

DESTINATIONS

Destinations is the official newsletter of Valley Metro

New Routes, More Service Kick Off in July

This summer, the Valley is receiving additional benefits of the Regional Transportation Plan including two new express routes. The new routes are being funded with the half-cent sales tax extension of the Regional Transportation Plan, which includes a full assortment of transportation improvements and new services for Maricopa County.



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On July 23, **Route 572**, the Surprise-Scottsdale Express, will begin serving the Surprise Park-and-Ride and the Scottsdale Airpark with trips going both eastbound and westbound in the morning and afternoon during

peak commute hours, Monday through Friday. Stops include Arrowhead Towne Center and Desert Ridge Mall.

On the same date, **Route 573**, the Arrowhead-Downtown Phoenix Express, will travel between the Church of Joy at 75th Avenue and Beardsley Road and downtown Phoenix. Stops include the Arrowhead Towne Center and 95th Avenue and Coyote Boulevard. The commuter service will travel both directions only during morning and afternoon peak commute hours, Monday through Friday.

New Service, Routes Extended

The following routes will be either adding service or changing routes to better meet the needs of Valley Metro passengers.

- **New Route 32:** Travels on 32nd Street from Washington Street to Union Hills Drive (replacing the 32nd Street portion of Route 3)
- **Route 90:** Extends route from Dunlap Road to Deer Valley Road instead of terminating at Paradise Valley Community College
- **New Route 154:** Travels on Greenway Road from 51st Avenue to Scottsdale Road
- **Routes 8, 27 and 156:** Operates every 30 minutes on Sundays
- **New neighborhood circulator** service for Desert Sky, Maryvale and Sunnyslope areas of Phoenix
- **New Route 70:** Replaces Route 24 by extending previous service from 67th Avenue to Litchfield Road (Luke AFB); weekend service will operate every 30 minutes
- **Route 72:** Extends to Mayo Boulevard from the Princess Resort
- **Route 156:** Extends from Chandler/Gilbert Community College to ASU Polytechnic

For more information about these planned changes in service beginning July 23, contact Valley Metro at (602) 253-5000. To plan a trip on a Valley Metro bus, go to www.ValleyMetro.org.



Voters approved transit facilities to accommodate new and existing bus service in the Valley.

Two New Maintenance Facilities Serve West and East Valley

The Valley Metro regional transit system will be adding two new maintenance and operations facilities this year to help operate bus service from the west to the east Valley.

The city of Phoenix is building a bus maintenance facility in southwest Phoenix on a 25-acre site that will have the capacity to house 250 Valley Metro buses. It's the largest bus facility project, at a price tag of \$50 million, funded largely by federal funds and regional public transportation funds.

The four-building complex will include a 97,660 square foot maintenance facility, administration space, bus wash and police transit bureau offices. A unique aspect of the facility is the covered spaces for buses that will help create cooler interior temperatures in summer. The facility is scheduled for completion in December 2007.

The cities of Tempe and Scottsdale, along with Valley Metro, are building a 250-bus operations and maintenance facility on a 24-acre site in northwest

Tempe. A distinctive aspect of the facility is that it will be "green." Both cities are actively supporting Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certified buildings in their communities.

There will be 74,400 square feet of maintenance space, as well as administrative offices and a bus wash. Unique aspects of the new facility include a water reclamation system that will reuse 90% of the bus washer water, as well as an under-floor air distribution system to reduce energy usage by 47%. All carpet, tile, millwork and ceiling finishes will contain recycled content.

Of the project's \$48.6 million cost, approximately 50% of the funds are from federal sources with the remaining funding from local sources, including the regional public transportation funds. The facility will be in full operation in late October 2007. A ribbon-cutting ceremony is planned for October 22.



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.

City by City

Transit updates from across the Valley Metro service area



Mesa Student Wins Bus Wrap Design Contest

Carlautta Griffith, a Westwood High School senior, will be the only 2007 graduate in the Valley that has her artwork wrapped around a Valley Metro bus. Griffith is the winner of the seventh annual 'Design a Bus Wrap' contest that transforms student artwork into a vinyl exterior wrap on a public transit bus.

Her design, titled "The Cool Way to be Hot, Cruise on the Valley Metro Bus," features an elaborately illustrated Phoenix bird spreading its wings on each side of the 40-foot bus. "Carlautta's colorful design was a clear standout," said Dolores Nolan, transit education supervisor for Valley Metro. "To the judges, it illustrates youthfulness and really grabs your attention."

Valley Metro believes that this contest will get more teens to take notice of public transportation and use it as a way to go places this summer. According to Nolan, today's teens are tomorrow's commuters.

High school students Valley-wide are asked to submit entries into the contest. This is the second time that a student from Westwood has won, and the first time the same school has generated winners two years in a row.



Carlautta Griffith and her winning design of the Valley Metro bus wrap.



Meet City of Avondale Transit Program Administrator

Jess Segovia joined the city of Avondale as the Transit Program Administrator in October of 2006. He manages all aspects of Avondale's transit services and is Avondale's liaison to Valley Metro. Since joining the city of Avondale, Segovia has become an active member of the Fare Policy, Paratransit Study and Valley Metro Regional Marketing committees.

Segovia worked eight years as the government relations administrator for Access Services, the Los Angeles County provider of ADA Paratransit service. Segovia obtained his master's degree in Organizational Management from Azusa Pacific University in 2000.



Jess Segovia, City of Avondale

Buses Add New Fareboxes in July

By year's end, the entire Valley Metro fleet of more than 800 buses will be outfitted with new, high technology fareboxes. The new system, manufactured by Scheidt Bachmann, replaces a 20-year old outdated system that has served the transit system well but is in need of replacement.

