EYE ON TRANSIT

NORTHWEST LIGHT RAIL EXTENSION OPENS

Community members celebrate arrival of new miles in Phoenix.

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Welcome to the second Eye On Transit (EOT) edition. Thank you to those who contributed news content this past quarter.

Please continue sending us ideas, stories or updates you would like to highlight in EOT. We are looking for any news that affects your city, the Valley and most importantly, the riders.

Send content by July 8 to Brenda Yanez brenda.yanez@phoenix.gov. Include a brief summary and an image. If you send a photo, please identify the subjects and the photographer. Thanks to Valley Metro and Leland Gebhardt for many of the photos in this edition.

After you have taken some time to check out our April 2016 issue, please let us know your thoughts on what you would like to see in the future. We truly want EOT to be of benefit!

We are excited for the start of the upcoming Transportation 2050 improvements and to share the transit successes happening throughout the entire region.

Maria Hyatt, Phoenix Public Transit Department Director
Northwest Light Rail Extension opens with a community fair celebration

Transit users rode the new Northwest Light Rail Extension service March 19 during the official opening of the new segment, which launched with a World’s Fair-themed community event.

More than 2,100 riders received free commemorative passes to ride the light rail and bus for the day. Many more community members attended.

The $327 million project started Jan. 2013 after leaders set aside Phoenix and Prop. 400 funds to further the project and open it as soon as possible. Phoenix Mayor Greg Stanton said the new 3.2 miles of service on 19th Avenue will connect more Phoenix residents to jobs, education and opportunity, as well as
Northwest Light Rail Extension...roll the videos

The first ride.

Riding the new light rail extension.

Celebrating new community connections.
Public Transit staff volunteered their time to activate 3,500 passes for the Northwest Light Rail Extension community fair and official opening of the light rail.

The free passes were handed out during the community recognition event for the 19th Avenue stations at Montebello, Glendale, Northern, Dunlap avenues as well as the bus.

Volunteers activate NW Light Rail Extension commemorative passes
April is here and in our transit-centric world, that means one thing - regional service updates.

A slate of new routes and frequency improvements across the Valley start April 25, 2016.

City of Phoenix bus and Dial-a-Ride enhancements will help riders connect to destinations more efficiently.

PHOENIX

- **Route 1** – Washington/Jefferson
  
  Eastbound passengers board at Central Avenue and Van Buren Street.

- **Route 10** – Roosevelt/32nd Street
  
  In coordination with the new Route 32 in Phoenix, the route operates from Central Avenue and Van Buren Street to Roosevelt Street and 32nd Street.

PHOENIX

- **Route 19** – 19th Avenue
  
  Weekday frequency increased to 15 minute off-peak intervals between Union Hills Drive and Jefferson Street.

VALLEY METRO

- **Valleymetro Rail**
  
  In Phoenix, extend light rail from Montebello to Dunlap Ave. along 19th Ave. Service started March 19, 2016.

- **Route 72**
  
  In Scottsdale and Tempe, increase frequency to 10 minutes from Camelback Road to Tempe Transportation Center.

- **Route 81**
  
  In Scottsdale, modify the north end of the route to travel on Pima Road.

LOOKING AHEAD

In October, pending City Council approval, Phoenix bus and Dial-a-Ride service is matching light rail hours in two steps.

The first step begins October 2016 and the second in April 2017. In total, Phoenix will add more than 5 million miles of service to help passengers get to school, jobs and their desired major destinations.
The Phoenix Public Transit Department has ordered 120 new buses to serve the city’s local routes, the first order for new 40-foot buses since late 2013.

The buses, built in California by the Gillig Corporation, use compressed natural gas (CNG) and have a fuel range of at least 400 miles, which means most of the new buses would not require daily refueling. Passengers also benefit from an enhanced air conditioning system that includes two units to cool the bus both front and back simultaneously.

Each Gillig bus costs $520,000 and is paid for with both federal and county (Prop. 400) funds. This investment means less repair and maintenance, and the city has a more efficient fleet to service those that depend on daily bus service.

Five to eight buses arrive each week now through July, and as they do city staff will inspect each one to ensure all equipment is in working order, as well as install the farebox.
New CAD/AVL bus system in the works

We all know software or updates on our phones and computers may be outdated in just a few years, sometimes even months. Imagine keeping your current computer or phone for more than a decade.

