



## Mountain Line

3773 N. Kaspar Drive · Flagstaff, AZ 86004 · 928-679-8900 · FAX 928-779-6868 · [www.mountainline.az.gov](http://www.mountainline.az.gov)

### NOTICE AND AGENDA OF A PUBLIC MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS (BOD) OF THE NORTHERN ARIZONA INTERGOVERNMENTAL PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY

Pursuant to A.R.S. §38-431.02, notice is hereby given to the members of the Board of Directors (BOD) of the Northern Arizona Intergovernmental Public Transportation Authority ("Mountain Line") and to the general public that the Board will hold a special meeting on:

Monday, May 13, 2024  
1:30pm  
Mountain Line VERA Room  
3773 N. Kaspar Dr.  
Flagstaff, AZ 86004

Unless otherwise noted, meetings held in the conference room are open to the public. This is a WEB BASED meeting. Members of the Board of Directors will attend by internet conferencing or by telephone. The public may observe and participate in the meeting at the address above.

**Pursuant to the Americans with Disabilities Act, persons with a disability may request a reasonable accommodation, such as a sign language interpreter, by contacting the Clerk of the Board of Directors at 928-679-8922 (TTY Service 800-367-8939). Requests should be made as early as possible to allow time to arrange the accommodation.**

#### Public Comment Process

The Mountain Line Board of Directors welcomes public comments during meetings. Members of the public can comment on items not on the agenda under the general call to the public and on items on the agenda at the time the item is considered, in the agenda order. There are three ways to submit comments:

1. Written Comments: Members of the public can submit public comments by email up until 9:00 a.m. on the day of the meeting. Comments can be emailed to [publiccomment@mountainline.az.gov](mailto:publiccomment@mountainline.az.gov) and should reference if the comment is part of the general call to the public or in reference to a specific agenda item. Every email, if received by 9:00 a.m. on the day of the meeting, will be entered into the official record.
2. Virtual Comments: Members of the public can join the meeting virtually to deliver public comments. Those wishing to attend virtually must email [publiccomment@mountainline.az.gov](mailto:publiccomment@mountainline.az.gov) by 9:00 a.m. on the day of the meeting with their name and agenda item for which they wish to provide comment. The Clerk of the Board will provide a link to access the meeting via Zoom and will introduce those giving public comments at the appropriate time in the agenda.
3. In-Person Comments: Members of the public can attend any Board meeting in-person and submit a speaker card to the Clerk of the Board.

The agenda for the meeting is as follows:

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1. CALL TO ORDER
2. ROLL CALL

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### **DISCUSSION / ACTION ITEMS:**

#### **3. TRANSIT TAX RECOMMENDATION**

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-Heather Dalmolin, CEO and General Manager

Staff recommends the Board of Directors formally request that Flagstaff City Council refer a transit tax measure to the ballot in the November 2024 election.

### **ITEMS FROM COMMITTEE AND STAFF:**

#### **SCHEDULE NEXT MEETING DATE AND IDENTIFY AGENDA ITEMS**

June/August Working Agenda

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The next Board meeting will be June 26, 2024 and will be a hybrid in-person and Zoom meeting based in Flagstaff in the Mountain Line VERA Room, 3773 N. Kaspar Dr., Flagstaff, AZ 86004 at 10am. The public is invited to attend. June agenda items may include but not be limited to the FY2025 Budget Adoption, Expand Reduced Fare Program, Zero Emission Bus Transition Plan Update, Triennial Review Final Report, Mobility Study Update, Procurement Resolution, Grant Resolution, Line of Credit, Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Program, Strategic Workplan Update, Workforce Utilization Report, Annual Cybersecurity Report, Flagstaff Unified School District (FUSD) Update, and Delegation of Authority Updates. The June agenda will be available for review on Mountain Line's website and at Mountain Line's public posting places (listed on the Mountain Line website) at least 24 hours prior to the meeting and should be consulted for a list of items that will come before the Board.

