



# City of San Antonio

## Agenda Memorandum

**File Number:**17-6320

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**Agenda Item Number:** 2.

**Agenda Date:** 11/20/2017

**In Control:** Transportation Committee

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**DEPARTMENT:** Transportation & Capital Improvements

**DEPARTMENT HEAD:** Mike Frisbie, PE, Director/City Engineer

**COUNCIL DISTRICT IMPACTED:** Citywide

### **SUBJECT:**

A briefing by VIA Metropolitan Transit on the Rapid Transit Corridor Studies

### **SUMMARY:**

VIA Metropolitan Transit (VIA) will provide a briefing to the City Council Transportation Committee on the Rapid Transit Corridor Studies, a program to identify and prioritize rapid transit services on multiple corridors throughout the San Antonio region.

### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

In coordination with the City of San Antonio's SA Tomorrow initiative, VIA is moving forward with implementation of Vision 2040, a long range plan for public transportation in the greater San Antonio region. One of the recommendations from Vision 2040 is to further define major capital investments that facilitate operation of rapid transit services in designated corridors throughout the San Antonio region with the greatest need and opportunity for success. The goal is to identify how best to facilitate rapid transit services, capable of connecting people and neighborhoods to concentrations of employment, education, service, and retail opportunities. The Rapid Transit Corridor Studies include considerations for capital project and operational feasibility, analysis of a multitude of reasonable alternatives, capital and operational cost implications, market conditions in potential station areas, competitiveness for Federal capital grants, and public and stakeholder engagement. These studies take into consideration findings from the VIA and City of San Antonio SA Corridors initiative.

The Rapid Transit Corridor Studies are the first critical step in the process of developing a capital project. Once

the studies are completed and capital projects are defined, they may proceed into Project Development, which includes a financial strategy, preliminary design, and an assessment of potential environmental impacts and mitigations. Upon receiving an official decision related to environmental impacts, construction plans are developed in preparation for Project Delivery. Generally, this process that begins with defining a capital project and ends with opening for service may take somewhere between six and ten years, or more, depending upon the scope and complexity of the project, and assuming funding can be secured early in the process.

## **ISSUE:**

VIA began work on the Rapid Transit Corridor Studies in February 2017 and has been coordinating with the City of San Antonio Planning Department and Transportation & Capital Improvements. VIA has nearly completed a comprehensive evaluation of all seven individual Rapid Transit Corridors identified in Vision 2040. The findings provide some indication as to which alignments would provide the best connectivity while reaching the most people and jobs, and also indicate whether a corridor warrants a large capital investment or could operate successfully with more of an operational upgrade to services that are currently available to residents in the region.

Over the next several months VIA will continue finalizing the corridor studies. In Spring 2018, VIA will assemble these corridors into various network configurations to better understand how Rapid Transit services could operate along with recommended frequency and service upgrades to VIA's bus system. This analysis will provide a refined understanding of the entire network and will allow for a more complete picture of the rapid transit investments that are needed in the San Antonio region to help mitigate congestion as the community continues to grow.

## **ALTERNATIVES:**

This is a briefing only.

## **FISCAL IMPACT:**

This is a briefing only.

## **RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends the Transportation Committee receive the Rapid Transit Corridor Studies presentation.