Phoenix buses have a Computer-Aided Dispatch Automated Vehicle Location system that is 14 years old. That’s quite the return on the initial investment.

A request for a proposal (RFP) went out in March 2016, which means in about two years we anticipate getting a new CAD/AVL system for the region's buses.

The CAD/AVL system allows us to know the location of each vehicle and how each bus route performs according to schedule.

Today, the company that manufactures the system no longer supports the technology. Updates and fixes are time-consuming and costly.

New features will include additional vehicle performance capabilities.

One example – if something is wrong with the engine, the driver could call the Operations Control Center (OCC) and the OCC would have access (via installed computer software) to view the vehicle’s internal parts and assist in diagnosing the issue.
Valley Metro and member cities collaborated to gather travel behavior data from transit users in the new Valley Metro 2014-2015 Origin and Destination Study. The results help Valley Metro and member cities have access to accurate information on how passengers use the transit system.

This allows regional planners to better comprehend needs and travel patterns of transit users. The study also meets Federal Transit Administration (FTA) requirements of a Before and After study for the Central Mesa Extension. The number of completed surveys including both bus (12,453) and light rail passengers (9,350) was 21,803.
In February 2016 the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) officially launched a new grants management system called Transit Award Management System (TrAMS) formerly known as TEAM. It was created to provide greater efficiency, transparency and accountability in the award and management of federal grants.

Several city of Phoenix Public Transit staff attended the training webinars during Feb. and March. Staff learned how to use the new system to continue providing region-wide high quality grant management services.

For more information visit: fta.dot.gov/funding
The city of Phoenix Public Transit staff issued purchase orders for 39 new vehicles on behalf of subrecipients in February 2016. These are part of the FTA Section 5310 programs that provide services for elderly people and people with disabilities and special needs.

Vehicles should be here in approximately three to four months and the order comprises several types including Ford Transits, Braun Entervans and Chevy Express passenger vans.
The recently-passed five-year federal surface transportation authorization law, Fixing America’s Surface Transportation (FAST) Act includes policy changes to highways, transit and federal passenger rail programs.

In transit specifically, formula and bus grants will have an $800 million increase in the first year and $200 million on top of that every year after.

Within that:

- $104 million average annual increase for Urbanized Area Formula grants (5340 funding is combined with 5307)
- Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities Program – $274 million annual average
- $28 million for Research & Development Demonstration and Deployment grant
- State of Good Repair- first year is $340 million increase and more than $40 million on top of that every year
- Bus and Bus Facility Formula program - $355 million annual average
- Bus and Bus Facility Discretionary program – approximately $300 million annual average
- Bus and Bus Facility No/Low Emissions Discretionary program - $55 million annually
Transit Asset Management Plan at work

A much-needed major renovation began at the South Transit Facility in fall 2015. The South Transit Facility was built in 1982, and houses and supports 200 buses.

The facility is used to maintain the Phoenix bus fleet, which services the central corridor of the region.

Upgrades for this 20-month project include (check out pictures to the right):

- Roofing replacements
- Upgrade/replacements for mechanical and electrical equipment
- Replace fire alarm and methane detection systems
- New entrance, perimeter fence improvements, guardhouse and exit gates to improve security of facility
- Replacement of underground storage tanks
- New Liquefied Compressed Natural gas (LCNG) system
- New bus washers

The Federal Transit Administration requires each transit agency to inventory transit assets (such as buses, transit facilities and equipment), provide preventive maintenance information and report on intentions to upkeep and extend the life expectancy of assets.

TAMPs, according to the U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration, are an important management tool that connect processes and stakeholders to
Thanks to city of Phoenix Public Transit Department Civil Rights and Operations staff and Valley Metro efforts, transit contractors and contract administrator staff received professional training for Title VI/ADA Customer Complaint Investigations.

The training in Phoenix on April 7 included information such as how to conduct a proper civil rights complaint investigation. The goal was to improve investigator consistency and better address customer discrimination claims.

The collaboration between the two organizations also will produce a similar training for Phoenix Public Transit Department and Valley Metro staff April 20.
Transit agencies receiving funds from FTA must comply with the Department of Transportation (DOT) Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) regulations. Those involved in the application and administration of the DBE requirements should understand best practices to encourage more participation by DBEs.

