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CITY COUNCIL REPORT

CITY CLERK DEPT.

POLICY AGENDA

2016 JAN 22 AM 7:15
TO:

Mario Paniagua
Deputy City Manager

AGENDA DATE: January 26, 2016

FROM: Albert Santana
Assistant to the City Manager

ITEM: 2A

SUBJECT: REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN – HIGH CAPACITY TRANSIT
CORRIDOR SCHEDULE CHANGES

This report requests City Council approval of the Phoenix Transportation 2050 High Capacity Transit (HCT) corridor schedule for incorporation into the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP).

THE ISSUE

Transportation 2050 is Phoenix’s 35-year, multi-modal transportation plan recommended by citizens, adopted by the City Council and approved by Phoenix voters in August 2015. The plan invests in Phoenix’s immediate and long-term transportation needs, including street improvements, expanded bus service, enhanced Dial-a-Ride service, new light rail miles, bicycle lanes and sidewalks. Transportation 2050 ensures Phoenix residents have transportation options to meet their needs. It is also a critically-important component to furthering the City’s economic development, sustainability and accessibility goals. Funding for the plan includes local sales tax and transit fare revenue, which will leverage federal grants and other regional funds.

The passage of Transportation 2050 provides an ability to accelerate expansion of the region’s HCT system previously approved by voters in 2000 (Transit 2000) and again in 2004 (Proposition 400). Additional HCT corridors were approved by Phoenix voters with Phoenix Transportation 2050.

The table below illustrates the original, existing and proposed completion dates as a part of implementing Phoenix Transportation 2050.

Corridor	Original	Existing	Proposed Completion
Northwest Phase II	2012	2026	2023
West Phoenix/Glendale	2017	2026	2026
Capitol/I-10 West Phase I	2019	2023	2023
Capitol/I-10 West Phase II	2019	2023	2030
Northeast Phoenix	2025	2034	2034
South Central	-	2034	2023
ASU West	-	-	2044

The recommended corridor schedule changes are necessary for a variety of reasons, described below.

Northwest Extension Phase II: The second phase of this corridor is proposed to be advanced from 2026 to 2023. The City of Phoenix and Valley Metro conducted a Project Definition Study to assess the feasibility of extending the light rail from Dunlap Avenue and 19th Avenue to the vicinity of Metrocenter Mall. Given the significant regional destination and potential for ridership, continued development and redevelopment in the area, the corridor is recommended to be accelerated.

South Central Extension: This corridor is proposed to be advanced from 2034 to 2023. The City of Phoenix and Valley Metro completed a corridor study to identify a preferred alignment and technology in South Phoenix, which were approved by the City Council in 2013. In 2014, the City of Phoenix received a U.S. Department of Transportation Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) grant to complete the environmental review process and conceptual engineering. Subsequently, the South Central project received national attention by being recognized as one of seven transportation projects included in USDOT Secretary Foxx's LadderS^{TEP} Transportation Empowerment program. This program provides USDOT support in advancing transportation projects that can empower, connect, and revitalize communities. Given the significant transit ridership in this corridor, revitalization and development opportunities, growing regional and national interest and the project's ability to compete for federal funding under the existing FTA guidance, this corridor is also recommended to be accelerated.

Capitol/I-10 West: Staff recommends the first phase of this corridor remain in 2023. The second phase of this corridor is proposed to be moved out from 2023 to 2030. City of Phoenix and Valley Metro completed a corridor study to identify a preferred alignment and transit technology in the west Phoenix area. The staff recommendations were approved by the City Council in 2012. Given the competitiveness for federal funding for large projects such as this corridor, staff conducted additional analysis and corridor alternatives to provide options to keep the project moving forward. The corridor was divided into two sections that have different characteristics in terms of alignment opportunities, station needs, key types of impact, and transit service needs. The Downtown Section runs from Downtown Phoenix to the Capitol, east of I-17, and the Mainline Section is west of I-17 to 79th Avenue. Given the unique mobility needs in the corridor, the project is recommended to be completed in two phases, with the Downtown section proposed for Phase I. Completion of this segment will improve transit access to the State Capitol, which is a growing employment center with development opportunities. Coordinating construction timing of both Capitol-I-10 West and the South Central extensions will help minimize the amount of light rail construction in the downtown area. With the acceleration of Phase II of the Northwest Extension by three years and the South Central Extension by 11 years, Phase II of the Capitol/I-10 Extension is recommended to begin revenue service in 2030. This will also allow staff to work with the region on how to best implement light rail extensions within freeway corridors.

A map showing the High Capacity Transit/Light Rail Transit (LRT) corridors, including the existing and proposed completion dates, in calendar years, is shown in Figure 1.

OTHER INFORMATION

The HCT program will be implemented by the City of Phoenix working through Valley Metro for many of the projects. These projects will be constructed with funds from Transportation 2050, regional and federal sources. Staff will regularly return to the Citizens Transportation Commission, T&I Subcommittee and City Council as these projects progress through planning, design and construction phases.

On January 7, 2016, the Citizens Transportation Commission recommended approval of this item by a vote of 13-2.

On January 12, 2016, the Transportation and Infrastructure Subcommittee unanimously recommended approval of this item.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff requests the City Council approve the Phoenix Transportation 2050 HCT corridor schedule and its incorporation into the RTP.

Figure 1: Proposed HCT Corridor Prioritization

