

City of Glendale

5850 West Glendale Avenue
Glendale, AZ 85301



Meeting Minutes - Final

Tuesday, September 15, 2015

1:30 PM

Workshop

Council Chambers - Room B3

City Council Workshop

Mayor Jerry Weiers

Vice Mayor Ian Hugh

Councilmember Jamie Aldama

Councilmember Samuel Chavira

Councilmember Gary Sherwood

Councilmember Lauren Tolmachoff

Councilmember Bart Turner

CALL TO ORDER

Present 7 - Mayor Jerry Weiers, Vice Mayor Ian Hugh, Councilmember Jamie Aldama, Councilmember Samuel Chavira, Councilmember Gary Sherwood, Councilmember Lauren Tolmachoff, and Councilmember Bart Turner

Also present were Richard Bowers, Acting City Manager; Jennifer Campbell, Assistant City Manager; Tom Duensing, Interim Assistant City Manager; Michael Bailey, City Attorney; and Pamela Hanna, City Clerk.

Mayor Weiers called the City Council Workshop to order.

Mayor Weiers then recessed the meeting to move into a Special Voting Meeting of the City Council.

The Workshop Session was resumed.

WORKSHOP SESSION

1. [15-584](#) WEST PHOENIX/CENTRAL GLENDALE HIGH CAPACITY TRANSIT STUDY UPDATE
Staff Contact: Jack Friedline, Director, Public Works
Staff Presenter: Debbie Albert, Interim Deputy Director, Public Works
Guest Presenter: Mr. Steve Banta, Chief Executive Officer, Valley Metro
Guest Presenter: Mr. Wulf Grote, Director of Planning and Development, Valley Metro

Ms. Albert explained this item was an update on the West Phoenix/Central Glendale High Capacity Transit Study. She introduced Steve Banta, the CEO of Valley Metro, and Jennifer Pyne, the Transit Study's Project Manager. She brought attention to a large group of citizens, business owners and community members, the Downtown Community Working Group, who has been working with staff and Valley Metro. They have met five times since June and she thanked them for their interest and participation.

Mr. Banta said they are working to connect all parts of the valley with one another and providing opportunities for economic development. He said there has been an \$8.2 billion dollar return on their initial \$1.4 billion investment in the transit system valley wide. He said this has created jobs, allowed people to get to and from work, and provided new mobility options. He said light rail ridership has been very good. He explained 35 percent of the light rail riders choose to ride even though they have their own vehicles. He looked forward to expanding into the Glendale area. He said the Phoenix transportation plan had included a 0.4 cent sales tax that expires on 2020. He said the recent voter approval of Phoenix 2050 provides an extension and increase in that tax for expansion of the Phoenix transit system for another 35 years. This includes funding for bus, rail and street improvements and will allow them to continue the momentum that has

been begun. Mr. Banta explained the Central Mesa Extension opened on August 22, 2015 and was the first extension to the original 20 mile light rail system that opened in 2008. He said they are earning \$8 for every \$1 invested in public transit, which is a great return on the investment.

Ms. Pyne spoke about the corridor alignments they are looking at for the Glendale area. She said the service area currently under review is from 19th Avenue to 67th Avenue, from Northern to Camelback, to connect downtown Glendale to the high capacity transit system already in place on 19th Avenue. She said they are also keeping in mind future expansions west out to Westgate and the stadium. In the planning study, they are looking at what type of transit will best serve the area and the best place to locate the route. Since 2013, they have narrowed down the routes to three options, with two different types of transit. They are also taking a detailed look at downtown Glendale.

