



MINUTES

Pursuant to A.R.S. § 38-431.02, notice is hereby given to the members of the Mayor and Council Tucson Transit Advisory Committee and to the general public that the Committee will hold the following meeting which will be open to the public on:

Monday, August 3, 2026 at 2:30 PM
Park Tucson Conference Room, 110 E. Pennington St., Ste. 150

1. Call to Order/Roll Call – 5 minutes

Members:	Attendance:	Others	
<i>Vanessa Gallego</i>	<i>Ward 1</i>	<i>Absent</i>	Preston McLaughlin, Non-Voting PAG/RTA Staff Representative
Ray Jordan	Ward 2	Present	
Suzanne Schafer	Ward 3	Present	Allen Benz, Tucson Bus Riders Union
Mike Sanchez	Ward 4	Present	Robin Steinberg, Public, Mitman NA
Malia Flores	Ward 5	Present	Joshua Kellog, Teamsters 104
<i>Margot Garcia</i>	<i>Ward 6</i>	<i>Absent</i>	Dale Kaneshiro, Public
Gene Caywood	CM	Present	Hector Macias, Public
<i>Mike Milczarek</i>	<i>CM</i>	<i>Absent</i>	Richard Meyers, Public
D.C. Price	CM	Present	
			Leticia Carpio, COT Mikel Oglesby, Sun Tran Davita Mueller, Sun Tran James Tewksbury, Sun Tran Shamara Smith, Sun Tran John Zukas, Sun Tran Will Heath, Sun Tran Ian Sansom, COT Elaina Richards, COT, W6

2. Approval of Minutes – (Vote) – 5 minutes
Chair Suzanne Schafer

The approval of minutes was moved pending minor changes, duly seconded, and, hearing no objections, Chair Suzanne Schafer approved the motion.

3. Call to the Audience on Agenda Items (First) – 5 minutes

No comments.

4. Updates/Announcements from TTAC Members and Staff (Informational Only) – 10 minutes
TTAC members, Sun Tran, City of Tucson, and/or PAG/RTA Staff

Ray Jordan had two observations: first, he noted that the new onboard audio announcements are a positive improvement. However, announcements are interrupted when a passenger pulls the stop request cord or when cross streets are announced, resulting in incomplete or confusing messages. He suggested reviewing the system to prevent announcements from being cut off. Second, he raised concerns about buses attempting to make left turns that require changing multiple lanes. Bus operators are sometimes forced to stop or travel very slowly in the center lane because motorists in the adjacent lane do not yield, creating operational and safety challenges.

Preston McLaughlin announced that the Regional Transit Working Group will meet on Tuesday, August 4th at 10:00 a.m. The meeting is open to the public and available online. The agenda includes discussion of the allocation of Section 5307 federal transit funds for capital projects, such as vehicle purchases and bus stop amenities. The group will also discuss the Regional Short Range Transit Plan. The consultant selection panel has completed its evaluation and will recommend a consultant for board approval.

Ian Sansom reported that interviews will soon begin for an ADA Eligibility Specialist position, and he expects the new hire will improve processing times for Sun Van applicants. He also shared an update from Mike Czechowski indicating that a formal Request for Proposals (RFP) will be issued for the Ronstadt Transit Center (RTC).

Mikel Oglesby reported that one of the two damaged streetcars has been repaired and is expected to return to service within approximately one week. Once it returns, six streetcars will be on the road at a time, restoring pre-accident service frequencies. In addition, he encouraged everyone to download the Transit App, noting that customer feedback has been very positive. Mikel also announced multiple Learn-to-Ride events, one of them at the Ward 5 Council Office (4300 S Park Ave), which will take place on Wednesday, August 5, 2026 at 5:30 pm.

D.C. Price shared concerns regarding Sun Van service reliability, noting as an example that her scheduled pickup time changed by an hour shortly before the trip. She requested that Sun Van representatives attend a future TTAC meeting to discuss service concerns. Mikel Oglesby agreed that there should be an agenda item dedicated to Sun Van. He also said long-term improvements will largely depend on replacing the current scheduling software and that while operational changes have improved the system, many processes continue to require manual intervention.

5. TTAC Representative Report: Complete Streets Coordinating Council– 5 minutes

D.C. Price said the Complete Streets Coordinating Council did not have a meeting in August, and that the next meeting will take place mid-September.

6. Sun On Demand Zones Discussion – 20 minutes

Suzanne Schafer asked about the original purpose of Sun On Demand, noting that it appeared to replace fixed-route bus service on neighborhood streets.

Davita Mueller explained that Sun On Demand was developed to improve connections in neighborhoods where traditional fixed-route service required multiple transfers or where street layouts made conventional transit inefficient. The service focuses on areas with limited transit access, including neighborhoods with lower incomes and higher transportation needs. She noted that changes resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic created opportunities to implement this flexible service model. Ward 5 also presented unique access challenges, including connectivity to El Rio after buses could no longer use the 22nd Street bridge.

Suzanne expressed interest in the long-term efficiency of the program, noting that using Sun On Demand to connect riders to transit centers and reduce transfers could improve overall system performance.