"With our current system, finding replacement parts or even finding new fareboxes for new buses is out of the question," said Debbie Cotton, Phoenix Public Transit Director. "Our passengers should find the transition to the new boxes pretty straight-forward."

New farebox testing began in January on several routes that serve the west Valley. The test phase was an opportunity for riders to provide input on the new fareboxes and gave the manufacturer time to work out the details to ensure a smooth rollout for the entire system.

To date, passenger feedback has been positive with 60% of passengers saying the new farebox is easy to use. With the new fareboxes, there will be several fare-paying procedures that will change including:

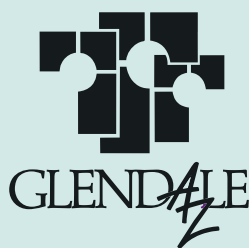
- Tickets and tokens will not be offered to riders
- All day passes can be purchased directly from the farebox
- Dollar bills honored as payments will be \$1 and \$2 bills only
- Three and seven day passes will be available
- Monthly passes will transition to a pass that is honored for a 31-day period from first day of use
- Paying more than one fare at a time will not be possible
- Transfer slips will not be offered—riders can purchase the all-day pass as a way to transfer between routes

The first installation of the new fareboxes will begin with the RAPID commuter service buses in July. For more information about the new fareboxes go to www.valleymetro.org.



New fareboxes will appear on all Valley Metro buses by January 2008.

City of Glendale and David Boggs Receive Top Honors from Arizona Transit Association



On April 18, the city of Glendale's Transit Division received the Outstanding Transit Organization award at the Arizona Transit Association (AzTA) awards ceremony in Sedona. Glendale was recognized for its expansion of Luke Link (service to Luke A.F.B.) and the success of its Glendale Urban Shuttle, Dial-A-Ride and several other transit services.

On that same night, David Boggs, Executive Director of the Valley Metro/RPTA, was named the Arizona Transit Association's Outstanding Transit Individual of 2007.

According to Paul Miller, incoming AzTA President and Arizona Bus Sales president, "The nominating committee realized the incredible amount of energy and enthusiasm that Mr. Boggs has brought to our transit community."



Paratransit Study Reveals Methods to Improve Service in Maricopa County

In Maricopa County, paratransit and Dial-a-Ride services are like a patchwork quilt. The shape and content of the fabric are varied and the pattern is confusing. The services become even more problematic with an aging baby boomer population and extreme population growth.

As a result, the programs that serve persons with disabilities and senior populations in Maricopa County are being closely studied.

In 2006, the Valley Metro Board of Directors recommended that the Regional Public Transportation Authority (RPTA) study the systems. Their goal was to develop a system that would be less fractured and more regional. Over the years, paratransit services in Maricopa County's cities and towns have grown into a conglomeration of many systems with vastly different priorities and service policies.

The current make-up of the Dial-a-Ride and paratransit services is comprised of more than 900,000 annual boardings served by eight different operators. Duplication and economic inefficiencies exist with several separate computer scheduling systems and nearly \$28 million in annual administration and operating costs.

Knowing that the task of developing alternatives for a more regional paratransit service would be extremely difficult, the RPTA brought together a member agency technical advisory committee (TAC) to help guide the process and paratransit consultants were hired to perform a study.

"Our paratransit riders deserve a great system," said Phoenix Councilwoman and Valley Metro Co-Chair Peggy Bilsten. "I know this study is the first step. It's encouraging to see eight local paratransit providers work together to make the changes that will benefit the end-users."

After months of interviews with the public, local agencies, elected officials, committees, and conducting both online and rider telephone surveys, the following issues were identified:

- Complicated and difficult transfers
- Long wait times at transfer points
- Lack of a centralized reservations number
- Inability to meet growing demand

Further analysis of existing Dial-a-Ride and the paratransit systems show that only one-fourth of the

trips have shorter trip times than the same trip taken on a fixed-route bus. In fact, in 65 percent of trips, the Dial-a-Ride trips take longer than fixed route.

Five service models, originally presented by the consultant, were consolidated into three options that were discussed with the Valley Metro Board of Directors in April.



- Option 1:** Shift to three geographic sub-regional systems with regional travel policies and procedures
- Option 2:** Use several geographic sub-regional operators and have a central reservations system
- Option 3:** Have a single area-wide provider

"After a careful review, the public, the committee, the consultant and the stakeholders feel that the system presented in Option 2 is most reasonable for both the passengers and the operators," said David Boggs, Executive Director of the RPTA.

They recommend a single contact point that would allow regional scheduling and dispatchers that will address the transfer issues. Valley Metro could contract with the regional call and dispatch center and three to five area providers. Levels of non-ADA service would be a local jurisdiction decision. The trip costs would be allocated to member communities based on ADA costs plus levels of non-ADA service requested and received.

The final report will be presented to the Valley Metro board of directors in September 2007.

METRO UPDATE



METRO unveiled its first fully assembled light rail vehicle to the public in February while Congressman Harry Mitchell, mayors Phil Gordon, Hugh Hallman, Keno Hawker and METRO Board Chair Tom Simplot cut the ribbon of METRO's Operations and Maintenance Center. In late March, testing of vehicles began on a section of Washington Street. Each vehicle will be tested to ensure it meets performance and safety specifications.

Installation of structural steel at the first METRO station occurred March 14 at the Central and First Avenue Station in downtown Phoenix.

Planning has already begun for three extensions to the METRO light rail 20-mile starter line, and the city of Phoenix has decided to speed-up construction of the first phase of the Northwest Extension, to take the

tracks on 19th Avenue another 3.2 miles north to Dunlap Avenue.

In the area of administration, audits conducted by independent auditors of METRO's June 30, 2006 financial statement, and of federal funds received, produced no findings. According to METRO's Marty McNeil, they received an A+ on their report card.

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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