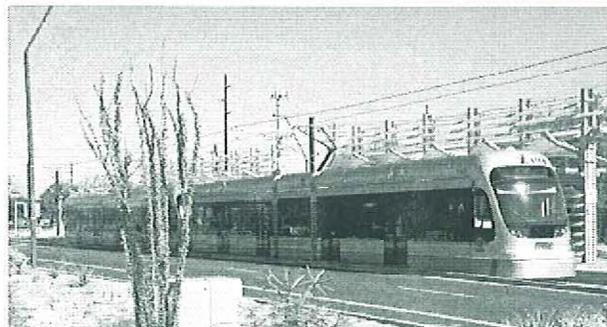


AGENDA ITEM 5

**FY 2011 Public Meeting Results
Regarding Potential Service Changes**





MEMO RAIL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

AGENDA ITEM 5

To: Chairman Cavazos and Members of the Rail Management Committee

Through: Stephen R. Banta, Chief Executive Officer

From: John Farry, Director of Community and Government Relations

Date: April 28, 2010

Re: Fiscal Year 2011 Public Meeting Results Regarding Potential Service Changes

PURPOSE

The purpose of this item is to provide a summary of input from the two public meetings and comments received via email on potential METRO Fiscal Year (FY) 2011 service change options.

BACKGROUND

As a result of the economic downturn and a decline in available city funding for transit operations, METRO is considering service change options for the FY 2010-11. Seven possible service change options were developed by METRO staff. These options were developed following internal cost-cutting efforts and with the customer in mind. Attached you will find a summary of the input received from the public input opportunities.

To understand customer priorities, METRO staff conducted two public meetings – one in Phoenix and another in the East Valley. A presentation providing an outlook on the national and local transit climate and discussing the service change options was delivered, followed by a question-and-answer period. Surveys were handed out and completed by many of those in attendance. The public was also offered information online, through printed material, the news media, and the ability to comment electronically via email.

METRO received 26 completed surveys and 42 emailed comments. The survey and email responses were consistent.

The service change options that create the least impact or received the greatest support are:

- Reducing peak service frequency from 10 to 12 minutes.
- Shortening the peak service period by two hours.
- Adding holiday service level to five additional days.

Rail Management Committee Memo
April 28, 2010
Page 2

The service change options that create the most impact or received the greatest opposition are:

- Shortening service day by two hours, an hour on each end.
- Eliminating late-night service on Friday nights/Saturday mornings.
- Eliminating late-night service on Saturday nights/Sunday mornings.

RECOMMENDATION

This item is for information only.



FY 2011 Service Change Public Involvement Summary

Public Meetings

METRO conducted two public outreach meetings in March 2010 to review the service change options with riders and understand their priorities via a meeting survey. The meetings were conducted on Tuesdays, March 2 and 9, from 6 – 8 p.m. at light-rail accessible locations in Phoenix and the East Valley.

Changes to the operation are being considered to help address a decline in sales tax revenue as a result of the slow economy. Sales tax revenue is the largest funding source for transit service Valleywide; fare revenue supports the balance of operating costs at approximately 25 percent

March 2, 2010 meeting | METRO Boardroom, Phoenix

Twenty citizens were in attendance ranging from experienced to new transit users.

Staff in attendance:

Steve Banta	Ray Abraham
Hillary Foose	John McCormack
John Farry	Kristin Roberts
Coral Balcazar	

March 9, 2010 meeting | Tempe Transportation Center, Tempe

Twenty-two citizens were in attendance, also ranging in transit use experience. More student participation was had at this meeting.

Staff in attendance:

Steve Banta	Jay Harper
Hillary Foose	Ray Abraham
John Farry	John McCormack
Andrea Libey	Wulf Grote
Coral Balcazar	Sue Taaffe (Tempe)
Jodi Sorrell (Mesa)	

In addition to capturing their insights on possible service changes, the meeting survey asked questions regarding the attendees' use of the light rail system.

Forty-four percent of respondents use light rail as their primary mode of transit, followed by local bus and a combination of light rail and local bus.

ATTACHMENT B

Sixty-three percent of survey respondents use light rail more than three days a week; three to five days being the majority.

Thirty-eight percent of survey respondents ride light rail for primarily work purposes followed by 33 percent who use the system for entertainment. A handful of respondents selected “school” and “other” as their primary purpose for using light rail. “Other” was noted as going to the supermarket, bank and other errands.

