

NOTES



US-60/Grand Avenue COMPASS

Loop 303 to Interstate 10

Planning Partners
June 27, 2013

Meeting

PLANNING PARTNER ATTENDEES

Chaun Hill – ADOT/UPM

Aryan Lirange – FHWA

Debbie Albert – City of Goodyear

Jamal Rahimi – City of Peoria

Abhi Dayal – Valley Metro

Sue McDermott – City of El Mirage

Allan Grover – City of Glendale

Tim Oliver – MCDOT

Stephen Chang – City of Surprise

Wulf Grote – Valley Metro

MAG STAFF

Bob Hazlett – MAG

Marc Pearsall – MAG

Eileen Yazzie – MAG

Micah Henry – MAG

Nathan Pryor - MAG

CONSULTANT TEAM

Jamie Blakeman – B&N

Jason Pagnard – B&N

Dan Marum – Wilson

Todd Cencimino – B&N

Peggy Fiandaca – PSA

Bob Hazlett called the meeting to order at 1:05 PM. He welcomed everyone and had everyone introduce themselves.

RECENT ACTIVITIES

Bob Hazlett presented the revised word cloud and provided a summary of recent activities. Three meetings were held on June 11th, including a presentation to the Surprise Chamber of Commerce and two focus groups (one on Business/Economic Development interests and the other on Rail and Freight interests). Recent data collection and analysis efforts include existing access conditions, existing railroad operations, and expressway documents. An Existing Conditions Mapbook has been developed, and corridor concepts have been preliminarily investigated. Two new documents have been completed and are under review by MAG, 1) Existing Access Management, and 2) Focus Group summary report.

EXISTING CONDITIONS SUMMARY

Using a PowerPoint presentation, Jason Pagnard gave an overview of the existing conditions research completed. Topics discussed included the corridor characteristics,

NOTES

planned grade separations, railroad operations, existing land use, environmental overview, traffic operations, crash history, and access management.

Wulf Grote mentioned that Valley Metro is starting a high-capacity transit study (19th Avenue to Downtown Glendale) and one of the alternatives being studied could have an impact on the Grand Avenue corridor. Jason mentioned that he was aware of the study and the team is watching it closely.

FOCUS GROUPS

Peggy Fiandaca provided an overview of the two focus groups conducted on June 11th. Twenty participants attended the Business/Economic Development interest and eight attended the Rail/Freight interest focus groups. The purpose of the focus groups was to understand competitive advantages or impediments, identify critical issues, explore visions and opportunities, and solicit comments from the specific focus group perspectives of the four preliminary corridor concepts. Peggy mentioned that the conversations provided good input for the team to further develop the concepts.

FOUR CORRIDOR CONCEPTS

Bob gave a brief reminder overview of the four corridor concepts, which was presented and approved for further study at the March 20th Charter Partners Meeting.

- **RED Concept 1 (Adopted Regional Transportation Plan)** – The no-build alternative incorporating only future planned and funded projects.
- **PURPLE Concept 2 (Expressway)** – An expressway alternative.
- **BLUE Concept 3 (Commuter Rail and Operational Performance)** – An alternative incorporating commuter rail providing rail service in the peak direction during the peak hour.
- **GREEN Concept 4 (Economic Development with Enhanced Connections)** – An economic-centric alternative through incorporating a high capacity transit option.

RED Concept 1 (Adopted Regional Transportation Plan)

Discussion:

- Bob Hazlett mentioned three potential candidate grade separation locations at 83rd Avenue and Peoria Avenue, Northern Parkway flyover ramp, and 19th Avenue and McDowell Road and asked if these locations were logical.
 - Jamal Rahimi - The intersection of 83rd Avenue and Peoria Avenue should not be considered for grade separation as it is located in Peoria's downtown economic development area.
 - Debbie Albert - The intersection of Bethany Home Road and 51st Avenue should be considered for grade separation.

