

## Capital Metropolitan Transportation Authority

### Access Advisory Committee

Wednesday, August 4, 2021

Virtual Meeting 5:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.

**Committee Members:** Chris Prentice, Paul Hunt, Audrea Diaz, Andrew Bernet, Paul Hunt, Suzie Edrington, Estrella Barrera, Glenda Born

**Capital Metro Staff:** Chad Ballentine, Yannis Banks, Martin Kareithi, Brian Carter, Kevin Conlan, Brian Carter, Marcus Guerrero, Danniella Madubiuke

### General Public:

#### Welcome / Introductions / Call to Order

#### Public Communications

**Ms. Diaz** – Asked about how much time they needed to let staff liaison know that they needed a digital bus pass. As soon as possible, and digital passes are usually e-mailed within 24 hrs.

**Ms. Born** - If CapMetro let supervisors know to remind drivers about added rides; remind the drivers to be cognizant of add add-ins, etc.

#### Agenda:

#### Project Connect Update

*Yannis Banks, Community Engagement Manager*

Mr. Banks went over updates on all lines and went over the public meetings that are happening in the next few months. Also, asked committee members to please participate in the upcoming meetings and workgroups for their thoughts and feedback.

All updates and meetings can be found on the [Get Involved Webpage](#)

#### Upcoming Meetings:

Orange Line Project: Republic Square South to the Slaughter Transit Center – Live Virtual Meeting

- **Thursday, Aug. 5 | 11:30 am – 1:30 pm | [Register for Zoom Meeting](#)**  
Two-hour live virtual public meeting focused on Project Connect's Orange Line project from Republic Square South to Slaughter.

Blue Line Project: Republic Square East to the Airport – Live Virtual Meeting

- **Monday, Aug. 2 | 11:30 am – 1:30 pm**  
**Two-hour live virtual public meeting focused on Project Connect's Blue Line project**

**MetroRapid** – community meetings are also being scheduled to talk about sound walls, upgrades, and other updates to the MetroRapid services.

Also, if anyone is interested in touring the future plans for the whole system, that can be found on the Project Connect website.

**Question from committee:** Were the recent MetroRapid closures part of the new updates? - No, they were part of routine maintenance that was needed for the current service and existing tracks.

## **FY2022 Budget Proposal**

*Kevin Conlan, Deputy CFO*

Mr. Conlan went over the fiscal year 2022 with highlights on budget overview, operating and next steps. He also did a budget overview and spoke about the balance, and that it currently meets the operating reserve requirements. The projected sales tax growth of 4.8% for fiscal year 2022 is in line with the City of Austin budget assumption, and service funding is at pre-Covid-19 levels and is based on August Service Plan.

In addition, Mr. Conlan spoke about the operating revenue, which includes fare revenue, federal grants, and freight railroad revenue, operating cost drivers, customer experience technology and bus enhancements, and the proposed 5-year capital plan. Next steps for budget items include budget outreach and board approval at the end of August. Items to come include Fare Structure discussions, Broadmoor and Mckalla Rail developments, and purchase of electric buses.

## **FY2022 Budget Development Calendar:**

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- Feb 4 Operating and Capital Budget kick-off meeting with departments
- Apr 16 Capital and Operating Budget requests received from departments
- May 12 Board Committees review proposed budget calendar
- Jun 2 Initial review with Access Advisory Committee
- Jun 9 Initial review with Customer Satisfaction Advisory Committee
- Jun 28 Board of Directors initial review and discussion
- Jul 19 Budget proposal presented to Board of Directors



**Questions:** Where does the profit go? -- There really isn't any profit. Since capital isn't included in these numbers, then that really goes to that, and profit minimizes.

## **Question: Ms. Born – Question about the two bonds and how they work:**

These are done through a national program because Covid-19 dramatically affected transits systems. Trajectory for sales tax got cut because ridership was so low, so there was a need for funding across the nation. This is mainly to cover the loss of income and the loss of future income. As of right now, CapMetro has drawn down their CARES Act funds, and that was done on operating expenses vs. Capital expenses.

## **August Service Changes**

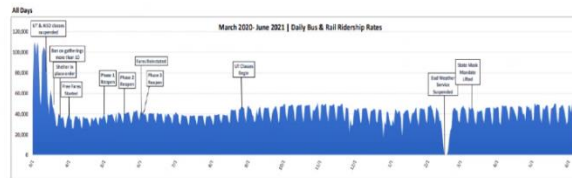
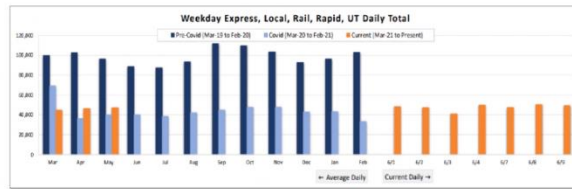
### August 2021 Service Changes

Current conditions influencing service include Covid-19, employment (state, private, downtown workers) UT Austin (returning in the fall), resources and workforce. Etc. Below is a list of current ridership and

### Current Ridership:

#### Current Ridership

- **System Ridership** – Slight growth since mid-March and steady uptick from early June
- **Commuter** - Rail (Weekdays growing and Saturday up); Express/Flyers down over 90%
- **High Frequency/Local Network** - down 45% with recent increases
- **UT Routes** - down 75% but positive outlook to the fall
- **Late Night** - Night Owls and E-bus (currently suspended)



**Question: Ms. Diaz asked about the Night Owls and when they would resume.** She called Council Member Vanessa Fuentes and asked her to call Capital Metro. Night Owls will resume on August 16, 2021. Ridership was low due to Covid-19 so they canceled.