Meeting Notification Method

Multiple efforts were undertaken to notify the public of the opportunity for public comment including:

- Production of printed piece detailing meetings and other ways to comment distributed inside the vehicle.
- Creation of a webpage dedicated to providing service change information in detail.
- Communication through METRO Facebook and Twitter.
- Sending of broadcast emails.
- Sending of a news release to media.
- Communication through partners including member cities, RPTA, Friends of Transit and ASU.

Meeting Agenda

6 – 6:15 p.m.	Open house; surveys handed out.
6:15 – 6:20 p.m.	H. Foose conducts welcome, reviews housekeeping items, initiates PowerPoint presentation.
6:20 – 6:40 p.m.	S. Banta discusses transit climate, service change options and rationale and next steps.
6:40 – 7:10 p.m.	Q&A moderated by H. Foose; staff provides answers and listens to comments/suggestions.
7:10 – 8 p.m.	Open house; surveys collected; staff discusses one-on-one with attendees.

ATTACHMENT B

Survey Results

Attendees were asked to complete a survey to understand which of the seven service change options had the most to least impact on their lives. The 26 completed surveys have been tallied to give an understanding of rider priorities.

Note: For the purposes of this document only, the options are numbered to allow for easy reference.

Service Change Option	No Impact	Some Impact	Significant Impact
1. Reduce peak service frequency from 10 to 12 minutes	65%	23%	12%
2. Reduce peak service frequency from 10 to 15 minutes	14%	50%	35%
3. Shorten the peak service period by two hours	42%	39%	19%
4. Shorten the service day by two hours	15%	27%	58%
5. Eliminate late-night service on Fridays	15%	31%	54%
6. Eliminate late-night service on Saturdays	15%	31%	54%
7. Implement holiday service on five more days	42%	50%	8%

The top three service change options that create the MOST impact for customers are items 4 (service day) and 5 and 6 (late-night weekend service) respectively. The options that create the LEAST impact are items 1 (12-minute peak frequency), 7 (additional holidays) and 3 (shorten peak period).

Online Feedback

In addition to the public meetings, METRO provided citizens the opportunity throughout the month of March 2010 to comment on the service changes options electronically. METRO received 42 comments via email.

Online Results

The feelings expressed through the online feedback align with those from the meeting surveys.

The top two options that create the MOST impact for customers are items 5 and 6 (late-night weekend service). From these respondents, there was a split between those customers that use the late-night weekend service and those who do not use it directly, but feel it is a positive generator for the cities.

The top two options that create the LEAST impact are items 1 (12-minute peak frequency) and 7 (additional holidays).

Sampling of Comments

These comments are a sampling of those received via the meeting surveys and email. They are representative of general rider sentiment.

Re: Service Changes

- If any service cuts have to happen, I think it makes sense to reduce to every 12 minutes, but not every 15. Five minutes added to the frequency would be noticed.
- Maintaining late-night weekend service is very important.
- I am strongly against shortening the service day; it would impact people's ability to get to work.
- Instead of eliminating late-night service altogether, could service be reduced slightly? For example, to 1 a.m. rather than 3 a.m.
- Consider altering the frequency of late-night weekend service to every 30 minutes and use smaller trains.
- Cutting service is a better option than raising fares.
- As you reduce service and/or increase fares, the riding public will leave transit and go back to their cars.
- During rush hours, the trains are really busy; service reductions would make them more busy. Consider the number of trains used when service changes take effect. Single trains should only be reserved for truly off-peak periods.
- Consider running more service/greater capacity during peak times of day, including when schools let out (i.e. Central High School).

Miscellaneous

- Why are not all agencies present? Rather than making piecemeal cuts, need to merge agencies. We need a regional system, not one where each element is managed independently.
- Fare hikes are unpopular, but sometimes it is better to act unpopular than imprudently.
- Need to find a stable revenue source that should come from general funds.
- Consider re-negotiating with private contractors to achieve lower costs.
- Consider other, non-operational alternatives to bring in revenue, like advertising sales, naming rights and permit parking.

ATTACHMENT B

FY11 Service Change Public Meeting Summary
Page 5 of 5

- More fare enforcement needed – you are losing money.
- Why so much waste on paper passes? The system should be using rechargeable passes.
- Need more retail locations and vending machines for purchase of fare media.
- All students, no matter their age, should qualify for a reduced fare.
- Consider instituting a citizen volunteer program to help educate passengers and report issues.
- Trains need to be timed better with the airport shuttle.
- Consider using the air-conditioning in the trains more conservatively.
- Consider instituting a “night owl” ticket to support late-night service (\$2.00 charge). Or allow the “bars” benefiting from the late-night hours to sponsor the service.
- Consider opening up the Platinum Pass program to individuals.
- Consider a family pass. With the recent fare increase, it’s less affordable for families to ride.