



Minutes City of Tempe Transportation Commission July 9, 2013

Minutes of the Tempe Transportation Commission held on Tuesday, July 9, 2013, 7:30 a.m., at the Tempe Transportation Center, Don Cassano Community Room, 200 E 5th Street, Tempe, Arizona.

(MEMBERS) Present:

Charles Huellmantel (Chair)
Pam Goronkin
Sue Lofgren
Kevin Olson
Charles Redman
Gary Roberts

Don Cassano
Ben Goren
Nikki Gusz
Philip Luna
German Piedrahita
Peter Schelstraete

(MEMBERS) Absent:

Aaron Golub
Benjamin Sanchez

City Staff Present:

Greg Jordan, Deputy Public Works Director-Transit
Shelly Seyler, Deputy Public Works Director-Traffic
Eric Iwersen, Interim Transportation Planning Manager
Tanya Chavez, Neighborhood Services Specialist

Joe Clements, Transportation Financial Analyst
Mike Nevarez, Transit Operations Coordinator
Nancy Ryan, Project Management Coordinator
Robert Yabes, Principal Planner
Kathy Wittenburg, Administrative Assistant

Guests Present:

None

Commission Chair Charles Huellmantel called the meeting to order at 7:45 a.m.

Agenda Item 1 – Public Appearances

None

Agenda Item 2 – Meeting Minutes

Commission Chair Charles Huellmantel introduced the minutes of the June 11, 2013 meeting and asked for a motion.

Motion: Commissioner Roberts

Second: Commissioner Lofgren

Decision: Approved

Agenda Item 3 – General Plan 2040 – Circulation Chapter

Nancy Ryan, Project Management Coordinator, presented an update on the Circulation Chapter of the General Plan – Circulation Chapter. Nancy distributed Circulation Chapter handouts and maps and gave an update on highlighted strategies and objectives listed below:

- Quality of Life – Transportation capacity impacts
- Pedestrian/Bike/Bus – Sidewalk modifications
- Development Patterns – Bike and pedestrian sections with 20-Minute City concept
- ADA and accessibility in transit, pedestrian and street access
- Improve shading on pedestrian paths
- Identifying routes for bike commuters as well as recreation and family
- Bike travel is an important part of the transportation modes
- Facilities connecting to other facilities in the greater region
- Travel ways maps: identified potential inner city rail and transit travel ways supporting street car and increased use by pedestrians and bikes seeking access to transit for connections.

Commissioner Cassano asked why the transit map doesn't show the most current option for the streetcar and Nancy replied that the draft shows the locally preferred alternative.

Commissioner Goren asked what does "Green Street" mean in this context and Nancy explained that it identifies routes that are more conducive for pedestrian and bike traffic.

Commissioner Gusz asked who will be tracking the progress on this plan and Nancy replied that we are creating a tracking program to generate an annual report to gauge the process.

Commissioner Piedrahita asked why the reluctance to stay away from Elliot Road. Eric responded by stating Elliot Road is a part of this process and is identified for bicycle and pedestrian improvements.

Nancy indicated the Commission input is needed to reflect the community needs. Eric shared that the streetcar alignment will be presented to Council in the late fall with the new preferred alternative alignment. Commissioner Goren stated hopefully by 2040, and Commission Chair Huellmantel added he hoped that we would also be looking for future streetcar routes and paths along the railroad both ways. These items are no longer included and are priorities for the Commission. Nancy stated these elements will be added back and shared, the entire General Plan can be found on the GP 2040 website.

Agenda Item 4 – Non-ADA Dial-a-Ride Fares Update

Mike Nevarez, Transit Operations Coordinator, presented with possible action an update on the current fiscal budget impacts based on the current imbalance of ridership due to the current fare structure. Presentation and discussion highlights include:

Mike directed the commission to the memos provided and gave a brief update of the fee structure, which indicates that the imbalance of ridership between ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) and Non-ADA dial-a-ride services has tilted. The number of Non-ADA passengers is increasing. As of now the cost of a trip is \$1.00 and the zone is \$.50. The Fare Recovery for ADA is 13% with a fare recovery for Non-ADA is at 5%. The imbalance needs to be corrected by increasing the Non-ADA fare, which has not increased in over nine years.