#### **4. ADJOURNMENT**

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**DATE PREPARED:** April 26, 2024

**MEETING DATE:** May 13, 2024

**TO:** Honorable Chair and Members of the Board

**FROM:** Heather Dalmolin, CEO and General Manager

**SUBJECT:** Transit Tax Recommendation

### **RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends the Board of Directors formally request that Flagstaff City Council refer a transit tax measure to the ballot in the November 2024 election.

### **RELATED STRATEGIC PLAN OBJECTIVE**

- ❖ Goal One: Service Improvements
- ❖ Objective: Deliver service enhancements that are in line with our 5-year transit plan and make transit an attractive mode choice.
- ❖ Goal Two: Stewardship of Resources
- ❖ Objective: Be exemplary at supporting community goals towards environmental sustainability.
- ❖ Goal Five: Community Engagement
- ❖ Objective: Increase the community's awareness of Mountain Line's value to the community.

### **BACKGROUND:**

The Board of Directors approved "Flagstaff in Motion – A Community Transit Plan" in January 2023. The plan outlined a prioritized list of transit improvements, all of which cannot be accomplished within Mountain Line's current budget and funding levels.

In coordination with the City of Flagstaff, Mountain Line staff did not ask the Board of Directors to consider requesting any transit tax initiatives be placed on the November 2022 ballot, as the priority was asking voters to consider a City housing initiative. With the adoption of Flagstaff in Motion, the priority became identifying what, if anything, should be considered for November 2024.

Mountain Line convened a Citizen's Advisory Committee (CAC) in May 2023 to begin this process. The CAC included:

- Julie Leid, Peak Engineering
- Dara Marks Marino, Citizen and Sustainability activist
- Michele James, Friends of Flagstaff's Future and Mountain Line TAC
- Ann Huffman, Coordinated Mobility Council
- Jamie Whelan, Citizen and former Flagstaff City Councilmember

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- Jolene Montoya, Flagstaff Biking Organization
- Erin Kruse, NAU Center for Service and Volunteerism
- Rick Tadder, City of Flagstaff (advisory role)
- Terry Madeksza, Downtown Business Alliance
- Regina Salas, Citizen and former Flagstaff City Councilmember
- Adam Shimoni, Flagstaff Biking Organization and former Flagstaff City Councilmember
- Steve Danner, Citizen
- Mary Kershaw, Museum of Northern Arizona
- Erik Nielsen, NAU Sustainability

Concurrent with the formation of the CAC, Mountain Line also engaged GlobaLocal Vision to conduct voter research and polling work, and Lumen Strategies to conduct voter education. The CAC met three times over the course of several months, learning about Flagstaff in Motion and Mountain Line's current budget situation. At the final CAC meeting in March 2024, Lumen Strategies presented data from a fall 2023 GlobaLocal Vision phone survey of likely voters. Highlights of the phone survey (which was conducted before the November 2023 election) include:

- 83 percent of respondents support extending the existing tax for 10 years
- 69 percent support increasing it by 10 cents
- 51 percent support increasing it by 20 cents
- Climate change is a winning message – 60 percent of respondents support a tax increase to address climate change.

Subsequent to the phone survey, Lumen Strategies created an online virtual meeting room to conduct additional community outreach about the extension and potential increase of the transit tax. The virtual meeting room received about 2,000 visitors and 170 of them responded to the survey instrument. The survey responses were overwhelmingly in favor of not only extending the transit tax but increasing it by approximately 20 to 25 cents in order to improve transit service in the community.

The full scope of the virtual meeting room data was not available at the final CAC meeting, so Lumen Strategies presented a high-level overview. Additionally, they discussed specific recommendations based on their expertise. This included the preference to only present voters with one question, especially considering the anticipated length of the ballot, and the preference to tax in even numbers (not the 29.5 cents it is now). Based on the data available at the time, the CAC recommended that Mountain Line at minimum recommend that their Board of Directors request a renewal of the existing transit tax plus a 10-cent increase. The CAC left it open for Mountain Line staff to determine if the community outreach efforts showed support for a larger increase.

