

Northwest Valley Local Transit System Study



MARICOPA ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS

NORTHWEST VALLEY LOCAL TRANSIT SYSTEM STUDY

DRAFT FINAL REPORT

JUNE 2013





**NORTHWEST VALLEY
LOCAL TRANSIT SYSTEM STUDY**

**FINAL REPORT
JUNE 2013**

Prepared for:



Prepared by:



Table of Contents

Chapter 1: Executive Summary	01
Chapter 2: Existing Conditions	09
Chapter 3: Community Outreach Summary	37
Chapter 4: Service Recommendations	93
Chapter 5: Financial Plan	123
Chapter 6: Implementation Plan.....	137

This page intentionally blank.

1

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This page intentionally blank.

CHAPTER 1 – EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Northwest Valley sub-region of the Metro Phoenix area is home to over 600,000 residents, many drawn to its inviting climate and quality of life. Collectively the communities of El Mirage, Glendale, Peoria, Sun City, Sun City Festival (in the town of Buckeye), Sun City Grand (in the city of Surprise), Sun City West, Surprise, and Youngtown have experienced significant population growth across the past decade, translating to an increase in transportation demand.

The Northwest Valley is home to many of Arizona’s top attractions. Each year, the cities of Glendale, Peoria, and Surprise host Spring Training for several Major League Baseball teams; while the city of Glendale is home to the Arizona Cardinals football and Phoenix Coyotes ice hockey franchises. Glendale is also home to the Arizona State University West Campus, Thunderbird School of Global Management, and Midwestern University, one of the region’s premier medical schools.

The Northwest Valley is also an attraction for seniors and retirees, particularly the communities of Sun City, Sun City Festival, Sun City Grand, Sun City West, and Youngtown. The sub-region also features a growing population of young families and diversified housing markets, most notably in El Mirage, Glendale, Peoria, and Surprise. These attributes and attractions, combined with numerous retail centers including the Arrowhead Towne Center and proximity to Luke Air Force Base, make the Northwest Valley one of the fastest growing regions in the American Southwest.

Transit Service Types

This report discusses four forms of public transit service that either currently serve the Northwest Valley or are proposed for future implementation.

- *Fixed-route service*, utilizing vehicles along an established route according to a regular, set schedule.
- *Limited-stop express service* operates along an established route according to a set schedule, yet stops less frequently covering longer distances in less time.
- *Deviated fixed-route service* follows a predetermined route and approximate schedule; yet unlike traditional fixed-route service, vehicles may deviate up to ¼-mile away from the normal routing in response to “pre-scheduled” passenger pickup/drop-off.
- *Dial-A-Ride service*, a shared-ride, reservation-based service catering typically to seniors and persons with disabilities.

Existing Transit Service in the Northwest Valley

While the Northwest Valley has experienced robust population growth as well as residential and commercial development, much of the sub-region lacks fixed-route transit service. The City of Glendale employs a reasonably comprehensive transit service with its own fixed-route shuttle system, the Gus Bus, along with several Valley Metro routes. Beyond Glendale, however, local fixed-route transit service remains relatively limited (especially in the western portion of the sub-region). Valley Metro Route 106 serves portions of Peoria and Youngtown, yet only runs hourly. Valley Metro's 571 and Grand Avenue Limited routes provide limited peak-hour service linking Surprise and Downtown Phoenix via Grand Avenue, although service levels have varied considerably during recent years.

Complementing these fixed-route services is a fairly comprehensive Dial-A-Ride (DAR) program. Valley Metro's Northwest Valley Dial-A-Ride program provides service to most of the Northwest Valley, while the City of Peoria operates its own DAR service within city limits. Sun City and Sun City West previously had a DAR service operated by a non-profit organization, although this service was absorbed by Valley Metro in 2011. The City of Surprise also operated its own DAR service, although this service was shifted to Valley Metro in October 2012 as a cost-cutting measure.

The consultant team was tasked with identifying practical recommendations specific to public transit intended to enhance resident mobility within individual communities while also identifying opportunities for synergy among key transit nodes. The team's primary approach was to develop practical, sustainable service recommendations using a phased approach (i.e., near-term, mid-term, and long-term implementation periods).

