

# DESTINATIONS

DESTINATIONS IS THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF VALLEY METRO

## Fare and Farebox Changes On Horizon

**A**fter a year of preparation and a largely successful pilot program, Valley Metro is set to unveil new fareboxes and a new fare structure on December 1, 2007. We began incorporating this new fare technology with a pilot program launched in January on Routes 3A, 59, 67, 131 and 571 that included staff riding along to provide materials and one-on-one explanations to passengers.

### Farebox Tests and Results

Valley Metro conducted an online survey to obtain passenger feedback on the new fareboxes. Sixty percent of those surveyed felt the farebox was easy to use with another 30% finding them “somewhat easy.” The biggest passenger concern was about not being able to pay multiple fares with a single transaction, something that is possible with the current farebox.

### Time for a Change

Since the system’s last fare change in 1994, labor, fuel and overall costs have skyrocketed. Fare studies were conducted and new fare structures approved by the City of Phoenix in 2003 and by the Valley Metro Board of Directors in 2005. In both instances, the changes were tabled so that they could correspond with the installation of new fareboxes.

Last year a study by an outside consultant showed that Valley Metro fares were far below the average range for cities of similar size and socioeconomic make-ups. The study also found that the types of fares offered needed a facelift and that light rail fares needed to be incorporated into the overall system. *Continued on page 2*

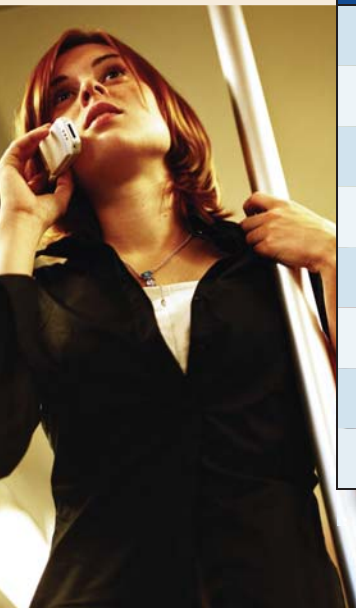


WHAT TO EXPECT ON DECEMBER 1
1-Day pass can be purchased from the farebox
No multiple transactions with a single bill
Only \$1 and \$2 bills will be accepted
Tickets and tokens will be phased out
Transfers from local bus to express bus will require a \$.50 fee for each boarding
3-Day, 7-Day and 31-Day passes are valid for consecutive days from the time of activation
Fares can be purchased online at <a href="http://ValleyMetro.org">ValleyMetro.org</a>
Transfer slips will no longer be offered

**NEW FARES STARTING DECEMBER 1**

# Valley Metro Tallies Annual Bus and Alternative Mode Use

Progress is being made in our efforts to boost alternate modes of transportation. We are seeing more commuters using the express bus and carpooling with local bus ridership declining slightly in 2007.



Annual Bus ridership	
2000	37,496,804
2001	40,194,501
2002	45,277,131
2003	50,510,536
2004	54,013,410
2005	56,358,335
2006	59,253,904
2007	58,020,189

DAILY COMMUTE TRIPS BY MODE IN MARICOPA COUNTY			
TRAVEL MODE	2006	2007	CHANGE
Single Occupant	2,435,400	2,539,900	4%
Carpool	297,500	390,400	31%
Bus	83,300	86,700	4%
Bike	50,000	43,400	-9%
Walk	84,600	110,400	30%
Telecommute	118,000	162,300	38%
Compressed Schedules	100,000	102,500	3%
Alt. Mode Totals	733,500	895,700	22%
<b>Total No. of Trips</b>	<b>3,168,900</b>	<b>3,435,600</b>	<b>8%</b>

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.

## Fare and Farebox Changes On Horizon

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For instance, replacing the monthly pass is a 31-day rolling pass offering the passenger 31 days of use from the day it is activated. Passengers would also get the option of buying an all-day pass good on both buses and light rail. The proposed structure eliminates transfer slips, tickets and tokens.

### The People Are Heard

Five August public hearings held throughout the Valley allowed residents to share their thoughts about the proposed fare changes. It was clear through the comments in these meetings and those received through our email system that there was a strong understanding of the need for the new fare structure.

### Next Steps

In September the Valley Metro and Valley Metro Rail Boards reviewed public concerns and approved the proposed fare structure. The Phoenix City Council reviews the issue in October. Farebox installation is ongoing and scheduled for completion by December 1, when new fares will take effect.

