

Upon notice duly given under Arizona Revised Statutes, Section 38-431, et seq., as amended, the City Council of the City of Bullhead City held a Special Meeting on Tuesday, June 2, 2026, in the Council Chambers, 1255 Marina Blvd., Bullhead City, Arizona.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Dallman called the special meeting to order at 3:30 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Council Present

Alfonzo, Dallman, Newlin, O'Neill, Ring, Smith

Council Absent

None

Staff Present:

CITY MANAGER: Toby Cotter

CITY ATTORNEY: Garnet Emery

CITY CLERK: Debie Ogden

HUMAN SERVICES DIRECTOR: Jeff Tipton

DISCUSSION ITEM(S)

Discussion regarding the Bullhead Area Transit System (BATS) Program.

Transit Manager Peluso provided an overview of the transit route planning and implementation process. He explained major service changes are typically developed through short-range or long-range transit planning efforts, which generally take about a year to complete after a consultant is hired. He said the resulting plans include annual implementation goals that may involve minor service adjustments, major route modifications, route reconstruction, or the addition of new routes. He said a five-year plan does not necessarily require five years to complete, as recommendations may be implemented sooner depending on logistical and budgetary considerations. He addressed questions that were brought up at the last Council meeting regarding passenger drop-off locations.

Transit Manager Peluso clarified transit service is available to both the Senior Enrichment Center and the Mohave County Library. He said a stop has been located on Trane Road near the Senior Enrichment Center since the 2018 route reconstruction, although it is currently identified as the Ken Fovargue Park stop and said staff will consider renaming the stop to improve visibility. He said library access is provided through a stop at Hancock Road and Trane Road, approximately 600 feet from the library entrance, and said staff may consider renaming nearby stops to better distinguish destinations.

Transit Manager Peluso reported the transit system includes 71 fixed-route stops, of which 40 lack shelters or benches and 21 lack sidewalks. He said many of these stops are located in low-ridership residential areas and said the upcoming short-range transit plan will evaluate if current routes and stop locations remain appropriate and if resources should be redirected to areas with greater demand. He explained installing a shelter typically costs between \$15,000 and \$20,000 when ADA accessibility improvements, sidewalks, curb work, environmental reviews, and construction costs are included, and said additional funding would need to be identified through grants and the budget process. He said previous service along McCormick Boulevard was removed during the 2018 route reconstruction due to low ridership. He said following the route changes, the Green Line experienced an approximate 60 percent increase in ridership and reduced operating costs. He said future service

modifications could be considered through the planning process and emphasized the importance of public participation in identifying unmet transit needs and shaping future service recommendations.

Transit Manager Peluso explained minor service implementations often involve changes that can be made internally when needs arise and do not create significant operational impacts. He emphasized the importance of public participation and noted that transit staff receive limited public feedback. He said staff routinely reviews internal policies and procedures to improve efficiency and service delivery and said under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the transit system may provide reasonable modifications to accommodate individuals with accessibility needs. He said accommodations can include adjusted pickup locations within a short distance of designated stops when necessary, and said such modifications are commonly provided during road construction or other temporary access issues. He highlighted the availability of online trip-planning tools and the assistance provided by dispatch staff in helping riders navigate the transit system. He said for individuals whose transportation needs cannot be met through fixed-route service, staff assists with evaluating eligibility for the Dial-A-Ride program and coordinate with other transportation providers when requests involve destinations outside the city's service area.

Transit Manager Peluso explained large-scale transit improvements involve significant logistical and regulatory requirements, particularly when federal funding is sought. He said projects must be included in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) or the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) before funding can be requested through the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). He said many projects also require environmental review and regulatory clearance before shelters, poles, or other infrastructure improvements can be installed, and said depending on the scope of a proposed change, public notification requirements may range from 30 to 90 days before implementation.

City Manager Cotter suggested to the Council they first focus on smaller, local transit issues before discussing larger-scale projects and processes involving the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and other regulatory requirements. Mayor Dallman concurred.

Council Member Smith asked how many transit stops currently have shelters. Transit Manager Peluso said 31 of the system's 71 fixed-route stops have shelters, while 40 stops do not have a shelter or bench and said of those 40 stops, 21 also lack sidewalks.

