



# City Council Report

**Date:** October 5, 2020  
**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, Ride Choice and ADA Platinum Pass services for Fiscal Year 2020/21. 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 \$23,289,777 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 2020/21 is \$3,088,269. Mesa's allocation of Public Transportation Funds (PTF) and grants will fund \$11,487,494 and Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act (CARES Act) will fund the remaining \$8,714,014.

## 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 15 local fixed-routes, 4 express routes and a downtown circulator route. Over 80 percent of the bus routes are funded by PTF. The remaining routes are funded by City funds (General Fund).

### Paratransit Service

Valley Metro Paratransit (formerly known as Dial-a-Ride) 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 3/4-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

RideChoice is a mobility option seniors and persons with disabilities can take advantage of instead of using paratransit. 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 Paratransit service.

### **Discussion**

In March 2020, Congress passed the CARES Act. It included \$25B in much needed support for transit systems across the country to ensure service availability for transit dependent essential workers get to their jobs and residents get to medical appointments. Mesa will receive \$8,714,014 for fixed-route, paratransit and RideChoice services. This funding represents a General Fund savings of \$2,978,119 for Fiscal Year 2020/21.

	<b>General Fund</b>	<b>PTF</b>	<b>CARES Act</b>
Fixed-Route	\$ 2,786,753	\$ 7,727,489	\$ 7,783,627
Paratransit	\$ -	\$ 3,358,256	\$ 733,184
RideChoice	\$ 301,516	\$ 401,749	\$ 197,203
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 3,088,269</b>	<b>\$ 11,487,494</b>	<b>\$ 8,714,014</b>

#### Fixed Route Bus Service

As outlined in Schedule A of the agreement, Valley Metro will apply \$7,727,489 of regional funding and \$5,735,895 in CARES Act 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), 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 \$2,786,753 toward the cost of the remaining bus routes operated in the City. In addition, \$2,047,732 in CARES Act funding will offset operations and maintenance for locally funded bus routes. Schedule B outlines the City funding for Route 30 (University Drive), Route 45 (Broadway Road), Route 61 (one weekday trip on Southern Avenue), Route 120 (Mesa Drive), Route 128 (Stapley Drive), and the Mesa Downtown BUZZ.

### Paratransit Service

In July 2019, the city of Mesa redefined the paratransit service area to comply with the Federal minimum requirement of providing paratransit service within three quarters of a mile of bus routes or rail stations. As a result of this change, the number of paratransit trips taken has decreased. Pre-pandemic, paratransit was providing approximately 45 percent of all accessible transit service trips taken. Due to the pandemic, the number of paratransit trips taken within Mesa has decreased by approximately 60 percent. Mesa residents were projected to take approximately 92,000 paratransit trips during FY 2020/21. As identified in the attached agreement in Schedule C, there is no city contribution for paratransit service this year. Our PTF allocation fully funds the \$3,843,530 estimated cost for this service.

### RideChoice

Schedule D outlines the RideChoice funding sources. The total estimated costs for FY 2020/21 are \$703,265 to provide 72,000 trips. The City's estimated contribution to this program is \$301,516. The remaining estimated costs will be offset by fare revenue, PTF and CARES Act funding.

RideChoice provides approximately 55 percent of all accessible transit trips within the City. This fiscal year, the RideChoice budget is down 67 percent from last year due to the pandemic impacting ridership and the CARES Act funding.

### **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 2020/21 is \$23,289,777. The City funded portion of the total cost is \$3,088,269 which is budgeted in the FY 2020/21 City budget using General Funds.

### **Coordinated With**

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