



City Council Report

Date: September 28, 2015
To: City Council
Through: Scott Butler, Deputy City Manager
From: Jodi Sorrell, Transit Services Director
Subject: Annual amendment to the Intergovernmental Agreement with the Regional Public Transportation Authority (RPTA) for citywide Fixed Route Bus, Dial-a-Ride, Ride Choice and ADA Platinum Pass services for Fiscal Year 15/16.
Citywide

Strategic Initiatives



Purpose and Recommendation

The purpose of this report is to review the proposed amendment between the City of Mesa and Valley Metro for operation and administration of \$15,438,407 of regionally and locally funded transit services operated within the city of Mesa. Staff recommends City Council adoption of the attached resolution authorizing the City Manager to enter into the amendment with the RPTA. Total cost to the City for the transit services included in the Agreement for FY14/15 is \$4,856,375. The balance, \$10,582,032 will be paid for from Mesa's share of Public Transportation Funds (PTF).

Background

The City of Mesa contracts with Valley Metro to operate and administrator fixed-route bus, Dial-a-Ride, RideChoice and the ADA Platinum Pass services for Mesa residents. Each year an amendment is made to the contract to adjust the estimated annual costs to provide the services.

Fixed Route Bus

There are 21 bus routes that operate within the city of Mesa. These include 13 local fixed-routes, 4 express routes, 2 LINK routes and a downtown circulator route. Over 60 percent of the bus routes are funded by the Public Transportation Funds (PTF). The remaining routes are funded by City funds (General Fund). The City applies for Local Transit Assistance Funds (LTAF) to help offset General Fund contributions.

East Valley Dial-a-Ride

East Valley Dial-a-Ride (EVDAR) provides door-to-door transportation for the disabled who are unable to navigate fixed route bus service. The system also fulfills the City's obligation to provide paratransit service within $\frac{3}{4}$ -mile of fixed route bus service for persons who qualify under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

The cities of Mesa, Chandler, Gilbert, Scottsdale and Tempe have been providing Dial-a-Ride service to residents in the East Valley under the umbrella name of EVDAR.

During the in-person assessments for Dial-a-Ride, qualifying individuals are offered the option of receiving an ADA Bus and Rail Pass. This program is intended to reduce ADA operational costs by encouraging ADA certified passengers to use fixed route buses and light rail service in-lieu of more traditional ADA paratransit services whenever possible. Fares associated with participation in this program are paid for by RPTA on behalf of the City and are eligible for reimbursement by PTF.

RideChoice

The RideChoice program offers a mobility option for seniors and persons with disabilities. In addition, the RideChoice program offers participating residents more flexibility to go where they wish to go, which also helps to stabilize Mesa's costs for the Dial-a-Ride program. Participants use a reloadable card where they can purchase up to \$100.00 in value for \$30.00 each month.

Discussion

Fixed Route Bus service

As outlined in Schedule A of the agreement, Valley Metro will apply \$7,633,489 of regional funding toward the cost of fixed route service in Mesa. The funding will be applied to the following routes: Route 40 (Main Street), Route 45 (Broadway Road), Route 61 (Southern Avenue), 96 (Dobson Road), 108 (Elliot Road), 112 (Country Club Drive), Route 136 (Gilbert Road), Route 156 (Williams Field Road), Route 184 (Power Road), Route 531 (Mesa/Gilbert Express), Route 533 (East Mesa Express), Route 535 (Northeast Mesa/Downtown Express), Route 541 (Mesa Express), Arizona Avenue/Country Club Road LINK and Main Street LINK.

The City of Mesa will contribute \$3,588,011 toward the cost of the remaining bus routes operated in the City. Schedule B outlines the City funding for Route 30 (University Drive), Route 45 (Broadway Road), Route 61 (one weekday trip on Southern Avenue), Route 77 (Baseline Road), Route 104 (Alma School Road), Route 120 (Mesa Drive), Route 128 (Stapley Drive), and the Mesa Downtown BUZZ.

The estimates for FY 15/16 include the following route changes:

- Main Street LINK - Shorten route to serve the Mesa Drive/Main Street light rail station instead of Sycamore/Main Street Transit Center to reduce duplication of service when light rail extension begins operation. This route is funded by regional funds.
- Arizona Avenue/Country Club Drive LINK - Connect to light rail at new bus stop at Centennial Way and Main Street instead of Sycamore/Main Street Transit Center to reduce duplication of service when light rail extension begins operation. This route is funded by regional funds.
- Route 61 (Southern Avenue) Improve Sunday frequency from 60 to 30 minute intervals. This modification responds to ridership demand and will provide seamless service to residents traveling into and out of Mesa on Sunday. This route is funded by regional funds.
- Route 104 (Alma School Road): Remove deviation into Sycamore/Main Street Transit Center to reduce duplication of service when light rail extension begins operation. This route is funded by City funds.
- Mesa BUZZ Circulator: Modify south end of route to connect to light rail at the new bus stop at Centennial Way and Main Street. Using savings from Route 104, the City will implement a pilot route modification to the west end of route to serve Mesa Riverview along Rio Salado Parkway and Dobson Road as a pilot route modification for the period of October 2015 – April 2016. This service enhancement will allow a connection with light rail and connectivity to commercial and entertainment destinations in Mesa. This route is funded by City funds.

Dial-a-Ride

It is estimated Mesa residents will take 131,760 trips on Dial-a-Ride. As identified in the attached agreement in Schedule C, the total cost of ADA Dial-a-Ride service in Mesa for FY 15/16 is \$3,661,004 PTF contributes \$2,948,543 to fund this service. The balance, \$712,461, is the responsibility of the City.

Ride Choice

Schedule D outlines the RideChoice funding sources. The total estimated costs for FY 15/16 is \$940,322. The City's estimated contribution to this program is \$555,903. The remaining estimated costs will be funded by a combination of New Freedom Grants and program revenue.

Alternatives

The City Council could choose not to authorize the City Manager to enter into an Agreement with the RPTA. Not executing this agreement would discontinue the provision of fixed-route, Dial-a-Ride and RideChoice services in the City.

Fiscal Impact

The total cost for RPTA provided transit, administrative, marketing and customer service activities during FY 15/16 is \$15,438,407. The City funded portion of the total cost is \$4,856,375 which is budgeted in the FY 5/16 City budget using General Funds.

Coordinated With

The RPTA has reviewed and agrees with the terms of the agreement. The City Attorney has also reviewed and concurs with the agreement as to form.