Note on the services - right now they are focusing on key services needed (grocery shopping, health care, etc.) and making sure they address them. Ms. Madubuike went over August service levels, and their current service levels since Covid-19 impacts.

### Future Service Changes:

CapMetro will review and evaluate ridership and service after August changes implemented, and there will be continued evaluation of system network and considerations in preparation for new Expo and Pleasant Valley MetroRapids in 2023

New Dessau Pickup Zone opened with its Grand Opening and Ribbon Cutting on June 14. This will have Saturday Service. 4.5 Miles and will be the first Project Connect Service Expansion.

### Public Safety Update

Gardner Tabon, Executive Vice President, Chief Safety Officer

Mr. Tabon wants to discuss Capital Metro's public safety approach, stakeholder feedback, and review the requested board action. CapMetro is bringing this to the board in August and would like to hear from the customer advisory committees.

The public safety plan is a three-pronged approach to the Public Safety plan. This includes creating three distinct roles - Public Safety Ambassadors, Intervention Specialists, and Transit Police. They would handle public safety challenges that CapMetro sees during daily operations and special events, plus challenges like potential threats to transit infrastructure.

Currently, this year's public safety activities will include an APTA Peer Review, operator and customer survey, stakeholder conversations, in addition to hiring 2 Community Intervention Specialists, a Public Safety Ambassador Supervisor, and 15 Public Safety Ambassadors.

Currently have a great partnership with APD and plan to continue that but want to make sure that we always have a response team that is dedicated to our operators and customers.

The customer and staff survey included: 570 total surveys - 164 coming from CapMetro Operators & Frontline Staff and 406 with CapMetro Customers.

## Summary of Board Resolution

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- ✓ Engage a consultant to guide development and implementation
- ✓ Engage the CapMetro DE&I Council, and Board Committees
- ✓ Develop a Transit Safety Advisory Committee charter and appointment process for Board consideration
- ✓ Develop a staff training program and professional standards based on input from industry standards and the Transit Safety Advisory Committee
- ✓ Create a process by which police auditing and oversight is addressed
- ✓ Include funding in the FY 2022 Operating Budget to continue this work

### **Question from Ms. Born: What about paratransit? – what is the plan or involvement for paratransit?**

It will be similar to the way we respond now. Capital Metro does not get many calls from demand response, but they will respond to those calls the same way as every other service. If any of the paratransit services, such as pick-up, requires something different, they will look into how to respond accordingly.

**Did you get any paratransit surveys when you did them?** There were no surveys from demand response – bus only. Since there are not too many calls from these services, we plan to respond the same as all other services.

**Will ambassadors or specialists be sent to respond all calls?** Capital Metro will be prepared if to dispatch an officer when needed. Officers will be positioned across the city to respond to calls.

**Ms. Barrera Comment:** Thank you for taking a holistic approach and thinking through the three roles/positions to try to do that; great message to send to the community.

### **Updates on Project Connect – Redline Improvements**

*Marcus Guerrero; Austin Transit Partnership, Transit Architect & Program/Project Manager*

#### **Lakeline to Leander double track project**

Currently, there is a single main track between the Lakeline and Leander Stations, and a new 3350 LF double track to establish a zone for passing trains would be added. This would provide improved service frequency and reliability and improved customer experience. Construction begins in September 2021 and the plan is to finish fall of 2022.

#### **Broadmoor MetroRail Station**

There would be a new multi-modal transit hub that would be adjacent to the Domain on North Burnet Road. It would be half a mile north of the existing Kramer rail station and one mile north of the new Austin FC stadium, and it includes direct connectivity to the 803, 240, and 466.

Mr. Guerrero went through amenities, benefits, and provided visuals and an overview of the station updates.

#### **McKalla/MLS MetroRail Station**

The update was based on 30% designs and the project includes new passenger rail station, customer amenities, double tracking, plus other improvements, and sustainability features. This would be coming in summer of 2023.

Working with the City of Austin and the Federal Railroad Administration we will conduct a diagnostic review to determine the requirements to include four additional crossing into our quiet zones. Design and construct the necessary protection and safety devices at Rundberg Lane, Rutland Drive, Braker Lane, and Kramer Lane.

#### **Meeting Recording Discussion**

*Edna Parra, Community Engagement and Outreach Manager*

The Capital Metro Board has had a few conversations and questions about the customer advisory committees (so CSAC and Access), and their systems in place. They have expressed that they want the meetings and committees to be as accessible and transparent as possible.

#### **That includes:**

Promoting CSAC and Access meetings more publicly, through social media, main website, or advertising.

Recording the meetings and posting them on the website for anyone to be able to join while in session or view any time after the meeting.

Posting the agendas ahead of time, at least 72 hours (about 3 days) before any scheduled committee meeting. As well as posting meeting minutes on the website shortly after the committee meetings.

Ms. Parra is working on the list and is working with various departments to update the website, create a communications plan on how to promote the committees to the public, and producing a timeline and process to add minutes and agendas to the committee webpage.

In addition, the board has also expressed interest in hearing the updates and report-outs at the board meetings from the committee chairs, Chair Prentice in this case. Right now, this would be a lot easier because that is a function through Teams.

**Question:** Did anything happen that made the instigated this change?

**Mr. Carter** – No, the board would like to see transparency across the organization and would like committee meetings to follow similar procedures that the board has for their meetings.

**Chair Prentice:** Does not mind logging on to Teams to do updates, we can work together to figure that out, please will need reminders and invites so he has it on his calendar

**Action Items - None**

**September Meeting Discussion** - Edna Parra and Martin Kareithi will work together for the September Agenda

**Adjourn**