A fare increase is recommended by September 1, 2013 to raise the base Non-ADA fare from \$1.00 to \$2.50 and to keep it on par with the ADA base fare by July 2014 which will bring the fare to \$4.00. From that point forward, both services would stay comparable. The difference would be the imposition of a mileage charge with Tempe's rider's averaging 7 or 8 miles. It is recommended; we provide a base distance fare of \$2.50 for 5 miles, a .50 surcharge per mile for 6-15 miles, plus \$1.00 per mile for over 15 miles. The goal is to ensure ADA individuals utilize the appropriate services and the Non-ADA individuals will still have services available while maintaining efficiency.

Commission Chair Huellmantel, thanked Mike for coming back with more detailed info and answering all questions asked about the recovery in the previous meeting.

Commissioner Gusz asked how the RPTA collected feedback from "targeted public outreach forums" to meet riders at forums they already participated in, instead of holding public meetings. Mike clarified that the workgroup solicited feedback from over twenty groups who already meet regularly and use the service to take proactive steps to collect quality data.

Commissioner Gusz asked how many public meetings the workgroup went to and Mike responded that they went to three in Tempe, 15 to 20 different places valley wide.

Commissioner Cassano questioned if the increased fare will impact ridership drop. Mike explained there should be a shift from Non-ADA to ADA. Currently the Non-ADA dial-a-ride is a little less convenient due to the length of reservation time needed in advance. A suggested change would be a demand response of same day or one day reservation.

Commissioner Goren asked why the Non-ADA is so much cheaper and how did this get started. Mike answered that the ADA is a federally mandated service and it cannot be more than twice the normal fare of the Fixed Route service. For Non-ADA, it just wasn't addressed. With our new brokerage model, we are using public and private resources resulting in a quality of service that has skyrocketed.

Commissioner Goren wondered why there are two different services. Mike informed him that the Non-ADA dial-a-ride still accepts individuals with a disability but not to the effect that prevents them from using the Fixed Route service. ADA eligibility is anyone who cannot access or navigate to the Fixed Route system. Examples would be an individual who cannot walk the distance to the bus stop, can't navigate it, or safely cross an intersection.

Commission Chair Huellmantel asked for clarity of why we are so heavily subsidizing the people that don't qualify for the ADA service but claim ADA services and what are the parameters. Commissioner Olson responded, it's the result of differing resources from different region the ADA service is mandated but at a much lower standard than what we provide. Tempe was in the lead, recognizing how bad the service was, with the region we came up with innovative ways to build a public/private partnership which provides better services at a reduced cost.

Commission Chair Huellmantel inquired how to define who is ADA qualified and Non-ADA eligible. Mike replied that the Non-ADA criteria is based on age and disability, and added that the City is required by federal law to provide discount transportation services to citizens who are disabled and over 65; essentially those who qualify for SSI.

Commissioner Roberts added that the advantage of the Non-ADA service is that it provides essentially door to door service.

Commissioner Cassano asked why the fees are being increased incrementally rather than all at once. Mike explained that the fee structure is a system that involves other entities worried about political ramifications, the need for low

income individuals to prepare for the raise in fares, and those who are not ADA certified the chance to become certified. As a compromise between all involved, the incremental fare increase was the best solution.

Commissioner Lofgren questioned if individuals wanted to become ADA certified that they will physically need to come down to the Valley Metro Center. Mike reassured that was correct and noted that part of the process is that the individuals are provided a cab to and from the location. This is a functional ability test, prior to that process it was self-certification. We have also implemented the Cabs for Coupons program which provides up to 75% subsidies for seniors and persons with disabilities who need to travel outside of the region.

