



# City Council Report

**Date:** July 3, 2023  
**To:** City Council  
**Through:** Scott Butler, Assistant City Manager  
**From:** Jodi Sorrell, Transit Services Director  
**Subject:** Intergovernmental Agreement with the Regional Public Transportation Authority (RPTA) for citywide Fixed Route Bus, Paratransit and Ride Choice services for Fiscal Year 2023/24.  
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 \$33,152,095 of transit services operated within the city of Mesa. Staff recommends the 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 2023/24 is \$4,048,060. Mesa's allocation of Public Transportation Funds (PTF) from Proposition 400 will fund \$29,104,035.

## 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 20 bus routes that operate within the city of Mesa. These include 15 local fixed-routes, 3 express routes and 2 circulator routes. Over 80 percent of the bus routes are funded by PTF. The remaining routes are funded by City funds (General Fund).

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## 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 ¼-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

In October, Route 48 (48<sup>th</sup> Street) will be extended east on Rio Salado from the Tempe Marketplace to Riverview. This route will be funded using Mesa's allocation of Public Transportation Funds (PTF) from Proposition 400. As outlined in Schedule A of the agreement, Valley Metro will apply \$23,403,705 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 48 (48<sup>th</sup> Street), 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) and Route 535 (Northeast Mesa/Downtown Express).

The City of Mesa will contribute \$4,048,060 toward the cost of the remaining bus routes operated in the City. Schedule B outlines the City funding for, 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

During the FY2023/24 fiscal year, Valley Metro will implement changes to the structure of the paratransit and RideChoice services. The most significant is having once centralized call center for both services. Residents will be able to call one number to book trips on these services. This will allow operators to assist residents in booking the best service for their transportation needs.

Mesa residents are projected to take approximately 58,800 paratransit trips during FY 2023/24. 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 \$3,802,691 and will be funded by PTF funds.

Schedule D outlines the RideChoice funding sources. We are estimating the program to provide 62,000 trips this fiscal year. Our estimated budget for RideChoice is \$1,897,639 and will be paid for by remaining PTF funds allocated for accessible transit. There will be no City contribution for RideChoice this year.

In FY2022/23, 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 2023/24 is \$33,152,095. The City funded portion of the total cost is \$4,048,060 which is budgeted in the FY 2023/24 City budget using General Funds.

### **Coordinated With**

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