PURPLE Concept 2 (Expressway)

Discussion:

- Bob Hazlett – The concepts shown on the figure are from the 1989 Grand Freeway Concept Finalization Report, Grand Avenue from New River to 7th Avenue & Van Buren.
- Bob Hazlett – At the June 11th focus group meeting, Floyd Roehrich of ADOT suggested this concept to look at eliminating all existing traffic signals along the corridor.
- Tim Oliver – Why are we considering this concept? There is no money to build it, it does not seem like a realistic option, and it contradicts economic development goals. One of the problems is that we have already built a number of grade-separations where US-60/Grand Avenue is not the priority.
- Debbie Albert – We need to keep this option on the table at least through this study. US-60/Grand Avenue needs to serve regional traffic.

BLUE Concept 3 (Commuter Rail and Operational Performance)

Discussion:

- Marc Pearsall – Edit the proposed Commuter Rail stop at 1st Avenue to 3rd Avenue and Harrison Street on Slide 23 and in the handout.
- Marc Pearsall – Phase B of the commuter rail project will provide rail service every hour in each direction.
- How do we facilitate the station locations? Phase A has double-tracking (Union Station to Peoria). The station locations were blessed by the communities.
- Marc Pearsall – Consider Diesel Multiple Units (like Portland, Austin and Denton) which looks like light rail but are a commuter rail. They run more frequently than commuter rail and can operate in the middle of the street. Denver went to electric multiple units because they needed something quicker than every hour. These modes should be examined.
- Marc Pearsall – The commuter rail study was focused on speed, getting people to and from Surprise and downtown Phoenix as fast as possible. The commuter rail study assumed existing plans were relevant and would be implemented. Commuter rail operates on the existing rail. The plan includes five runs during the morning peak hour from Surprise to Phoenix, two runs during the lunch hour (one from Surprise to Phoenix and the other from Phoenix to Surprise), and five runs during the afternoon peak hour from Phoenix to Surprise.
- It is critical to address pedestrian and bicycle access with this concept.
- Debbie Albert – It is important to eliminate as many signals as possible. Glendale prefers grade-separations.

NOTES

GREEN Concept 4 (Economic Development with Enhanced Connections)

Discussion:

- Eliminate as many intersections as possible
- Reduces lanes to four-lane operation from the SR-101L to downtown Phoenix and includes a higher capacity alternative within the existing right-of-way (ROW).
- Eileen Yazzie – Consider Bus Rapid Transit (BRT). Eileen will send a copy of a PowerPoint presentation regarding BRT to the team.
- Nathan Pryor – What are the bike and pedestrian opportunities with this concept? This concept must evaluate pedestrian and bicycling.
- Tim Oliver – It is important to communicate to the Charter Partners what it takes to keep US-60/Grand Avenue as a regional road of significance so that ADOT continues to maintain the roadway.
- Any options would have to be located in ROW 20 feet from BNSF ROW.

Bob Hazlett summarized that the team will take the information provided by the Planning Partners to refine the GREEN and BLUE concepts into alternatives. The team will move forward and conduct a meeting with Valley Metro.

PUBLIC OUTREACH NEXT STEPS

The Corridor Geographic-Based Dialogue Meetings are set for:

- Glendale Council Chambers – July 22nd; 6 to 8 pm
- AZ Communiversity at Surprise – July 24th; 6 to 8 pm.

Invitations will be emailed to the database and a media release distributed. Everyone was encouraged to communicate and invite citizens to the meetings.

Nathan Pryor mentioned the “I ♥ Grand” project and the goal to conduct events along the corridor in May 2014. There is a planning committee meeting on July 9th at 10:00 am to begin discussing potential events and anyone is welcome to participate.

NEXT STEPS

The next steps in the process are:

- Geographic meetings in July
- Charter Partners meeting August 14
- Establish and analyze alternatives by November 2013
- Workshops/study session presentation by Bob in November/December
- Develop Access Management Plan and Policies by December 2013
- Project completion by Spring 2014
- Planning Partners meeting July 25 and August 29

Meeting was adjourned at 3:33 PM.