# City by City

Transit updates from across the Valley Metro service area

## Phoenix Makes a Big Splash this Summer

**P**hoenix Public Transit made a “Big Splash” on July 23, 2007 with the implementation of its largest increase in Phoenix bus service in seven years.

Among the citywide improvements were:

- A brand new bus route along Greenway Road in North Phoenix, stretching from Glendale to Scottsdale
- A new route along 32nd Street from Union Hills to Washington
- Two new neighborhood circulators in Maryvale and Sunnyslope
- Sunday service added on popular weekend routes.

In total, the city invested almost \$70 million in new buses and service improvements, and adding three million more miles of service, bringing its total to 21 million miles of service annually.



*The Phoenix Fire Department was there to lend a hand and a hose at the inauguration of two new bus routes at Greenway Road and 32nd Street. The Big Splash event included remarks from Phoenix City Councilwoman Peggy Neely (right) and Phoenix Public Director Debbie Cotton.*

## Meet City of Chandler's Mike Normand



*Mike Normand*

**M**ike Normand was named Chandler's Acting Director for Transportation and Operations in 2006. The Detroit native and longtime Washington state resident represents the city's needs across the region and state through his participation in the Transit Management Committee and the Valley Metro Operations and Capital Committee. He also serves on technical advisory and corridor committees for the Maricopa Association of Governments and the Arizona Department of Transportation.

Normand is a respected industry veteran whose vast experience includes working with Puget Sound's Sound Transit where he was instrumental in developing new transit facilities.

He earned a Bachelor's Degree in Urban and Regional Planning at Western Washington University, a Master's Degree in Public Administration from Arizona State University, and is a veteran of the U.S. Coast Guard.

# Regional Transportation Plan Projects

An update on studies and projects related to the Regional Transportation Plan.

# UPDATE

## ▶ **Transit Life Cycle Program (TLCP)**

The agency has contracted with HDR/SR Beard to assist in updating the TLCP, aligning it with the budget, and recommending a process to administer unallocated funds.

## ▶ **Regional Paratransit Study**

The completion schedule has been revised to allow additional review time. The Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) met August 29 to review the first draft of the final report. A fourth stakeholders meeting is being held October 3. The final report and recommendations will be presented to the Valley Metro Board for information in October, with final report acceptance anticipated in November.



## ▶ **20-Year Strategic Plan**

The Board approved the RPTA mission, vision and goals and authorized the RPTA to become the lead agency to regionalize ADA paratransit operations dependent upon contractor recommendations and local city council approvals. A resolution will be drafted to reflect the Board's intent to develop a single regional transit agency for all transit modes over time.

## ▶ **Service Effectiveness and Efficiency Study**

The 18-month evaluation will conclude December 2008. The study includes a methodology and a series of performance benchmarks that will be used by the

RPTA and its lead project agencies to monitor the effectiveness of various transit investments identified in the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). A multi-agency working group is meeting regularly to coordinate implementation.

## ▶ **Main Street Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Corridor**

The city of Mesa held an open house on July 26 to provide opportunity to comment on the BRT station options being constructed along the line. The Mesa Main Street BRT Steering Committee is refining the BRT study by determining station locations and station design. In a parallel effort, METRO is conducting an alternatives analysis in the Main Street corridor due to the high capacity transit extension to Mesa Drive that is a part of the RTP.

## ▶ **Freeway Express Bus/Bus Rapid Transit Operating Plan**

A Technical Advisory Group meeting was held on June 12 and was followed by an interagency conference call on June 27 to address remaining issues associated with Red Mountain Express and Superstition Springs Connector routes. The consultant has integrated the findings of the HDR/SR Beard review of the Transit Life Cycle Program. A draft final report is being prepared by the project consultant and will be submitted to RPTA for review by the Technical Advisory Group.

## ▶ **Arterial Bus Rapid Transit Studies**

Scopes of work are being developed for two studies that will finalize the operational and capital characteristics of the arterial BRT network described in the

Regional Transportation Plan and funded through Proposition 400. The Arizona Avenue BRT line, which will begin service in July 2010, will be the second arterial street route implemented by the RPTA. The Arizona Avenue BRT Design Concept Report will provide the preliminary (30 percent) design of passenger facilities and right-of-way improvements that will be constructed to support the service. The comprehensive arterial BRT study will define how the five planned BRT lines will be integrated operationally with other transit modes.

