



City of San Antonio

Agenda Memorandum

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Agenda Item Number: {{item.number}}

Agenda Date: March 18, 2025

In Control: Transportation and Infrastructure Committee

DEPARTMENT: Transportation Department

DEPARTMENT HEAD: Catherine Hernandez

COUNCIL DISTRICTS IMPACTED: Citywide

SUBJECT:

Keep San Antonio Moving (KSAM) Projects Update

SUMMARY:

VIA Metropolitan Transit to provide updates on the Advanced Rapid Transit Program (Green Line and Silver Line), the 2nd Fixed-Route Operations & Maintenance Facility, and the Better Bus Plan.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Keep SA Moving (KSAM) envisions a future where San Antonio is more connected than ever, where people can move around the city faster and easier, whether going to work, school, healthcare appointments, visiting friends and family, attending events, or simply enjoying and exploring our community. Keep SA Moving includes several innovative transit projects bringing more accessible and affordable options to more people across San Antonio.

Some major projects under KSAM are VIA Rapid Green Line, VIA Rapid Silver Line, Second Fixed Route Operations and Maintenance Facility, and Better Bus Plan.

VIA Rapid Green Line

The VIA Rapid Green Line project was included in the Federal Transit Administration's (FTA) Capital Investment Grant (CIG) New Starts program in 2022 with a Medium-High rating. In May 2023, VIA completed NEPA with Documented Categorical Exclusion (DCE). The project entered New Starts Engineering in October 2023. The FTA awarded VIA a full funding grant agreement in December 2024. Construction is expected to begin in 2025, and service is expected to begin in late 2027/early 2028. The project team, in conjunction with the FTA, finalized the Full Funding Grant Agreement in the amount of \$267.8 million, which contributes to over half of the full project cost of \$480.8 million. This award allows for the negotiation and eventual award of the Guaranteed Maximum Price (GMP) with the Construction Manager at Risk (CMAR) team, Flatiron-Herzog JV. Additionally, the final design team is nearing the end of the development of the 95% plan set. Early works packages are under development to begin utility relocations as early as July. In addition, VIA launched an updated Keep San Antonio Moving website in conjunction with the signing of the FFGA, which included a new look and feel and updated web content for both Rapid Line Projects. Public engagement continues as we complete Final Design.

VIA Rapid Silver Line

The VIA Rapid Silver Line project is included in the Federal Transit Administration's (FTA) Capital Investment Grant (CIG) Small Starts program in 2023 with a Medium-High rating. In August 2024, VIA secured \$100.5 million in Bexar County ATD local funding. VIA anticipates preliminary engineering to be completed in mid-2025, the environmental review process with a Documented Categorical Exclusion (DCE) to be completed in late 2025, and final design in late 2026. VIA anticipates the small starts grant agreement (SSGA) to be awarded in late 2026. Construction is expected to begin in 2027, and service is expected to begin in late 2029. The Project Team continues to progress NEPA technical resource reports, which are on schedule. The Project Team coordinated extensively with multiple stakeholders, completed fieldwork, and integrated community feedback into progressing toward 40% design. VIA staff is working on the procurement strategy and timeline. Staff continues to seek and meet with stakeholders to inform and educate about the project.

VIA must complete critical third-party agreements as one of the requirements to completing the Project Development phase of the CIG Small Starts Program. An Interlocal Agreement (ILA) between VIA and the City of San Antonio (COSA) will establish processes and mutually beneficial roles and responsibilities to ensure the Project is completed within the anticipated schedule and budget.

The ILA is currently under review with the Federal Transit Administration and has been submitted to the City of San Antonio staff for review. VIA is expecting to finalize the ILA language in March 2025 after discussion with the City staff and requests action in April 2025/ May 2025 timeframe.

Second Fixed Route Operations and Maintenance (O&M) Facility

VIA's current maintenance facility, located at 1720 N Flores, supports all VIA's fixed-route buses (over 500) and support vehicles (approximately 200). The facility was built in 1947 that

accommodated a smaller fleet of vehicles at that time. As VIA continues to grow and the existing facility continues to age, VIA identified the need to invest in infrastructure that allows for the continued maintenance and operations of the fleet, along with the ability to support new vehicle technologies most efficiently. VIA has finalized the conceptual design of the facility to use as the basis for the development of the environmental document. The study has included review of potential impacts to noise, traffic, surrounding neighborhoods, historical, archeological, and environmental impacts. An environmental review and decision from the FTA is expected in the next quarter.

Better Bus Plan

The Keep San Antonio Moving Plan includes the development and implementation of a Better Bus Plan (BBP), with the goal to build a fixed-route transit plan that focuses on decreasing wait times, increasing service, and providing more direct connections. The key elements of the plan include the implementation of the Advanced Rapid Transit Lines and the expansion of VIA Link services with more zones and longer hours. For regular fixed-route service, the BBP aims to provide 30-minute or better service on all routes with more consistent hours of operation throughout the week. VIA has developed a draft plan that provides over 60% of residents with 20-minute or better service, compared to just over 40% today. Almost 50% of people see an increase in their level of service during peak and midday periods. Low-income and minority populations will have access to at least two more grocery stores during midday within 30 minutes on transit. During peak periods 44% more job opportunities will be available to everyone. Multiple outreach events were conducted to obtain the community's feedback on the draft network, including briefings with city council members. Based on the feedback received, the draft network is being finalized. The plan is expected to be adopted by the VIA Board of Trustees in late Spring of this year.

ISSUE:

The VIA Rapid Silver Line Interlocal Agreement (ILA) will move forward to City Council for consideration. The ILA is similar to the Green Line ILA that was considered and approved by City Council in June 2023.

FISCAL IMPACT:

N/A

ALTERNATIVES:

N/A

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends the VIA Rapid Silver Line Interlocal Agreement (ILA) move forward to City Council for consideration. The ILA is similar to the Green Line ILA that was considered and approved by City Council in June 2023.