Davita reported that both Sun On Demand Zones 1 and 2 have been successful, achieving customer satisfaction ratings exceeding 95 percent. Ridership has continued to grow, increasing passengers per revenue hour. She explained that Sun On Demand operates differently from Sun Van, which is a trip-based ADA service, while Sun Tran and Sun Link operate with higher revenue-hour costs due to fixed-route operations.

Suzanne also asked about trip cancellations. Davita explained that the current software does not distinguish whether cancellations are initiated by the customer or by the system, making it difficult to accurately categorize cancelled trips.

Mike Sanchez expressed concern that expanding Sun On Demand could negatively affect ADA services and whether that is being monitored. Mikel explained that the Federal Transit Administration requires ongoing monitoring of ADA performance metrics. Malia Flores emphasized that maintaining ADA service quality is an important priority for Sun Van users.

Ray Jordan asked about the distinction between completed requests and completed boardings. Davita explained that a completed request may include multiple passengers, so requests should not be interpreted as ridership totals.

7. Transit Safety and Security Action Plan Update – 30 minutes

Suzanne Schafer asked how bus operators determine whether to allow passengers to board when safety concerns exist. She also asked whether there could be ways for passengers or individuals waiting at bus stops to discreetly signal that they need assistance. Ian Sansom acknowledged these challenges and announced that four public meetings focused on transit safety would be held August 10–13, including three in-person meetings and one virtual meeting. These meetings will provide opportunities for public input and updates on the City's transit safety initiatives.

Ian announced upcoming back-to-school bus stop deployments. City staff and volunteers will be stationed at certain bus stops and transit centers to provide a visible safety presence, assist riders, and reinforce confidence in the transit system. Staff members will also ride buses during these deployments. Ian noted that staff will take a trip to Albuquerque to learn about its transit ambassador program and will use those lessons to refine Tucson's upcoming ambassador program.

Mikel reported that security patrols continue to operate between noon and 6:00 p.m. Initial feedback indicates that the additional security presence has been well received by both operators and riders. Ian added that staff continue to communicate regularly with surrounding neighborhoods and are developing key performance indicators (KPIs) to measure the effectiveness of the Transit Safety and Security Action Plan. He invited TTAC members to provide input on appropriate performance measures.

Ian reported the City is working to upgrade bus operator communications. Mikel explained that the system is transitioning from analog to digital radios, which must comply with Buy America requirements. Ray Jordan expressed concern about bus drivers using radios while driving. Mike Sanchez asked whether any accidents had occurred due to operators using the radios. Mikel responded that, during his two years with Sun Tran, no such accidents have occurred. William Heath noted that bus operators are exempt from handheld radio restrictions in the same manner as emergency vehicle operators.

Malia suggested exploring a pilot program focused on students, such as trips dedicated to school-aged riders during peak school travel times. Ray Jordan commended Sun Tran operators for their professionalism and safety record despite challenging driving conditions.

Preston asked whether sufficient data from the patrols exists to identify safety trends. Ian responded that it is still too early to draw conclusions. Mikel added that a larger sample size is needed, noting that the deployment began with four police officers who initially worked together before being assigned separately. As staffing increases to eight officers, more meaningful trend data will become available. Members also noted that riders have expressed appreciation for the increased security presence.

Suzanne added that bus operators continue to provide excellent customer service and that conditions appear to be improving.

8. Subcommittee Formation Discussion – 10 minutes

Chair Suzanne Schafer discussed forming a TTAC subcommittee. Potential members identified were Mike Sanchez, Malia Flores, Vanessa Gallego and Suzanne Schafer. Meeting times will be discussed at a future date.

9. Call to the Audience (Second) – 5 minutes
Chair Suzanne Schafer

Joshua Kellogg emphasized the importance of teaching children how to safely cross streets and properly use intersections. He brought these points up in relation to Malia's suggestion of conducting a pilot program for students using public transit.

Hector Macias asked for additional information regarding the bus stop amenities to be discussed at the RTA meeting. Preston McLaughlin explained that the bus stop amenities category is quite open-ended and that all kinds of capital purchases are eligible under the funding program, but that available funding is limited.

Dale Kaneshiro expressed appreciation for Sun On Demand, stating that the service provides important mobility options that would otherwise not be available.

Richard Meyers asked about the relative operating costs of Sun On Demand, Sun Van, Sun Tran, Sun Link, and the Express Service. He also shared a recent experience in which a Sun Link vehicle experienced mechanical issues, requiring passengers to disembark. He commented that while Sun Link is often described as a premium service, he believes Sun Tran provides a more reliable, and therefore, premium, service because it maintains scheduled arrival times.

Allen Benz reported attending a Ward 6 Learn-to-Ride event and the celebration marking six years of fare-free transit service.

10. Items and Date for Next Meeting(s) – 5 minutes

The next meeting will take place on September 14, 2026.

Potential topics: Fare-Free Transit Study by Dr. Arthur Nelson and Dr. Robert Hibbert

11. Adjournment

For further information, contact: Monica Landgrave-Serrano, (520)-780-0635, monica.landgrave@tucsonaz.gov. Persons with a disability may request reasonable accommodation, such as a sign language interpreter, by contacting Transit Services at 520 791-5409. Requests should be made as early as possible to allow time to arrange the accommodation.