A 10-cent increase in the transit tax would allow Mountain Line to absorb the anticipated increased costs of operating today's transit service levels and implement a small portion of the service improvements in the five-year plan. A 20-cent increase would allow Mountain Line to implement many of the list of desired service improvements. It would take a doubling of the existing tax to fully implement all of the recommendations of the five-year plan and go fare free.

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Based on the information gathered from qualitative and quantitative efforts, Mountain Line staff believe a 20.5 cent increase is the correct balance between community preferences and transit needs. This would make the total transit tax 50 cents on a \$100 purchase.

### **FISCAL IMPACT:**

An increase in the transit tax would allow Mountain Line staff to implement the highest prioritized items in the five-year plan. If a ballot initiative is unsuccessful, there would not be an immediate fiscal impact, as the existing transit tax does not sunset until 2030. There would be two additional election cycles to secure funding.

### **ALTERNATIVES:**

- 1) Recommend that Flagstaff City Council place a proposition on the November 2024 ballot that increases the transit tax to 50 cents on a \$100 purchase for a period of 10 years **(recommended)**. This level of funding allows Mountain Line to implement a significant portion of the five-year plan and brings an improved transit system to Flagstaff residents.
- 2) Recommend that Flagstaff City Council place a proposition on the November 2024 ballot that increases the transit tax to 40 cents on a \$100 purchase for a period of 10 years **(not recommended)**. This level of funding allows Mountain Line to absorb the anticipated increased costs of operating current service levels but does not allow for implementation of a significant portion of the five-year plan.
- 3) Recommend that Flagstaff City Council place a proposition on the November 2024 ballot that renews the existing 29.5 cents on a \$100 purchase transit tax for a period of 10 years **(not recommended)**. The current level of funding does not allow Mountain Line to make any service enhancements, nor does it allow Mountain Line to sustain current service levels as costs increase.
- 4) Do not make a transit tax recommendation to Flagstaff City Council **(not recommended)**. A delay in presenting this initiative to Flagstaff voters could impact the outcome and jeopardize future funding.

### **TAC DISCUSSION:**

This is a special Board of Directors meeting, so this was not discussed by the TAC.

### **APPROVED BY:**

Heather Dalmolin  
CEO and General Manager

### **ATTACHMENTS:**

None.

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**June: TAC Meeting is Thurs, 6/6 Board Meeting is Wed, 6/26**

ITEMS:	WHO & WHAT:
Safety Minute	Sam
Milestone Anniversaries	Heather D
FY2025 Budget Adoption	Josh S - D/A
Expand Reduced Fare Program	Heather D - D/A
Zero Emission Bus Transition Plan Update	Heather D - D/A
Triennial Review Final Report	Bizzy - D/A
Mobility Study Update	Estella - D
Procurement Resolution	Josh S - C
Grant Resolution	Josh S - C
Line of Credit	Josh S - C
EEO Program	Codi - C
Strategic Workplan Update	Heather D - PR
Workforce Utilization Report (Mid-Year)	Codi - PR
Annual Cybersecurity Report	Jon - PR
FUSD Update	Jacki - PR
Delegation of Authority Update – Agreements, Grants, and Procurements:	Heather D - PR
August/September Agenda Calendar	

**August: TAC Meeting is Thurs, 8/1 Board Meeting is Wed, 8/21**

ITEMS:	WHO & WHAT:
Safety Minute	Sam
Milestone Anniversaries	Heather D
Bus Stop Acquisition Policy	Anne - D/A
Organization Structure Update	Heather D - D
Trip Quest Roll Out with Data	Jacki - D
Annual Safety Report	Sam - PR
Annual Maintenance Report	Jeremiah - PR
Bus Stop Program/Rehab Report	Jeremiah - PR
Delegation of Authority Update – Agreements, Grants, and Procurements:	Heather D - PR
Possible Executive Session for CEO and General Manager's Evaluation and Contract	Heather D/Board Chair
Possible Action Item: CEO and General Manager's Contract	Board Chair
Sept/Oct Agenda Calendar	

C = Consent, D/A = Discussion/Action, D = Discussion, PR = Progress Report