley Metro and the City of Phoenix have learned from each of these projects and developed extensive programs to provide business assistance before and throughout construction, in the form of business assessments, special

events, customized signage, marketing/social media assistance and accounting/financial planning.

- South Central Extension has the largest budget for business assistance needs than any other prior rail project.
- Valley Metro has staff available 24/7 to inform and answer questions from business owners and to respond rapidly to any emergencies that may arise from construction.
- Valley Metro and construction contractor, Kiewit, have a “considerate” construction plan that entails maintaining business access at all times, safe routes for pedestrians and schools and localized hiring and spending.

How has the design changed based on community input?

Community input has been and continues to be an important element in the design of the South Central Extension. The design team has incorporated the following elements, based on feedback, into the final design of the project:

- Increased number of bus pull-outs (over 80% of bus stops now have pull-outs)
- Increased landscaped areas and size
- Enhanced bicycle and pedestrian facilities; for example, 23 additional signalized crosswalks and over 10 miles of continuous and wider bike lanes
- Modified one park-and-ride location to relocate parking closer to the station and identified an alternate location for another park-and-ride to avoid impacts to nearby businesses
- Placed Broadway Road station south of intersection to reduce the amount of right-of-way needs
- Removed frontage road from the Lincoln Station location to minimize property impacts and maintain local street access
- Identified new power substation locations to avoid impacts to property owners
- Modified design of roundabouts to reduce right-of-way impacts and better accommodate bicycles and pedestrians
- Added Downtown Hub for easy, convenient transfers between light rail, bus, and other transportation modes

Why the two-lane roadway design?

- Light rail expands roadway capacity by carrying passengers each day to/from the area and attracting additional customers.
- The two-lane design achieves the community’s desire for a pedestrian-friendly environment that includes sidewalks, shade, and dedicated bike lanes, while also limiting property takes.

- The two-lane design saves nearly 80 businesses that would have otherwise been wholly or partially torn down to fit four lanes of automobile traffic and the trackway. These kinds of property impacts would have dramatically altered the character of south Central Avenue.
- The two-lane design includes bus pullouts to keep vehicles moving when buses are stopped as well as allows for emergency vehicle access.
 - This design improves public safety in this corridor by providing emergency vehicles with easier access to travel along Central Avenue. The two-lane design was reviewed and approved by Phoenix Fire and is safer for all than a four-lane configuration.
 - Dedicated left/right turn lanes help to maintain traffic flow.
- The Phoenix City Council approved, for the third time, the two-lane design in September 2018.

What is the initiative?

- An initiative was filed with the City of Phoenix in November 2018 to amend the city charter to terminate “the furtherance of any light rail extension or any other fixed rail line transit system” in Phoenix. It also seeks to “redirect the funds” to finance infrastructure improvements in South Phoenix and throughout the city.
- This initiative is specific to the City of Phoenix; it does not currently affect light rail development in other cities. However, it could have repercussions on the future of transportation funding in this region.

What is the status of the initiative?

- The Phoenix City Clerk verified that the initiative contains a sufficient number of valid signatures on January 18.
- The Phoenix City Council voted on February 6 to refer the initiative to the August 27 ballot.
- There is a legal challenge focused on election law concerns from the Arizona Chapter Associated General Contractors.

Will Valley Metro continue to work on the South Central Extension (or other Phoenix rail project) even though there is an initiative/upcoming election?

- Yes. Valley Metro will continue with design and early utility work consistent with the existing policy, which was established by previous voter-approved measures and multiple Phoenix City Council actions.
- Continued work is also critical to keeping projects in the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) funding pipeline.

- More than \$3.5 billion in FTA grant dollars, dedicated to fixed guideway/rail projects, is anticipated to support the Phoenix rail capital program. A stop or pause in these projects could cause the city to lose this significant federal investment to other communities nationwide.
- Related to the South Central Extension/Downtown Hub, utility work in downtown Phoenix is necessary in 2019 to meet the Phoenix hosting requirements of the Super Bowl in 2023.

What happens to the funding planned for light rail extensions affected by this initiative?

- The initiative seeks to re-direct Proposition 104 (Transportation 2050) funds for light rail extensions to finance other infrastructure improvements within South Phoenix and the city. Other regional and federal dollars dedicated to rail transit would be unavailable to the city for other uses.
- Proposition 104 funds only 15 – 20% of the total costs of building Phoenix light rail extensions.
- The majority of funding comes from federal grant programs and regional Proposition 400 dollars that are dedicated exclusively to rail extensions and cannot be transferred to other uses or city projects.
 - The city could potentially lose upwards of \$5 billion in federal and regional monies to other cities in this region and across the U.S. who have rail projects moving forward.

What happens if the projects are paused/put on hold?

- Placing a hold or “pause” on current light rail work would have a significant negative impact on projects, which could put the projects in jeopardy. There are serious risks, including:
 - If Valley Metro does not meet critical milestones with the FTA, the South Central Extension and Northwest Extension Phase II would be removed from or deprioritized within the federal grant program. Due to the competitive nature of this program and limited federal funds, funding is very likely to be awarded to other projects in other cities.
 - Currently, there are more than 300 people at work on these projects. Any kind of work stoppage would demobilize this staff, generating significant cost and risk of them being reassigned to other, active projects.
 - Completing construction activities in downtown Phoenix prior to the Super Bowl in February 2023 would not be possible. Greater costs would be incurred related to “buttoning

up” downtown for this event and schedule delays that could push out project completion to 2025 or later.

- In short, pausing work on light rail projects could achieve the same goal as proponents of the anti-light rail initiative: killing light rail in Phoenix.

What is the Public Art Program?

- Valley Metro’s percent-for-arts policy directs up to 1% of the construction budget to be assigned for public art on light rail projects
- Artwork, which involves the community, can bring additional value and pride to transit facilities.

How is the community involved in the art process?

- Valley Metro conducted a series of artist workshops prior to the release of the Call to Artists to insure the awareness and participation of local artists in the process.
- Artist selection committees are formed; made-up of people who live and work near the alignment
- Artists attend public and one-on-one meetings to ensure the local neighborhoods are reflected in the art.
- 13 of the 18 artists working on art elements for the South Central Extension are local

What is the construction timeline?

- Relocation of third-party utilities will begin downtown Phoenix in spring 2019 in order to meet the hosting requirements of the Super Bowl in 2023. Construction is scheduled to begin on portions of the project in early 2020. Construction will be completed at the various stages of the project in 2022 and 2023, depending upon when construction stage began. The entire length of the extension is expected to open in 2023.

Will the city up-zone or down-zone my property once light rail is built?

- The City of Phoenix cannot and will not rezone property along the corridor without the consent of the property owner. Rather, the process to rezone property is initiated by the property owner. As part of its review of land use along the route, the city may offer zoning incentives to promote development consistent with transit, but a property owner’s existing legal rights will not be diminished by any zoning action.

Will there be a tax increase to maintain operations for the South Central Extension?

- No. In August 2015, Phoenix voters approved the Transportation 2050 plan that provides a dedicated revenue source for bus service, light rail service and street improvements through 2050.

How can I stay updated on the project?

- Join the email distribution list by contacting one of the Community Outreach Coordinators, visit valleymetro.org/southcentral and follow us @valleymetro.
- Visit us at the South Central Extension Community Office, 5040 S. Central Ave., Phoenix
- Meeting materials will be posted online