Council Member Smith said locating the Senior Enrichment Center stop between the park and the senior center seemed illogical and asked if a reasonable ADA modification could relocate the stop closer to the facility entrance. Transit Manager Peluso explained staff had evaluated that option and identified several challenges including limited ingress and egress, the lack of a designated bus stop area in the site design, narrow travel spaces that would make bus operations difficult, and steep sidewalk grades that could cause buses to scrape or become high-centered. He said the area is currently served by the Dial-A-Ride program and said ridership data showed an average of approximately 0.52 passenger boardings per day at the Ken Fovargue Park fixed-route stop, compared to more than one passenger trip per day using Dial-A-Ride service at the Senior Enrichment Center. He said transit staff generally considers three passenger trips per day to be the threshold for a productive stop and lower-performing stops may be candidates for modification or service reallocation. He said based on current ridership levels, staff did not recommend relocating the stop but indicated they could conduct additional evaluations if directed by Council.

Council Member Newlin said he had ridden the Red, Blue, and Green Lines and found the overall rider experience to be positive. He asked if transit service operates on Sundays. Transit Manager Peluso responded there is no Sunday bus service.

Council Member Newlin suggested revising the transit schedule on the city's website by changing the label "Weekend" to "Saturday" to more accurately reflect service availability. He also recommended updating stop names on the online schedule, including those identified as "El Palacio" and "Suddenlink Community Center," to reflect the current business names.

Council Member O'Neill asked if each of the four bus lines operates with a single bus per route. Transit Manager Peluso answered affirmative. Council Member O'Neill said the library was approximately 600 feet from the nearest bus stop and suggested that service could be improved by routing buses more directly to key destinations such as the library, medical centers, and the Senior Enrichment Center through modified circulation patterns within the area, including potential adjustments within parking lots or alternative access points. He said infrastructure modifications would be required and emphasized improving convenience and accessibility to the riders. He expressed concern that many existing stops appeared underutilized while buses still passed through residential areas with higher vehicle ownership. He advocated prioritizing transit access for residents in apartments and individuals without cars and said transit services should focus on those most dependent on it.

City Manager Cotter said when considering bus stop changes at locations not owned by the city, coordination and permission from the appropriate entity, such as Mohave County for the library site, would be required. He emphasized safe passenger drop-off locations were a primary consideration and said while additional routing adjustments could be explored, they must still meet safety standards to prevent conflicts with vehicle traffic. He said improvements at the Senior Enrichment Center location were feasible but would require proper budgeting, planning, and identification of a safe and appropriate stop location to ensure passenger safety. He said the importance of accommodating the amount of programs at the senior facility and limited access to direct drop-off locations could present challenges for some users and said not all riders are aware of or eligible for Dial-A-Ride services. He asked if these improvements should be incorporated into a longer-term planning timeline or prioritized for funding and implementation in the short-term.

Council Member O'Neill suggested adding a bus stop near the post office on Lakeside Drive and said there was currently no nearby stop and riders frequently requested drop-offs in that area. He said the location appeared to warrant closer transit access.

Vice Mayor Alfonzo asked how the transit system solicited public feedback to identify neighborhood transportation needs and service gaps. Transit Manager Peluso said public input was gathered through survey tools and outreach efforts, particularly during planning studies conducted with consultants. He said the city also used its website and said future transit planning efforts would include a dedicated project webpage to provide updates and encourage public engagement. He said social media, on-site postings, and direct communication with riders and drivers were also used to increase awareness and encourage community participation in shaping transit services. Vice Mayor Alfonzo expressed support for placing transit planning and feedback opportunities on the city's website and said this would allow residents to provide input on both current service areas and future neighborhood expansion.

Council Member Smith asked if transit riders are provided with physical paper surveys on buses to collect feedback. Transit Manager Peluso said the system primarily uses online surveys, including tools such as SurveyMonkey, for outreach. He said during previous short-range transit planning efforts, consultants supplemented online surveys with in-person onboard surveying, allowing riders to complete physical questionnaires while using the bus to increase participation and gather direct feedback. Council Member Smith said it was important for surveys to focus on current bus riders.

