

EYE ON TRANSIT

WINTER 2020

FROM THE DIRECTOR



Public Transit friends and colleagues -

This has been a challenging year, to say the least, for all of us as a community. The circumstances have changed many of our day-to-day activities, including how we get to where we need to go. Here at the Public Transit Department, we continue to provide valuable services to all our riders, and I would like to take a moment to thank all of you for your continued support as we continue working together to stay safe and serve the community.

In the last few months, we also have continued balancing multiple crucial projects which will help us plan for a bright public transit future. These include the Central Station redevelopment project and related bus stop changes, the South Central/Downtown Hub and Northwest Phase II light rail extensions, a new regional transit fare collection system, and the Bus Rapid Transit program.

As we move forward, we will continue to seek direction from health experts and adhere to the recommendations of our local leaders while also providing critical services to individuals who rely on our systems for essential work and travel. We consider it of utmost importance to maintain an environment which protects transit staff, community members, and the riding public.

In this winter issue, we are excited to share some developments and, as always, invite you to submit your content/accomplishments to us for a future issue. We look forward to a new year and new achievements.

Jesús Sapien, Phoenix Public Transit Director

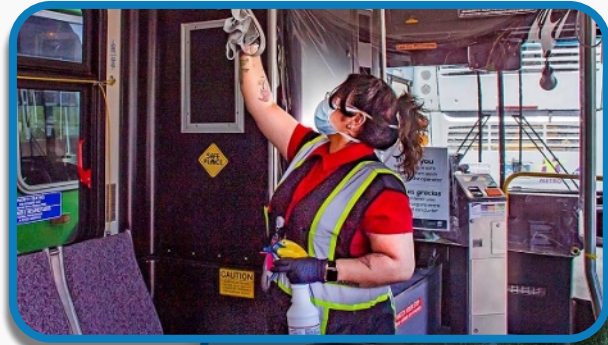
COVID-19 Update

The Public Transit Department in partnership with Valley Metro continues a multitude of efforts to ensure a safe environment for all of our riders and transit personnel. Some of the recent updated measures include:

- Continued education on the requirement to wear face masks on *all* public transit services, including vehicles, stops, stations, and transit centers
- Face mask distribution at select public transit facilities and libraries
- Higher-volume cleanings for bus transit centers and at rail ends-of-line
- Installation of hand sanitizer dispensers on transit vehicles
- Additional signage on seats to facilitate on-board social distancing
- Installation of temporary barriers between drivers and passengers (permanent barriers coming soon)

The Public Transit Department continues working jointly with the riding public to ensure a clean, safe, and comfortable ride.

For additional information and a list of the locations providing face mask distribution, visit <https://www.valleymetro.org/covid-19>.



Restoration of Bus Service

The Phoenix City Council has approved various measures to return some important transit services. On October 26, 2020, morning bus service on Phoenix-operated routes returned to a start time of approximately 4 a.m. on weekdays and 5 a.m. on weekends. RAPID service was partially restored on the I-17 route, with one inbound trip in the morning and one afternoon outbound trip. Public Transit staff will continue to monitor ridership for determining trips or routes needing further adjustments. Bus seats have also been marked 'unavailable' to better implement social distancing. This maximizes the ability to safely distance on board while minimizing the occurrences of buses reaching capacity.

PROJECT UPDATES

Central Station Redevelopment

The [Pardon our Progress campaign](#) has started, as construction is officially underway for many downtown projects. You may have noticed fences now surrounding the former Central Station Transit Center as the site is being prepared for a full transformation. During construction, all Central Station customer service activities, including pass sales and lost-and-found collections, have been relocated just across the street to the north side, ground floor, of the Public Transit building located at 302 North 1st Avenue.



28 routes including several Express/RAPID, six local routes and the DASH circulator are all impacted throughout the duration of construction. The week of October 26, the Public Transit Department and Valley Metro conducted in-person (with safe social distancing and masks) outreach including bus navigation assistance, informational tables, and placement of bus stop relocation signage. Virtual public educational meetings and updates on social media platforms were utilized to promote awareness of these changes. Visit the *Pardon our Progress* site for more details and specific route changes: <https://www.valleymetro.org/maps-schedules/pardon-our-progress>.

When completed in 2024, the project will include a 9,000 square-foot Central Station Transit Center, as well as lower-level retail and commercial space, market-rate, workforce and student housing, and open public space. The new Phoenix Central Station Transit Center will continue offering the same connections to light rail and bus routes in the area while modernizing the region into an elevated mixed-use, walkable urban experience.