Ms. Pyne said they expect to conclude the study by the end of the year and will come back before Council early next year. They are looking at both light rail and bus rapid transit options. Both would operate in an exclusive travel way to increase speeds and stops would be located about ½ to 1 mile apart. She said light rail has a higher passenger capacity, but does come with a higher capital cost. She said another advantage for light rail is that it has been shown to support economic development objectives. Ms. Pyne said they are looking at three routes. The first route is straight across Glendale Avenue. Another option would run on Camelback, north to 43rd Avenue and then on Glendale Avenue to reach downtown Glendale. The final option would utilize Camelback but come up Grand Avenue and 51st Avenue to reach downtown Glendale. Some key study considerations include ridership potential, travel reliability and travel time, capital cost and cost-effectiveness, traffic impacts, community impacts, consistency with local plans, ability to extend further west in the future, public input, and federal evaluation criteria and funding feasibility. Ms. Pyne said they will be back later in the year to discuss a recommendation. She said the Camelback options are showing the most ridership benefits. The Camelback, 43rd Avenue and Glendale Avenue option has a lot of interest from the community for revitalization of the area. For the longer Camelback routes, the ridership benefits increase faster than costs do when comparing alternatives. On the Camelback/Grand Avenue option, the portion along 51st Avenue is located in a more residential area than the other alternatives. She also explained the Grand Avenue segment of this option is not very pedestrian friendly.

Ms. Pyne next discussed the two different transit types and said one of the biggest differences between them is in the ridership estimates. The bus options show about half the ridership potential of light rail. Some of the reasons may be with light rail; you have the option for a one seat ride from downtown Glendale to some other regional employment or other destinations. She said light rail also has an attractiveness that a bus doesn't always have. She said investors and developers have responded more favorably to the permanence of the light rail investment. She did say that the bus project comes with lower capital costs, as well as being an easier construction project.

Ms. Pyne discussed compatibility of local plans and said they have worked very closely with Glendale staff in the Economic Development and Planning Departments. She said

the Centerline Overlay District is aligned with some of the effects they see from this type of high capacity transit project. These projects are compatible with and may attract office and retail projects and promote higher occupancy rates. The Downtown Glendale Community Working Group has been established and the purpose of this group is to provide an advisory recommendation for a downtown route and type of transit. There was an application process to identify group members in April and May 2015. About 48 applications were received and all applicants were accepted and placed in the group. She indicated that one applicant elected to not participate. The group members have been very engaged in the process. Meetings are scheduled to conclude in October. The group has worked to develop evaluation criteria to be used to assess the options. Some of the key discussion issues include the impacts on small businesses, the unique character of the downtown area, impacts on historic properties, and leveraging investment to achieve economic revitalization goals.

Ms. Pyne provided a map showing all the downtown route options that were available. She said there has been generally positive feedback on Glenn Drive or Lamar as route options. They have received mixed feedback on a Glendale Avenue route, with concern about the potential for impacts in the heart of downtown. There is less interest in options north of Paltaire, and there is a high level of interest in continuing this project west to Westgate or other destinations. She explained there have been about 88 total public outreach activities so far, which includes Community Working Group meetings, presentations and public events. The CWG also conducted a research tour to the Central Mesa Extension last week. Additionally, research trips are planned in the future to Portland, Oregon and Dallas, Texas to look at settings that are similar to the Glendale area. Ms. Pyne said next steps will be completing the technical analysis, receiving the Downtown Glendale Community Working Group advisory recommendation, obtaining and incorporating additional public input, including public meetings in November 2015, and developing a recommended alternative route and technology, for Council action in early 2016.

Mayor Weiers said keep up the good work.

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

Acting City Manager Bowers had nothing to report.

CITY ATTORNEY'S REPORT

City Attorney Bailey had nothing to report.

COUNCIL ITEMS OF SPECIAL INTEREST

Councilmember Aldama said staff has been working to have the vacant properties in the district cleaned up. They have done a fantastic job and he is asking staff to look at a broader plan to address these properties, specifically in the Ocotillo District, but citywide. He would like to see staff make a plan with those property owners to get those properties cleaned up.

Vice Mayor Hugh asked staff to take a look at the civic center and try and find ways to get more use out of the facility. He asked that staff also take a look at the fees to try and make it more competitive in the marketplace.

MOTION TO GO INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION

It was moved by Councilmember Tolmachoff, seconded by Councilmember Chavira, to enter into Executive Session. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 7 - Mayor Weiers, Vice Mayor Hugh, Councilmember Aldama, Councilmember Chavira, Councilmember Sherwood, Councilmember Tolmachoff, and Councilmember Turner

ADJOURNMENT

City Council moved into Executive Session at 2:43 p.m.