Council Member Ring asked for an explanation of the qualifications required to use the Dial-A-Ride service. Transit Manager Peluso said Dial-A-Ride is a medically qualified service operating under ADA guidelines for individuals with mobility limitations that prevent them from effectively using the fixed-route system. He said applicants must complete a certification form that includes personal information and is also completed in part by a medical professional confirming the individual's inability to use fixed-route transit. He said once submitted, the application is processed within approximately two weeks and said approved riders are certified for a three-year period before renewal is required. He said eligible users can schedule trips by calling the service to request transportation within city limits.

Vice Mayor Alfonzo asked about the cost of Dial-A-Ride service. Transit Manager Peluso said the fare is \$2 per one-way trip.

Council Member Newlin said he noted variability in the height of transit signage at bus stops with some signs appearing higher than others and asked if a standard height was used. Transit Manager Peluso said signage standards are managed by the Public Works Department and are intended to ensure adequate clearance and safety for pedestrians. He explained while sign poles are manufactured at a uniform length, installation depth can vary, resulting in differences in final installed height. Council Member Newlin suggested reviewing the issue for consistency. Transit Manager Peluso acknowledged the concern and said staff would evaluate opportunities to standardize sign placement across all transit stops.

Council Member O'Neill said former transit stops were in the Safeway plaza parking lot area behind Black Bear Diner and in front of Big Belly Nelly's Restaurant. He asked if the Big Belly Nelly's stop would be reinstated. Transit Manager Peluso said the location operates under an agreement with the property owner and it would be reinstalled. Council Member O'Neill reiterated his suggestion of using internal parking lot circulation routes particularly around Mohave County Library, Superior Court, and nearby public properties to improve direct access to destinations and potentially reduce the need for costly stop infrastructure. Transit Manager Peluso said that approach could be considered in the future as part of broader planning efforts.

City Manager Cotter thanked the Council for the discussion on short-range transit issues and said staff would follow up on the feedback provided. He said while some topics raised such as McCormick Boulevard service, other route expansions, and growth areas including the CityCentre development related to long-range planning, those matters would be addressed through a broader planning process. He said the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Director was present to discuss long-range transit planning and coordination, including future facility planning and potential service restoration in areas such as McCormick Boulevard.

Metropolitan Planning Organization Director D'Amico explained the MPO is currently undertaking both short-range and long-range transportation planning efforts for the Bullhead City, Fort Mohave,

and Mohave Valley MPO area, along with a concurrent safety planning study. He said all three plans would be developed separately and advised against making immediate service changes based on individual narratives and emphasized the importance of completing the full planning and public participation process before making decisions. He said transportation planning must consider the needs of the entire population served and service decisions should be based on broader usage patterns and data. MPO Director D'Amico emphasized federal and regional planning processes require extensive public participation often led by consultants dedicated to outreach efforts including incentives to encourage input. He said these studies are designed to ensure informed, data-driven decisions that reflect overall community needs rather than individual requests.

Council Member Newlin asked for the timeline for receiving the short-range transit study. MPO Director D'Amico said the consultant had been selected and the MPO executive board would meet in approximately two and a half weeks for approval. He said once approved, work on the study was expected to begin around July 1st. He said the 12-month short-range study would form a five-year transit plan and said some recommendations could potentially be implemented within a few months rather than waiting for the full study to conclude. Council Member Newlin asked if the short-range, long-range, and safety plans were all 12-month studies. Director D'Amico clarified the long-range transportation plan would be a 15-month effort covering a 27-year planning horizon and said the safety plan had not yet been fully scoped. He said the safety plan would include regional considerations such as evacuation planning and coordination across Bullhead City, Fort Mohave, Mohave Valley, and tribal partners and may take up to 12 months to complete.

City Manager Cotter said the development of these planning efforts is closely tied to securing millions of dollars in grant funding. He emphasized the importance of obtaining federal funds to support major transit investments, including a new transit facility, bus stop improvements, and additional buses included in the current budget. MPO Director D'Amico said the MPO actively pursues available grant opportunities and regularly submits applications as funding programs become available and said they would continue to pursue all eligible grant opportunities.

Mayor Dallman expressed support for these efforts and said she appreciated the ongoing pursuit of grant funding.