Report Overview

This study had two primary goals: The identification and quantification of transit demand throughout the Northwest Valley, and development of practical recommendations intended to address said demand in the most cost-effective manner possible. To accomplish this, the consultant team completed a variety of activities which are documented in the following chapters:

1. Executive Summary
2. Existing Conditions
3. Public Involvement
4. Service Recommendations
5. Financial Plan
6. Implementation Plan

The [Existing Conditions](#) chapter presents a snapshot of demographic characteristics and existing transit services within each community within the study area. The consultant team obtained demographic data from the federal census; and transit service information from direct observation, the individual

communities, and Valley Metro. Where applicable, the consultant team then mapped findings using ESRI ArcMap software.

Public involvement included more than 20 community workshops at locations throughout the Northwest Valley as well as surveys conducted via direct mail, the internet, and at community workshops. In total more than over 2,600 surveys were collected, providing a wealth of information concerning transit-related needs and wants specific to Northwest Valley residents. We used both the survey data and input from community meetings in developing the service recommendations.

Key Findings

- Existing transit service is presently limited in most portions of the Northwest Valley. Where it does exist, it runs either hourly or less frequently on weekdays as a limited- express route for persons who work in downtown Phoenix.
- Residents of the Northwest Valley exhibited a strong desire to access local retail centers and healthcare centers via public transit.
- Participants in community workshops indicated an overall desire for local circulators as a means of addressing intra-community mobility needs.
- Many survey respondents/workshop attendees expressed a desire for improved transit connectivity/service to destinations beyond the Northwest Valley, especially downtown Phoenix and Sky Harbor.

Utilizing input from the public involvement process the consultant team prepared the **Service Recommendations** chapter. The recommendations presented therein address questions of routing, scheduling, administration, and finance and capital. Taken collectively, three primary themes emerged:

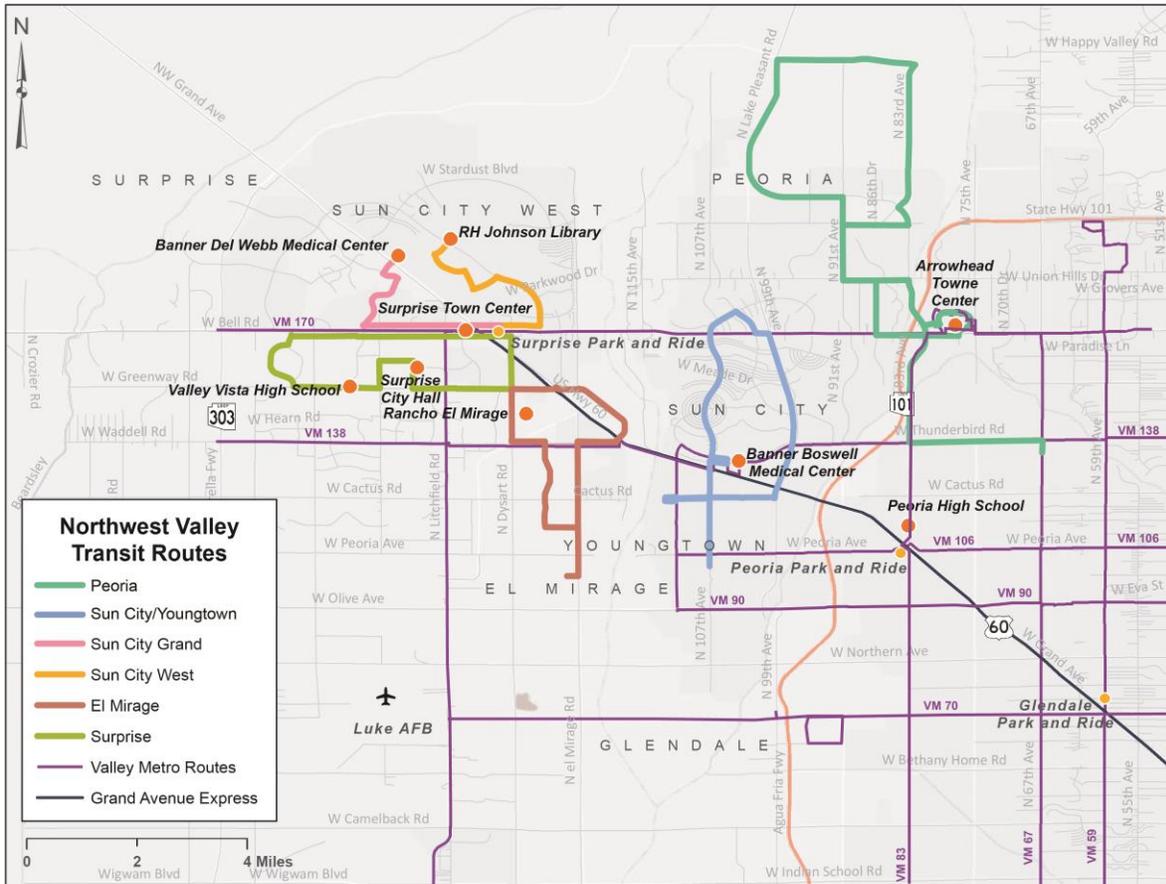
- Implement circulator routes to enhance access to address local shopping and healthcare-related travel needs,
- Establish an Intergovernmental Cooperative Agreement among the Northwest Valley communities to address, administrative, operational, and funding functions.
- Increase Valley Metro bus service throughout the Northwest Valley.