Watch the virtual public transit report hosted by PHXTV featuring Deputy Public Transit Director Joe Bowar and Valley Metro Project Manager Scott Miller, as they share an insider's perspective about the downtown projects and transit changes. <https://youtu.be/Sf1OtMb-ing>.



LIGHT RAIL

South Central Extension/Downtown Hub

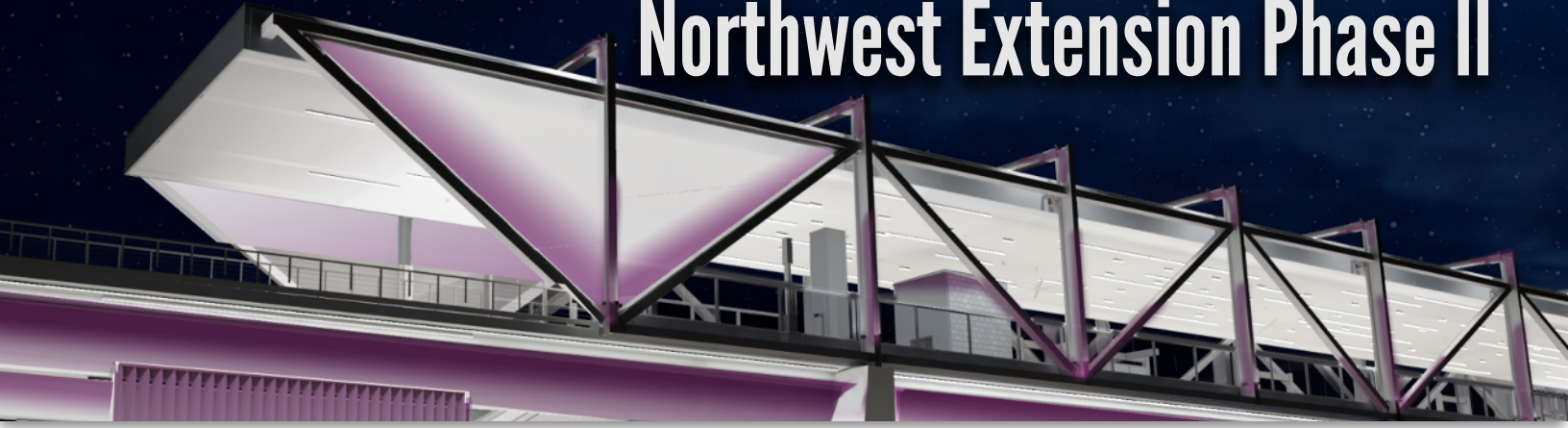
Utility relocation advances down Central Avenue with upcoming plans for street work, track guideways, and electrical systems installations in the coming months. Central Avenue may be limited to one lane in each direction and turning restraints in some areas. Safety for motorists, pedestrians, bicyclists and construction workers is a top priority. The message to riders and drivers alike is to stay alert and be extra careful when traveling in these construction areas.



The project includes building new stations in the downtown area to enhance connections between the South Central extension, the current light rail system, and the future Capitol/I-10 West extension.

For more information visit <https://www.valleymetro.org/southcentral>. You can also stay up to date by downloading the ConstructVM app on your smart phone.