The three-day National Transit Institute DBE training held in March focused on providing working knowledge of the U.S. DOT DBE regulations. Attendees were given the necessary tools to design and implement a DBE program in their organization.

Other topics included setting annual DBE goals, accounting for and reporting DBE participation and disputes, and appeals under DBE requirements.

For more information contact city of Phoenix Regional DBE/EEO Compliance Specialist Susan Sweeden at 602-534-2667 or susan.sweeden@phoenix.gov.
Valley transit leaders kick off conference

SWATA (South West Transit Association) Freedom through Transit conference attendees heard the latest news in transportation from transit leaders including city of Phoenix Public Transit Director Maria Hyatt, Valley Metro’s Interim CEO Scott Smith, Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG) Transportation Director Eric Anderson and Mesa Mayor John Giles.

Highlights from the event included a discussion panel where leaders talked about upcoming plans and goals for Transportation 2050.

Attendees also had access to the latest transit technology and products.

Transportation expo a success

Leaders from the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) city of Phoenix, Valley Metro and Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport networked and conducted presentations to educate Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) and Small Business Transportation expo attendees about opportunities available in the industry.

Highlights included

- Transportation 2050 overview by city of Phoenix Public Transit Director Maria Hyatt and city of Phoenix Engineer / Assistant Director of Street Transportation Kini Knudson
- A presentation by Valley Metro Director of Planning and Accessible Transit Wulf Grote and Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport Special Projects

Check out a recap and more pictures: adotdbeexpo.com
The Friends of Transit 14th Annual Conference on Feb. 19 gave attendees a unique perspective on the future of transit. Arizona State University students presented their vision for transit in a Reimagining Transportation contest. Audience members voted on the best presentations and winners received bragging rights, money and the opportunity to network with the Valley’s top transit leaders.

Additionally, conference participants heard from Mayor Greg Stanton, Phoenix Councilwoman Kate Gallego, who received the Friends of Transit Person of the Year award, and author and former transit director Gabe Klein.
Phoenix attends Central City South Community Fair

Several city of Phoenix departments including Housing, Parks and Recreation, Fire, Police, Phoenix Workforce Connection and Public Transit assisted in hosting the Annual Central City South Community Connection Fair on March 5.

The free, non-profit Connecting All Ages-themed fair had more than 500 attendees at Matthew Henson Park and featured information booths (Public Transit even brought a new bus), entertainment, door prizes, a Kids Zone and free refreshments.

Phoenix hosts first NACTO workshop

Phoenix hosted its first National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) design workshop March 4. The training included a morning seminar and an afternoon design challenge.

NACTO Director of Designing Cities Initiative Matthew Roe presented on topics that focused on urban-friendly transit prioritization techniques, on-street stop and station design, efficient and safe intersections, bus rapid transit and walking and bikeway design.

City of Phoenix staff
Phoenix invited to present Transportation 2050 plans at Women in Transportation Seminar (WTS)

City of Phoenix leaders presented on the progress of the Transportation 2050 plan at the T2050 WTS Advancing Women in Transportation luncheon March 3.

Public Transit Director Maria Hyatt and City Engineer Kini Knudson spoke to more than 50 attendees about the plan components including street and facility improvements, the expansion of light rail transit and enhanced bus and Dial-a-Ride service.

Valley Metro receives 2016 Innovative Transportation Solutions award

Valley Metro, in partnership with the cities of Mesa and Phoenix, were presented with the WTS Innovative Transportation Solutions Award for their business assistance programs during the construction of the Central Mesa and Northwest Phoenix extensions March 12.

The annual event, which occurred at the Desert Botanical Garden, included more than 170 individuals from the local and regional transportation industry.

The WTS Metro Phoenix Scholarship and Awards Ceremony is conducted annually to award scholarships to young women in the STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) fields and give special recognition to individuals and organizations making an impact in the transportation industry.
Phoenix transportation plan outreach receives award

The city of Phoenix Public Transit and Street Transportation departments along with Arizona State University received an AzTA/ADOT Excellence Award for “Outstanding Transit Innovation” at the 29th annual Transit Conference held April 10-13 in Flagstaff.