City Manager Cotter asked when the public would be able to provide input on transit routes and planning efforts, particularly as community growth and service needs evolve. Transit Manager Peluso said formal public engagement opportunities would be scheduled throughout the planning process, with specific dates to be announced once the project officially begins as outlined in the request for proposals (RFP) requirements for public participation. He said public feedback is accepted at any time through the transit office and said staff is open to receiving all types of rider input and incorporate feedback into operational adjustments as well as into long-range planning when consistent themes or needs are identified over time. Mayor Dallman suggested providing contact information for members of the public who were not present at the meeting. Transit Manager Peluso said the transit office contact number is 704-BATS.

Mayor Dallman asked if anyone from the public wanted to speak on this item.

Harvey Pryor expressed longstanding concerns regarding BATS transit service and said service hours and route coverage are insufficient for riders who work standard shifts. He said the system closes before some riders can return home from work and raised concerns about limited evening service and

the inability to complete round-trip travel for employment or public meetings. He requested expanded service coverage to include additional stops near key destinations such as Exceptional Hospital, the Motor Vehicles Department (MVD), City Hall, and other high-demand locations. He asked for route adjustments to be considered to improve access to medical facilities and essential services. He said he had not observed or been made aware of public surveys and questioned the effectiveness of public outreach efforts. He further expressed frustration regarding communication and transparency with public meetings and said he was not consistently notified of transit-related meetings or updates, and said information on quarterly meetings was difficult to obtain.

Scotty McClure said he agreed with Mr. Pryor's concerns regarding BATS service and questioned why buses do not directly serve the MVD and nearby government facilities. He said existing roadway access could potentially support improved routing through the area, including connections between the MVD and courthouse. He raised concerns about accessibility for individuals using wheelchairs and said he had repeatedly requested a stop at the MVD during public meetings. He expressed frustration with perceived limitations in service changes over time and criticized the level of route expansion. He said the removal of a previous stop at Rio Grande and Marina had not been clearly explained. He asked why ADA-related access could not allow for more flexible stops. He said transit amenities such as benches and shelters are costly and emphasized the difficulty of waiting in extreme heat conditions without adequate shelter at bus stops.

City Manager Cotter said the citizens who spoke during public comment expressed strong concerns about transit routes and stop locations, reflecting broader community interest in how the system operates. He said both Council and staff share the goal of maintaining a transit system that effectively serves residents who rely on it for essential travel including medical appointments, employment, and regional transportation connections. He said the city invests significant resources into transit and emphasized that many residents are dependent on the system. He said staff regularly hears feedback from riders and Council and staff are aware of ongoing concerns. He said while the upcoming short-range plan and MPO processes are important the city does not need to wait for those studies to consider operational improvements. He said potential service modifications such as stop adjustments and shelter improvements could be explored more immediately through internal review and staff collaboration. He emphasized transit service must balance affordability with community needs and said improvements are possible within existing constraints. He directed staff to begin developing practical solutions to address identified issues and report back with options for consideration.

Mayor Dallman stated she was in support of moving forward with further review of transit stop concerns and expressed a desire to see staff work on potential improvements. She said community members are clearly passionate about specific stop locations and emphasized the need to address those concerns.

Vice Mayor Alfonzo made a motion to adjourn the Special Meeting and convene into Executive Session at 4:31 p.m. Council Member Ring seconded the motion.

VOTE: AYES: Alfonzo, Dallman, Newlin, O'Neill, Ring, Smith
NAYS: None ABSENT: None

MOTION CARRIED

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Annual evaluation of the City Attorney. Arizona Revised Statutes § 38-431.03(A)(1).

MOTION: Council Member Newlin made a motion to adjourn from executive session and the special meeting at 5:00 p.m. Council Member Ring seconded the motion.

VOTE: AYES: Alfonzo, Dallman, Newlin, O'Neill, Ring, Smith
NAYS: None ABSENT: None

MOTION CARRIED

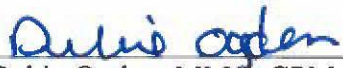
ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Dallman declared the special meeting adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that the foregoing minutes are a true and correct record of the special meeting of the City Council of the City of Bullhead City held on the 2nd day of June 2026. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held and that a quorum was present.

Dated this 10th day of June 2026.



Debie Ogden, MMC, CPM
City Clerk