Commissioner Goren suggests if raising fees incrementally is based on concern for individuals, then increase the fare immediately but design a sliding scale or assistance available for those who are financially challenged.

Greg indicated staff will be moving this item forward to Council in August and is seeking approval from the Commission.

Motion: Commissioner Olson

Second: Commissioner Cassano

Decision: Approved

Bring it back next year to see how it's working.

Agenda Item 5 – MAG Planning Grant Assistance

Eric Iwersen, Interim Transportation Planning Manager, presented an update on the MAG Planning Grant application process. Presentation and discussion highlights include:

Eric reviewed the process to apply for MAG (Maricopa Association of Governments) grants and acknowledged the Commission's previous direction to forward the Highline Canal Project application. Staff also continued pursuing options that would develop a north and south railroad alignment path. Subsequently, staff generated a second grant application proposal for the North South Rail Spur Path Project and applications for both projects were submitted to MAG.

Commission Chair Huellmantel thanked Eric and staff for their efforts and appreciates the Commission's direction and vision.

Commissioner Roberts asked for more clarification of what the funds will cover. Eric responded that this grant would cover the work required to develop a tangible concept vision and costs to help determine what projects are viable to be considered for future Capital Improvement Projects (CIPs) (basically the work would take the projects to a 15% design).

Agenda Item 6 – Regional Bike Share Program

Eric Iwersen, Interim Transportation Planning Manager, presented an update about the proposed Regional Bike Share Program. Presentation and discussion highlights include:

Eric explained that this proposal would create a partnership between the Cities of Phoenix, Mesa and Tempe, ASU and Valley Metro and that all parties with CycleHop to operate service, and equipment for a regional bike share program. Preliminary discussion topics focus on branding, logos, determining rental rates, drafting map locations, accessories and safety.

The City of Phoenix anticipates securing a contract in August and plans to launch in December; the City of Tempe would launch in the spring on 2014. CycleHop is actively pursuing corporate sponsorship to reduce or eliminate program costs, which will effect branding, advertising, logos, and the look of the equipment. Citi Bank donated \$43 million to New York City's "City Bike" program. Eric presented a bike with equipment as a prototype.

Commission Chair Huellmantel suggested that the name should have regional significance.

Commissioner Roberts asked if there were lights for night driving. Commissioner Goren asked if the bikes were equipped with a locking GPS device and how will lights be permanently secured to the bike. Eric demonstrated the location of the lights and GPS and reiterated that the bike presented is a preliminary example and modifications have been discussed to address Arizona's extreme weather conditions.

Commissioner Guzs asked how health and safety concerns will be addressed and Eric replied that consumers would sign a waiver at the registration sites.

Commission Chair Huellmantel asked how the bikes would be parked and Eric explained specific docking stations are designed to secure the bike and charge the solar features that power the GPS.

Commissioner Goren mentioned that it would be beneficial if there were racks for groceries.

Commissioner Schelstraete asked if CycleHop is operating anywhere else and Eric replied no, that Tampa, Florida is their first venture.

Commissioner Piedrahita asked if the tires are flat proof and Commissioner Goren asked how break downs would be addressed. Eric replied that the tires have thorn protection and a system would be in place where the consumer would call in a break down and an attendant would help the customer.

Eric informed the Commissioners that staff would continue to work out details on the project and bring future updates back to the Commission.

Agenda Item 7 – Department and Regional Transportation Updates

- Transportation: Greg is leaving City of Tempe to go to Portland, Maine next month.
- Valley Metro/RPTA:
 - The merger occurred on July 1st and operations have run well.
 - The "major event" on the 4th of July was a success.
 - The strike is on a 30 day cooling off period, discussions continue over economics and benefits. A resolution is expected before the 30 days has expired.

Agenda Item 8 – Future Agenda Items

None

The Commission's next meeting is scheduled for August 13, 2013.

Meeting adjourned at 8:52 a.m.

Prepared by: Kathy Wittenburg & Travis Mullen
Reviewed by: Yvette Mesquita