Northwest Extension Phase II



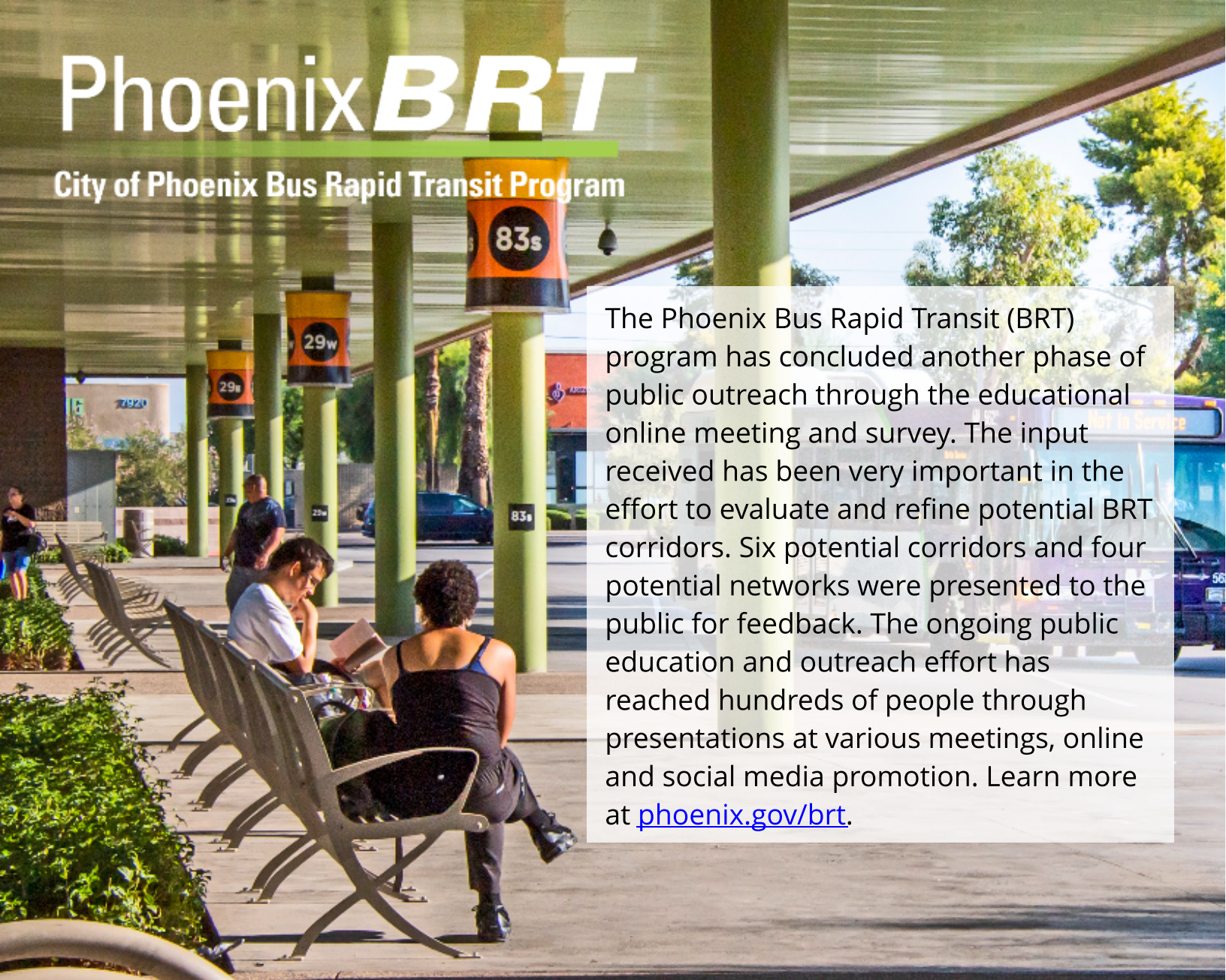
Light rail construction on the Northwest Extension Phase II Project remains on the north side of Dunlap Avenue (between 19th and 25th avenues) and on 25th Avenue (between Dunlap Avenue and Mountain View Road) and will begin soon along Mountain View Road. Utility relocation has continued on major streets, with preparations for the Arizona Canal and bridge over I-17 in the future. Current construction zones maintain one lane in each direction as well as business and pedestrian access.

Valley Metro hosted *Strengthening Your Business for Light Rail Construction*, a virtual business forum held on November 12. Local business owners had the opportunity to learn about what to expect during construction from Council members and other panelists. Affected businesses are supported through Valley Metro's Business Assistance Program, which includes technical assistance, marketing resources, business access signage, individualized banners and more.



Phoenix *BRT*

City of Phoenix Bus Rapid Transit Program



The Phoenix Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) program has concluded another phase of public outreach through the educational online meeting and survey. The input received has been very important in the effort to evaluate and refine potential BRT corridors. Six potential corridors and four potential networks were presented to the public for feedback. The ongoing public education and outreach effort has reached hundreds of people through presentations at various meetings, online and social media promotion. Learn more at phoenix.gov/brt.

Annual Progress Report Fiscal Year 2020

The fourth annual Transportation 2050 progress report is now live at phoenix.gov/T2050 under the Progress tab. The report is interactive and delivers the information in an easy-to-understand format. Check out all the major accomplishments in public transit, streets, and high capacity transit.

Awards/Recognition



The Public Transit Department was recognized as the 2020 Employer of the Year by the Women in Transportation (WTS) Phoenix Chapter. The award was presented at an online gala on November 5, 2020 and takes into consideration how an employer supports women, advances their careers, and provides professional development opportunities.