## ▶ **Bus Stop Inventory and Design Guidelines**

An all inclusive member agency meeting was held July 24 to fully discuss the draft final report's recommendations for a bus stop improvement program funded by Proposition 400. As a result of the meeting, the consultant is doing additional work. The TAC met on September 13 to review the consultant's findings. This study is also investigating options on how to improve the region's bus stop inventory database, which will allow improved customer service by enabling full utilization of the Next Bus service information. Bus stop improvements are programmed at \$26M over the 20 year term of the Transit Life Cycle Program.

## ▶ **Commuter Rail**

MAG is developing strategies for implementing commuter rail service in Maricopa County and northern Pinal County. The stakeholders met on September 12 at the Glendale Civic Center to develop action steps for goals and objectives of the plan. The draft plan will be presented October 30.





Facility entrance monument sign shows project partners: Cities of Tempe and Scottsdale and Valley Metro.

Front entrance of the facility has a cooling effect with shade canopies and native landscaping.

The facility is accessible by public transit, bikes and pedestrians.

## “Green” Facility Unveiled in Tempe on October 22

The cities of Tempe and Scottsdale, along with Valley Metro and the Tempe Chamber of Commerce, are inviting the public to join them to celebrate the grand opening of a new environmentally friendly transportation facility. The event will feature breakfast and music in addition to tours of the facility.

More information about the East Valley Bus and Operations Maintenance Facility is at [www.tempe.gov/greenprograms](http://www.tempe.gov/greenprograms) or by calling 480-350-2775. Special transportation accommodations are available for people with disabilities. Please call 480-350-8663 for more information. Bus route and schedule information available at [ValleyMetro.org](http://ValleyMetro.org) or by calling 602-253-5000.

### October 22

#### “GREEN” RIBBON-CUTTING CEREMONY

2050 W. Rio Salado Parkway (west of Priest Drive)

Breakfast 9 to 9:30 a.m.

Ribbon Cutting Ceremony 9:30 to 10 a.m.

Facility Tours 10 to 10:30 a.m.

#### ABOUT THE FACILITY:

The region’s future is looking brighter and greener thanks to this 250-bus operations and maintenance facility. Built by the cities of Tempe and Scottsdale, along with Valley Metro, the building will house 600 employees and feature an array of green features including:

- Under-floor air distribution – reducing energy usage by 47%
- Windows that open to allow for air flow and natural lighting
- Recycled content in all carpet, tile, millwork and ceiling finishes
- Use of local materials to significantly save on shipping costs

Approximately 50% of the project’s \$46.8 million cost come from federal sources. Remaining funding is from local sources including the Valley Metro public transportation funds from Proposition 400.

## Clean Air Campaign Honors Employers on October 25

On October 25, we will honor 20 employers for their participation in the Maricopa County Trip Reduction Program at “Sky Blue – Thanks to You,” our Clean Air Campaign Luncheon. The program, now in its 20th year, recognizes those who work to creatively outperform their peers in air quality improvement efforts. They are encouraging employees to carpool, ride the bus, and telework for the sake of reducing traffic congestion and improving our air quality.

The luncheon will be held at the Arizona Biltmore Resort and Spa. To make reservations or learn more about the awards program, go to [ValleyMetro.org](http://ValleyMetro.org) or call (602) 262-7433.



# A METRO Vision for the Future in Phoenix, Tempe and Mesa

**T**hroughout the region, the new light rail future is taking shape. METRO remains on time and on budget for a December, 2008 opening date. Recent progress includes:

- Eight miles of continuous METRO light rail track runs from 44th to Washington streets in Phoenix to McClintock Road and Apache Boulevard in Tempe
- METRO has laid another 27 miles of linear track throughout the region
- Station foundations are completed for 20 of the system's 28 stations
- Structural steel and shade canopies are up in downtown Phoenix, downtown Tempe and near ASU
- 30 of the 50 light rail vehicles have been received
- Vehicle testing has begun on Washington Street between 48th and 56th Streets.



*Light rail station features louvered shade canopies that will offer passengers shelter from sun and rain.*

You can catch a glimpse of the future by visiting the light rail section on Washington Street between 48th Street and Mill Avenue. The Priest Drive Station features native landscaping in the median, which sets the tone for the finished track and power system.

*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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**For more information,  
visit our Web site at  
[www.ValleyMetro.org](http://www.ValleyMetro.org).**



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