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**For immediate release**

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RTA to publish first Annual Report

**Highlights of FY2006-07 include transit service improvements, formation of citizens committee for Grant Road project**

Transit improvements resulting from funds collected through the Regional Transportation Authority in its first year include overcrowding relief, expanded evening service on weekdays and expanded service hours on weekends.\*\*\*\*\*

"The expanded service Sun Tran has implemented this year has truly made a difference in our community," said Katrina Heineking, Sun Tran's general manager. "Passengers regularly send their heartfelt appreciation, letting us know they now have more options and the ability to take advantage of more opportunities thanks to extended service hours."

The annual report of the RTA's FY 2006-07 will be published in the Arizona Daily Star and Tucson Citizen on Dec. 12 with complete details online at [www.RTAmobility.com](http://www.RTAmobility.com). The \$2.1 billion RTA plan was approved by voters on May 16, 2006.

One of the major projects in the 20-year plan is the widening of Grant Road, from Oracle to Swan. The \$161 million project will widen that stretch to six lanes. The city of Tucson, which manages the project, formed a task force of citizens to determine the alignment during an 18-month process. The task force last met Dec. 6 to put the finishing touches on a vision statement and on guiding principles for the Grant Road project. The document will be available for public comment through mid-January.

Design work is under way for 10 roadway projects. During the first five-year phase of the plan, 11 roadway projects will begin construction.

Another significant transit project of the RTA is the modern streetcar which is expected to travel from the University of Arizona campus of University Medical Center, along 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue, through downtown and to the west side of Interstate 10. The draft environmental

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assessment for the modern streetcar project was submitted to the Federal Transit Administration on Sept. 28.

The Pima Council on Aging also started receiving RTA funding to assist volunteer drivers with a liability insurance rider and gas mileage to encourage volunteer drivers to help transport non-drivers to medical appointments or other destinations, such as the grocery store. The PCOA will receive about \$245,000 annually for the volunteer assistance.

A total of 17 safety improvement projects were completed in the fiscal year with another 11 under way. These include major intersection improvements, new pedestrian crossings, as well as new traffic signal technology. More than \$1 million in sidewalk and bike lane improvements also have been completed.

Through November, the RTA Board has approved 111 projects with 77 projects under development, six under construction and 23 projects completed. Also, five transit element projects have been implemented.

Through November \$91.2 million was collected from the countywide half-cent excise tax, which Pima County voters also approved on May 16, 2006. Of that, \$13 million has been dispersed for work that has been completed.

Other transit improvements that went into effect Aug. 12 include weeknight service until 11 p.m. on Routes 2, 21, 23, 26, 27 and 29, extended weekend service hours on Routes 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, and 11. Also, service on Ina Road and extended service on Sundays on Route 16. Services that went into effect Nov. 11 include extended weekend service hours on Routes 1, 10, 15, 17, 19, 22, 34.

The RTA plan includes a total of 35 road improvement projects, and includes more than 200 intersection improvements, 200 bus pullouts, 500 miles of bike lanes and paths, and plans to address safe crossings for wildlife to improve safety for drivers and pedestrians.

Projects are under way in each of the jurisdictions to help provide regional mobility and safety, which were priorities identified by the public as the RTA plan was developed.

Additional information about the plan may be found at [www.RTAmobility.com](http://www.RTAmobility.com) or by calling (520) 770-9410.

*The Regional Transportation Authority is the fiscal manager of the \$2.1 billion plan approved by Pima County voters on May 16, 2006. The RTA Board is comprised of representatives from the local jurisdictions in Pima County, including the cities of Tucson and South Tucson, Pima County, the towns of Marana, Oro Valley and Sahuarita, the Pascua Yaqui Tribe and the Tohono O'odham Nation. A representative of the Arizona State Transportation Board also serves on the board. For more information about the RTA plan, visit [www.RTAmobility.com](http://www.RTAmobility.com) or call (520) 770-9410.*

### **\*\*\*\*\*FY 2006-07 Transit Improvements**

**Effective August 14, 2006** - Overcrowding Relief – Additional bus trips scheduled to serve passengers where overcrowding had occurred on a regular basis for several years. Additionally, stand-by buses positioned throughout the service area on a daily basis, assisting with overcrowding situations where possible.

**Effective February 19, 2007** - Routes 4, 8 and 16 – Weeknight service until midnight.  
Routes 3, 6, 7, 9, and 11 - Weeknight service until 11 p.m.

**Effective May 21, 2007** - Routes 1, 10, 15, 17, 19, 22, 34 – Weeknight service until 11 p.m.  
Routes 3, 4, 15 - Maintaining mid-day frequencies Monday through Friday during the summer months.