The **Financial Plan** chapter presents cost estimates specific to implementation of these study's near-, mid-, and long-term service recommendations. The Plan also identifies likely funding sources at the federal, state, regional, and local levels.

Finally, the **Implementation Plan** provides a summary of service recommendations while recommending the order in which they should be implemented. The Plan also provides an at-a-glance summary of each recommendation and the phase recommended for its implementation.

Exhibit 1.1.1 Illustrates where the recommended fixed- and deviated-route services would operate.

Exhibit 1.1.1 Circulator Routes and Valley Metro Service for All Implementation Phases



This page intentionally left blank.

2

EXISTING CONDITIONS

This page intentionally left blank.

CHAPTER 2 – EXISTING CONDITIONS

The Northwest Valley is home to nearly 600,000 people and some of Arizona’s top attractions. Each year, the cities of Glendale, Surprise and Peoria host Spring Training for several Major League Baseball teams, while the City of Glendale is home to the Arizona Cardinals football team. Glendale is also home to the Arizona State University West Campus, Thunderbird School of Global Management, and Midwestern University, one of the region’s premier medical schools. The Northwest Valley is also a popular home for retirees, particularly the communities of Youngtown, Sun City, Sun City West, Sun City Grand, and Sun City Festival. The region also features a growing population of young families and diversified markets, most notably in El Mirage, Surprise, Peoria and Glendale. These attributes, combined with numerous retail centers including Arrowhead Towne Center and proximity to Luke Air Force Base, make the Northwest Valley one of the fastest growing regions in the American Southwest.

2.1 POPULATION AND LAND USE

Transportation demand is people-and goods-driven since the regional road system allows for the movement of both large and small freight shipments. Destinations, trip purposes, and mode preferences change as the population matures. A community’s land-use patterns and topography influence residential and commercial development along with the resulting trip generators (origins and destinations). [The key to sustainable transit ridership is to effectively match demand with optimal service delivery and ensure that required financial support is available.](#)

Maricopa County

In terms of population, Maricopa County is the fourth largest county in the country with a population greater than 23 states. According to the 2010 Census, Maricopa’s population stood at 3.8 million residents, or approximately 64 percent of the total state residents. The City of Phoenix (which is not within the study area) is the largest city in Arizona. Glendale, Peoria, and Surprise (which are in the study area) fall within the Top 10 cities in Arizona from a population perspective.



Two communities within the study area, Sun City and Sun City West, lie in unincorporated Maricopa County. Both communities are relative anomalies with densely populated, similarly-aged residents. County-wide transit challenges exist with respect to linking the more rural areas of the county, which are less densely populated, with the urban core where transit service currently exists.

El Mirage

The City of El Mirage, founded in 1937, is 10.03 square miles in size, making it the second smallest municipality within the study area, behind eastern neighbor Youngtown. Home to 31,797 residents, El Mirage has the youngest average resident age (28.1 years). Approximately thirty-six percent of its population consists of residents 18 years of age or younger. Residents age 65 and above comprise 6.4 percent while residents age 85 and above comprise 0.4 percent of the overall city population which is also the lowest proportions for the study area for each cohort.



There are 7,988 households in the community. The average number of persons per household is 3.50, the highest volume among study area communities. The density is approximately 3,170 persons per square mile. Median income for El Mirage households is \$48,726 and per capita income is \$15,973. With 20 percent of its population below the federal poverty line, El Mirage reflects the highest level of household poverty within the study area. The majority of new residential growth in El Mirage has been characterized by higher income households with different transportation needs that are different from those of the City's older residential neighborhoods.

Approximately 2.5 percent of El Mirage households lack access to a personal vehicle. Persons with disabilities total approximately 8.9 percent of the City's population. The average El Mirage resident has a one-way commute time of 32 minutes.

