

Attachment A

RTA Special Needs Transit Background

The Transit Element of the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) approved by voters in 2006 includes funding of \$108.8 million (2006 dollars) over 20 years for expanded services for elderly and disabled citizens under Special Needs Transit Service category. The RTA Administrative Code, which was approved by the RTA Board in June 2006, provides a guiding document for the implementation of the RTP. The Administrative Code defined the Special Needs Transit Service as follows:

- Existing paratransit services to be expanded by 3.5% annually to meet future mobility needs of the elderly and disabled population.
- Support existing volunteer-based services for seniors.
- Four agencies receiving funding:
 - Van Tran (currently Sun Van)
 - Coyote Run
 - Pima Transit
 - Volunteer-based transport for seniors (Pima Council on Aging)

In June 2006, the RTA Board also adopted a Transit Element Policies, Objectives and Procedures (POP) which stated that the "RTA Board shall implement transit improvements with the goal of creating a seamless regional transit system."

In July 2006, an intergovernmental agreement with the City of Tucson for extended Van Tran services was approved, followed by an agreement with Pima Council on Aging in January 2007 for volunteer-based senior transportation. An agreement with Pima County for special needs transit service in portions of unincorporated Pima County was approved in June 2008. The county residency requirement for Pima County special needs transit service was dropped in July 2009. Funding for Town of Oro Valley Coyote Run was not executed due to Oro Valley residency requirements for Coyote Run service.

In October 2008, the RTA Board directed staff to perform a regional paratransit system study. The Regional Paratransit System Plan (RPSP) was presented to the RTA Board in July 2009 with a recommendation to consolidate all dispatching, operations and provision of service, except Coyote Run, with Sun Van and to expand the service area after consolidation. The RTA Board voted to table the RPSP pending additional evaluation and discussion with affected organizations.

In January 2010, a paratransit task force of the Transit Working Group recommended a different approach than RPSP with nine recommendations:

- Expanding the service area
- Centralizing the call center
- Acquiring trapeze for Pima Transit Special Needs Service (under Handi-car contract)
- Moving Handi-car operations to paperless voucher system
- Implementing zone fares
- Eliminating the shared areas between Handi-car and Sun Van
- Extending Sun Van boundary to 1.5 miles around fixed routes
- Implementing a uniform regional fare
- Allowing 60 day customer transition period

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In February 2010, Local Transportation Assistance Funding (LTAF) was eliminated by the State. In May 2010, Sun Shuttle Route 420 & 425 become Sun Shuttle Dial-a-ride Green Valley/Sahuarita and was open to general public ridership. In addition, the RTA Proposal for regionalizing transit services with the City of Tucson was suspended. In June 2010, the Town of Oro Valley agreed to fund Coyote Run due to the loss of LTAF for an additional year.

In January 2011, management of the Pima County Special Needs Service was transferred to the RTA. In February 2011, the RTA contracted with the Town of Oro Valley for Sun Shuttle Dial-a-ride service, which replaced the Sun Shuttle Route 402, for general public service. In June 2011, the Town of Oro Valley voted again to fund Coyote Run and formed a Council subcommittee to discuss with RTA potential regional solutions. In July 2011, fares were increased on the RTA (formerly Pima County) Special Needs service to match Sun Van fares.