



City Council Report

Date: December 1, 2022
To: City Council
Through: Scott Butler, Deputy City Manager
From: Jodi Sorrell, Transit Services Director
Subject: Intergovernmental Agreement with the Regional Public Transportation Authority (RPTA) for citywide Fixed Route Bus, Dial-a-Ride and Ride Choice services for Fiscal Year 2022/23.
Citywide

Purpose and Recommendation

The purpose of this report is to review the proposed Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) between the City of Mesa and Regional Public Transportation Authority (RPTA) for operation and administration of \$26,862,532 of transit services operated within the city of Mesa. Staff recommends City Council adoption of the attached resolution authorizing the City Manager to execute the amendment with the RPTA. Total cost to the City for the transit services included in the Agreement for FY 2022/23 is \$5,416,552. Mesa's allocation of Public Transportation Funds (PTF) from Proposition 400 will fund \$21,445,980.

Background

The City of Mesa contracts with Valley Metro to operate and administrator fixed-route bus, Paratransit Service, RideChoice and the ADA Platinum Pass services for Mesa residents. The City enters into a new master IGA with RPTA every five years. In the subsequent years, the IGA is amended to adjust the estimated annual costs to provide the services.

Fixed Route Bus Service

There are 19 bus routes that operate within the city of Mesa. These include 14 local fixed-routes, 3 express routes and 2 circulator routes. Over 75 percent of the bus routes are funded by PTF. The remaining routes are funded by City funds (General Fund).

Accessible Transit

The City offers two accessible transit options – paratransit and RideChoice - for qualifying individuals who are disabled or over 65 years of age through Valley Metro.

Valley Metro Paratransit provides door-to-door transportation for the disabled who are unable to navigate fixed route bus service. The system fulfills the City's obligation to provide paratransit service within ¾-mile of fixed route bus service for persons who qualify under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

During the in-person assessments for ADA certification, 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 is a mobility option seniors and persons with disabilities can take advantage of instead of using paratransit. This service offers participating residents more flexibility to go where they wish to go, which also helps to stabilize Mesa's costs for the paratransit service.

Discussion

Fixed Route Bus Service

As outlined in Schedule A of the agreement, Valley Metro will apply \$17,575,248 of regional funding toward the cost of fixed route service in Mesa. The funding will be applied to the following routes: Route 30 (University Drive), 40 (Main Street), Route 45 (Broadway Road), Route 61 (Southern Avenue), 77 (Baseline Road), 96 (Dobson Road), 104, (Alma School 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) and Route 541 (Mesa Express).

The City of Mesa will contribute \$5,416,552 toward the cost of the remaining bus routes operated in the City. Schedule B outlines the City funding for, Route 45 (Broadway Road), Route 61 (one weekday trip on Southern Avenue), Route 120 (Mesa Drive), Route 128 (Stapley Drive), Mesa Downtown BUZZ and Mesa Fiesta BUZZ.

Accessible Transit

The number of paratransit trips taken in Mesa has fallen substantially due to the Coronavirus. Due to the general nature of the trips, paratransit and RideChoice services will see post ridership return sooner than other transit services. In

FY2021/21, the number of paratransit trips taken within Mesa was nearly 53,349. Mesa residents are projected to take approximately 57,100 paratransit trips during FY 2022/23. As identified in the attached agreement in Schedule C, there is no city contribution for paratransit service this year. The estimated cost for this service is paid for from \$2,669,478 in PTF funds.

Schedule D outlines the RideChoice funding sources. During FY2021/22, Mesa provided 53,811 RideChoice trips. Accessible transit ridership continues to slowly rebound from the Coronavirus. For that reason, we are estimating the program to provide 56,000 trips this fiscal year. Our estimated budget for RideChoice is \$1,079,315 and will be paid for by remaining PTF funds allocated for accessible transit. There will be no City contribution for RideChoice this year.

In FY2021/22, RideChoice provided approximately 50 percent of all accessible transit trips within the City.

Alternatives

The City Council could choose not to authorize the City Manager to execute 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 2022/23 is \$26,862,532. The City funded portion of the total cost is \$5,416,552 which is budgeted in the FY 2022/23 City budget using General Funds.

Coordinated With

This Intergovernmental Agreement has coordinated with the City Attorney's Office and the Regional Public Transportation Authority.