Existing land use is primarily single-family residential (33.9 percent) and Open Space (31.7 percent). Future land-use projections reveal a modest increase in single-family residential units with most of the City's growth occurring within the Multiple-Use designation. Future development is slated for current Open Space land use areas, which are projected to decrease by approximately 70 percent.

With a younger population and limited number of trip generators, current and forecast demand is focused on both inter-community connectivity as well as access to the regional transit network. Future growth is expected to focus on single-family housing, which can generate significant demand for transit due to students who use transit to get to school. An example of a community with similar school-based demand is Ahwautukee, which operates the ALEX circulator. Amenities such as park-and-ride lots are also common trip generators as residents seek to carpool and access regional transit services.

Glendale

The City of Glendale, founded in 1892, is 59.98 square miles in size, placing it near the middle of study area communities in terms of land area. Home to 230,482 residents, Glendale is the fifth most-populous municipality in Arizona and the largest within the study area. Glendale residents comprise about 38 percent of study area population.



The median age in Glendale is 32.5 years, with 28 percent of residents belonging to the 18 and under cohort. Glendale is home to 21,204 persons age 65 or older, or about 9.2 percent of total population. Residents age 85 and over constitute 1.2 percent of total population. Population density is currently 3,780 residents per square mile, making Glendale the second-most densely populated of study area communities after Youngtown.

Glendale is also home to the largest number of households in the study area at 80,235. Households consist of an average of 2.83 residents. Of these, approximately 6,900 do not have access to a personal vehicle, translating to about 8.5 percent of households. Further, residents have an average commute time of 26.3 minutes.

Median household income is \$51,103, indicating a higher household income than the study area average of \$48,903. At \$23,373, the Glendale per capita income is less than the average of all communities at \$24,686. Despite this, 16.6 percent of the Glendale population lives below the federal poverty level. Approximately 10.5 percent of the overall population is comprised of persons with disabilities.

The largest existing land-use is single-family residential, which accounts for 40.8 percent of total land allocation and is expected to increase to 45.3 percent by 2020. The second-largest use is other/public employment, which is expected to remain relatively stable into the future. The amount of open space is expected to drop significantly across the next decade.

With significant regional attractions and major retail and educational facilities, the transit needs in Glendale are both internal and external. Continued growth in entertainment-related development as well as the seasonal population influx related to Major League Baseball spring training and the NFL football season often translates to significant impact on the local and regional transportation network. Further, Glendale's proximity to Phoenix makes it a popular community for residents working the Phoenix Metro area.

Peoria

The City of Peoria, founded in 1888, is 174.4 square miles in size, making it the largest municipality within the study area in terms of land area. Home to 156,637 residents, Peoria is the ninth most populous municipality in Arizona. Peoria's population is spread across a large area and the density of 883 persons per square mile is the lowest of the region. The City's planning area extends northward past the Maricopa County boundary.



The median age is 38.1 years, with 57 percent of the population between 20 and 64 years old. Fourteen percent is age 65 or over, while 26 percent is 18 years and younger. Approximately 3,600 residents, or

2.3 percent of the population, are 85 or older. Persons with disabilities account for 10.9 percent of Peoria's population.

Peoria's population comprises 54,398 households with an average of 2.71 persons per household. Median household income is the highest of the study area at \$63,535, well above the study area average of \$48,903. Per capita income is \$29,279, second only to Sun City West. Seven percent of Peoria residents are below the federal poverty level. Approximately 4.4 percent of households do not have access to a personal vehicle. Peoria's residents have an average commute time of just under 28 minutes.

The largest existing land designation is Vacant or Developing (39,373 acres, or 39.2 percent), with Open Space a close second (38,203 acres, or 38 percent). Single-family residential is a distant third (14.4 percent), yet this is expected to change dramatically as Peoria continues to grow. The Maricopa Association of Governments' (MAG) land-use projections forecast that single-family residential will increase from 14.4 percent to 45.1 percent of total land allocation.

Sun City

Sun City is defined as a Census Designated Place, meaning a community with specifically delineated boundaries and population, although not a legally incorporated municipality. Relative to the surrounding study area, Sun City is a 14.37-square mile county "island" that features a significant population of a very specific age demographic.

According to the federal census, Sun City, founded in 1960, is home to nearly 38,000. Of this, 32,246 persons (85.9 percent) are age 60 and above, with a median age of 73.4 years. Fifteen percent of the population is 85 years old or older, the largest percentage of all communities. Less than one percent of residents are under 18 years of age. Sun City also has the highest percentage of persons with disabilities at 32 percent of the population. The population skews toward female (58.3 percent).

