

**TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL COMMITTEE  
MEETING MINUTES  
MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 17, 2018  
3:00 PM  
MUNICIPAL PLAZA BUILDING**

<b>Members Present:</b>	Councilmember Rey Saldaña, Chair, <i>District 4</i> Councilmember Shirley Gonzales, <i>District 5</i> Councilmember Greg Brockhouse, <i>District 6</i> Councilmember Ana Sandoval, <i>District 7</i> Councilmember Manny Peláez, <i>District 8</i>
<b>Members Absent:</b>	<i>None</i>
<b>Staff Present:</b>	Peter Zaroni, <i>Deputy City Manager</i> ; Art Reinhardt, <i>Assistant Director of Transportation &amp; Capital Improvements</i> ; Alicia K. Beckham, <i>Office of the City Clerk</i>
<b>Others Present:</b>	Bruce Ashton, <i>Rail Passenger Association</i>

**1. Approval of the Minutes for the August 20, 2018 Transportation Committee Meeting.**

Councilmember Gonzales moved to approve the Minutes for the August 20, 2018 Transportation Council Committee Meeting. Councilmember Brockhouse seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

**2. Briefing on the City of San Antonio's Transportation Demand Management (TDM) initiative and Bexar County's recent resolution on employee transportation alternatives.** [Peter Zaroni, Deputy City Manager; Mike Frisbie, Director, Transportation & Capital Improvements]

Art Reinhardt reported that in response to Chairman Saldana and Councilmember Sandoval's Council Consideration Request (CCR), the Transportation and Capital Improvement (TCI) Department recommended establishing a working group with partner agencies to review the feasibility of creating a Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Program. He stated that TCI formed a TDM Working Group that consisted of transportation professionals, professionals from San Antonio Organizations, technology professionals, and alternate commuters. He noted that the TDM Working Group Strategy was to develop, consolidate, and prioritize to reduce dependency on single occupancy vehicles. He added that the ideas fell within three categories:

1. Infrastructure and Investment
2. Policy and Regulation
3. Employee and Employer

Mr. Reinhardt stated that the TCI met with stakeholders to focus on developing a short-term TDM Pilot Program with key employers located in the Downtown Area. He noted that the current limited commuter benefits could be greatly enhanced by promoting carpooling; VIA Vanpool; public transit; and the education of employees regarding the options and availability of commuter alternatives. He added the intent would be to pilot City Employees and use the findings as a model for expanding the commuter options for other Downtown Employers

Mr. Reinhardt stated that there were 3,600 City of San Antonio Employees in the Downtown Area. He mentioned that TCI had worked with VIA Metropolitan Transit (VIA) to perform a spatial analysis on the data to identify potential VIA Vanpool Candidates. He noted that the

analysis would determine a potential number of VIA Vanpool Vehicles for the City to consider partially or fully subsidizing.

Councilmember Brockhouse asked the cost of the VIA Vans. Mr. Reinhardt replied that assuming there were 3% of Downtown Employees participating; there would be 22 vans at a monthly cost of \$16,500. Councilmember Brockhouse suggested that the City funding allocated to the VIA Commuter Bus Pass be rerouted toward the TDM Pilot Program. He stated that he would like for staff to analyze how often the Commuter Bus Passes were being used by City Employees.

Councilmember Gonzales asked of Uber being an option to alternative transit. Mr. Reinhardt replied that VIA was piloting a program with VIA for their Mobility on Demand Service for their underutilized fixed routes.

Councilmember Peláez asked how long the City had been paying VIA for the Commuter Bus Passes. Peter Zaroni stated that the City had been paying VIA for the past 10 years.

Councilmember Sandoval asked of the amount the City funded for employee parking stipends. Mr. Reinhardt stated that he was not aware of the amount but that there were approximately 138 employees that were receiving monthly stipends. In response to Councilmember Sandoval, Mr. Reinhardt stated that VIA would partially subsidize the VIA Vanpools.

Councilmember Peláez suggested that TCI collaborate with the Department of Innovation to identify ways to transport employees.

No action was required for Item 2.

**3. Briefing on a proposed City Council resolution from Rail Passengers Association (RPA) for Amtrak to increase frequency of passenger rail service of the Sunset Limited Route at San Antonio from the current three days a week service to daily service. [Peter Zaroni, Deputy City Manager; Mike Frisbie, Director, Transportation & Capital Improvements]**

Art Reinhardt reported that the Rail Passengers Association (RPA) approached the Mayor's Office seeking support to increase the frequency of rail service provided by Amtrak on the daily Sunset Limited Route. He stated that the Sunset Limited Route stopped in San Antonio three days a week. He noted that the route provided passenger service from New Orleans to Los Angeles and that similar train routes in the nation operated daily.

Mr. Reinhardt stated that RPA requested that the full City Council approve a Resolution calling on Amtrak to increase service to San Antonio on the Sunset Limited Route. He noted that RPA provided the following items for inclusion in the proposed Resolution:

- Sunset Limited is a part of Amtrak's basic national train network connecting Louisiana, Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, and California.
- These five states have seen a population growth in the counties served by the Sunset Limited route of 22% between the years 2000 and 2016.
- The increasing congestion on the I-10 corridor serving San Antonio needs increased safe, affordable, and reliable alternatives to automobile and air travel.

- A daily stop on the Sunset Limited in San Antonio will enhance connectivity with the existing daily trains such as the Amtrak Texas Eagle service from San Antonio to Chicago and transportation hubs in New Orleans, San Antonio and Los Angeles, as well as to the proposed Texas Central Railway line in Dallas.

Mr. Reinhardt stated that the San Antonio Train Station lacked adequate parking and interior building space to accommodate increased passengers. He noted that there were two sets of railroad tracks at the Train Station. He added that there was limited operational ability to move passengers efficiently and safely with the needed multiple trains required for expanded service frequency of Sunset Limited.

Mr. Reinhardt stated that the Sunset Limited service from New Orleans to Los Angeles utilized tracks owned by Union Pacific Railroad Company (UPRR). He noted that prior to 2010, Amtrak obtained a preliminary estimate of \$850 million from UPRR for necessary railroad track improvements to accommodate daily service on the Sunset Limited. He added that the San Antonio Amtrak Train Station was in need of significant improvements to accommodate increased rider capacity.

Mr. Reinhardt stated that it would be more beneficial to have a discussion with other major cities along the Sunset Limited Route to present a unified voice to State and Federal Delegations. He stated that to request increased Amtrak frequency would likely initiate a feasibility review by Amtrak. He added that federal support was essential for future funding.

### ***Citizens to be heard***

Chairperson Saldaña called upon Mr. Bruce Ashton to speak.

Mr. Ashton spoke in support of increased rail service provided by Amtrak on the Sunset Limited Route.

Councilmember Sandoval suggested that staff identify the potential growth if services were to increase and asked of the current ridership. Mr. Ashton stated that ridership was 100,000 passengers a year.

Councilmember Peláez moved to forward a Resolution calling on Amtrak to increase service to San Antonio on the Sunset Limited Route to the full City Council for approval. Councilmember Courage seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

### **Adjourn**

There being no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 4:19 p.m.

***Respectfully Submitted,***

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***Rey Saldaña , Chairman***

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***Alicia K. Beckham,  
Office of the City Clerk***