The Public Transit Department was also recognized as the City of Phoenix’s Community Service Fund Drive (CSFD) Outstanding Medium Department Award for the 2020 CSFD campaign. Recipients were selected based on increased per-capita giving over last year, increased total number of donors from last year, and/or increase of actual funds raised over last year.



UPCOMING



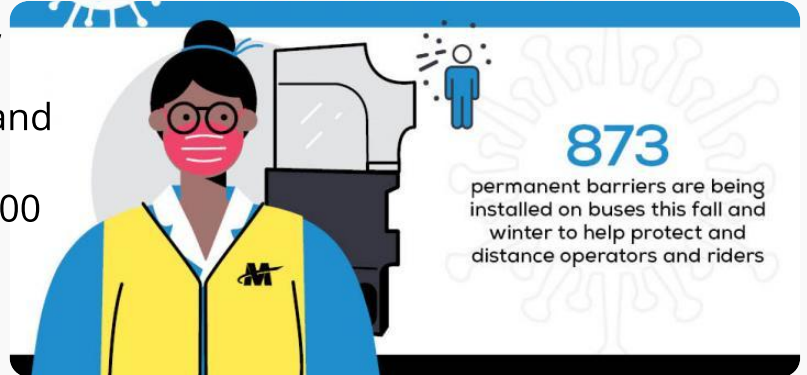
Bus Stop Shade Structures

So far this year, over 80 bus stop shade structures have been installed around Phoenix at stops where there previously were none. Thanks to Transportation 2050, many people are now able to sit in a shaded area while they wait for their bus. New designs are also in the works, including a collaboration with the

Arizona State University's School of Industrial Design, to provide more options and to accommodate the variety of available space at each bus stop location.

Bus Operator Permanent Protective Barriers

To better protect bus operators and riders, the Public Transit Department awarded a \$4.9 million contract for the manufacture and installation of permanent barriers on the region's buses. Installation on more than 800 transit vehicles is anticipated to begin mid-December 2020 and be completed by May 2021.



Fare Collection System Modernization Project

Work has started on a new fare collection system which will move the region's transit network from a cash and paper-based ticketing system to an account based, contactless fare collection platform. Passengers will have the flexibility to pay via smartphones or contactless, reloadable cards, and will implement a fare model that rewards usage and loyalty, including fare capping through frequency of use options.



Rendering of new touchscreen ticket vending machine

The system will utilize a new mobile application providing advanced trip planning capabilities and will allow riders to pay fares, check balances, and manage account values, all from their smartphone. The project will add a suite of devices including validators and ticket vending machines to support the new system. The system will be complemented with a robust retail network where cash-reliant customers can load their accounts at many locations alongside a call center to provide customer support.

OTHER NEWS

Valley Metro Proposed Service Changes

Valley Metro recently obtained public feedback for the April 2021 service changes. The proposed changes impacting Phoenix routes include a change to Route 32 (32nd St.), a Route 50 (Camelback Rd.) extension in Scottsdale, a change to Route 108 (Elliot Rd./48th St.) Saturday/Sunday frequency, and a modification to a Route 522 (South Tempe Express) neighborhood pick-up. Learn more about the proposed changes at

<https://www.valleymetro.org/maps-schedules/service-changes/april-2021>.



Street Transportation Department



The city of Phoenix is seeking applications for the Shared Streets for Social Distancing Pilot Program. Now through Dec. 31, Phoenix residents can nominate segments of their streets to be temporarily restricted to allow only local traffic, creating more space for outdoor recreational activities such as walking, running or biking while complying with public health and social distancing guidelines.

Residents must submit an application by 5 p.m. Dec. 31, 2020 to be considered for the pilot program. The application and program details including selection criteria are available in English and Spanish at phoenix.gov/streets/shared.

EYE ON TRANSIT

[Phoenix.gov/publictransit](https://phoenix.gov/publictransit)

[Phoenix.gov/T2050](https://phoenix.gov/T2050)

Twitter: @PhoenixMetroBus

Eye on Transit Newsletter

To submit content, email: eric.everts@phoenix.gov

Call 602-261-8392; TTY 502-543-5500

302 North 1st Avenue, Suite 900

Phoenix, AZ 85003

If you need Eye on Transit in another format,
please contact Phoenix Public Transit

Email: pubtrans@phoenix.gov