The community includes 23,633 households. Population density is 2,610 persons per square mile. Median household income (\$35,304) falls below the study area average, which is explained in part by it having lowest number of persons per household of the study area at 1.6 persons per household. And although many residents are on a fixed income, per capita income (\$27,492) is slightly higher than the area average. Approximately 6.5 percent of Sun City households are below the federal poverty level. Five percent of residential households do not have access to a personal vehicle. The average commute time for Sun City residents was 25.6 minutes.

A relatively modest number of residents live in an assisted care facility while the majority occupies single-family residences. The master-planned community is gated and infrastructure is geared towards connectivity within the development with a limited number of external access points. The street network is designed in curvilinear patterns geared toward vehicle mobility, including golf carts, rather than pedestrian mobility. Resident average age translates to significant demand for local paratransit

services. Resident average age is expected to remain relatively constant leaving the demand fairly constant across the study's horizon. National trends towards seniors aging in place rather than moving to senior developments could have implications for the long term viability of Sun City and Sun City West in their current form.

Sun City West

Much like Sun City, Sun City West is a Census Designated Place consisting of a specific and unique demographic compared to the regional population. Sun City West, founded in 1978, is 10.93 square miles with a population of 25,535. Population density is 2,245. Ninety-three percent of residents are 60 years old and older, with a median age of 75.6 years. 14.8 percent are 85 years of age and older. The population skews toward female (56.3 percent), with an average of 1.67 persons per household.

There are 15,300 households in Sun City West. Median household income is slightly below the study area average at \$45,235, yet per capita income is \$33,331, the highest of all study area communities. Sun City West also has the lowest percentage of its population at the federal poverty line at 3.7 percent. 4.4 percent of Sun City West residents do not have access to a personal automobile. Sun City West also had the shortest average commute time (25.1 minutes) among communities in the study area.

Sun City West shares many characteristics with its neighbor, Sun City. Most residents live in single-family dwellings, and the street network is oriented toward movement within the community with few entry and exit points. Also like Sun City, the relatively high average age of Sun City West residents creates a significant demand for paratransit services, which is expected to remain fairly constant into the future.

Sun City Festival

The community of Sun City Festival, founded in 2006, is located within the City of Buckeye about 10 miles west of Surprise.

Surprise

The City of Surprise, founded in 1938, is 105.75 square miles in area, making it the second largest city within the study area in terms of land area behind Peoria. Home to 117,517 residents, Surprise is the tenth most-populous municipality in Arizona. The median age is 36.8 years, with 19 percent of residents aged 65 and over. Twenty-seven percent is 18 years or younger. One and a half percent of Surprise residents are 85 or over. Persons with disabilities make up 10 percent of the City's population.



Surprise includes 38,229 households. Average household densities run about 2.71 persons per household. Current population density of the City is 1,111 persons per square mile, the second least dense community in the study area above Peoria. Median household income is \$62,141, while per capita income is \$25,884. Approximately 7.7 percent of households in Surprise are below the federal poverty level.

Surprise has the highest percentage of households with vehicle access, with only two percent of households not having access to a vehicle. Surprise residents also reported lengthiest average commute time (34.2 minutes) among study area communities.

The largest existing land-use is Vacant or Developing, with 57 percent of current land allocations within this category. Single-family residential is a distant second at 19.5 percent; however, this is expected to increase dramatically as the city continues to grow. Land-use projections cite single-family residential increasing from 19.5 percent to 61.4 percent over the next 20 years. While not large in terms of cumulative totals, both multi-family residential and retail are expected to more than quadruple. This is particularly important in terms of gauging future transit demand.

Youngtown

Youngtown, founded in 1954, is the smallest municipality within the study area in terms of geography as well as population and has the unique distinction of being the very first master-planned, retirement community in the United States. The Youngtown city limits cover 1.53 square miles hosting a population of 6,156. The median age is 36.7 years with 25 percent of the population aged 18 or younger. 19.2 percent is over 65 years of age, including 5.1 percent 85 years old or over.



Despite having the lowest number of households (2,109) of the study area, Youngtown is the most densely populated community at 4,015 persons per square mile. Youngtown households are made up of an average of 2.6 residents. Median household income is \$36,280 and average per capita income is \$17,471. Sixteen percent of the population is below the federal poverty level. Among all study area communities, Youngtown has the highest percentage of households lacking access to a personal vehicle at 9.1 percent. Youngtown's average commute time was 29 minutes.

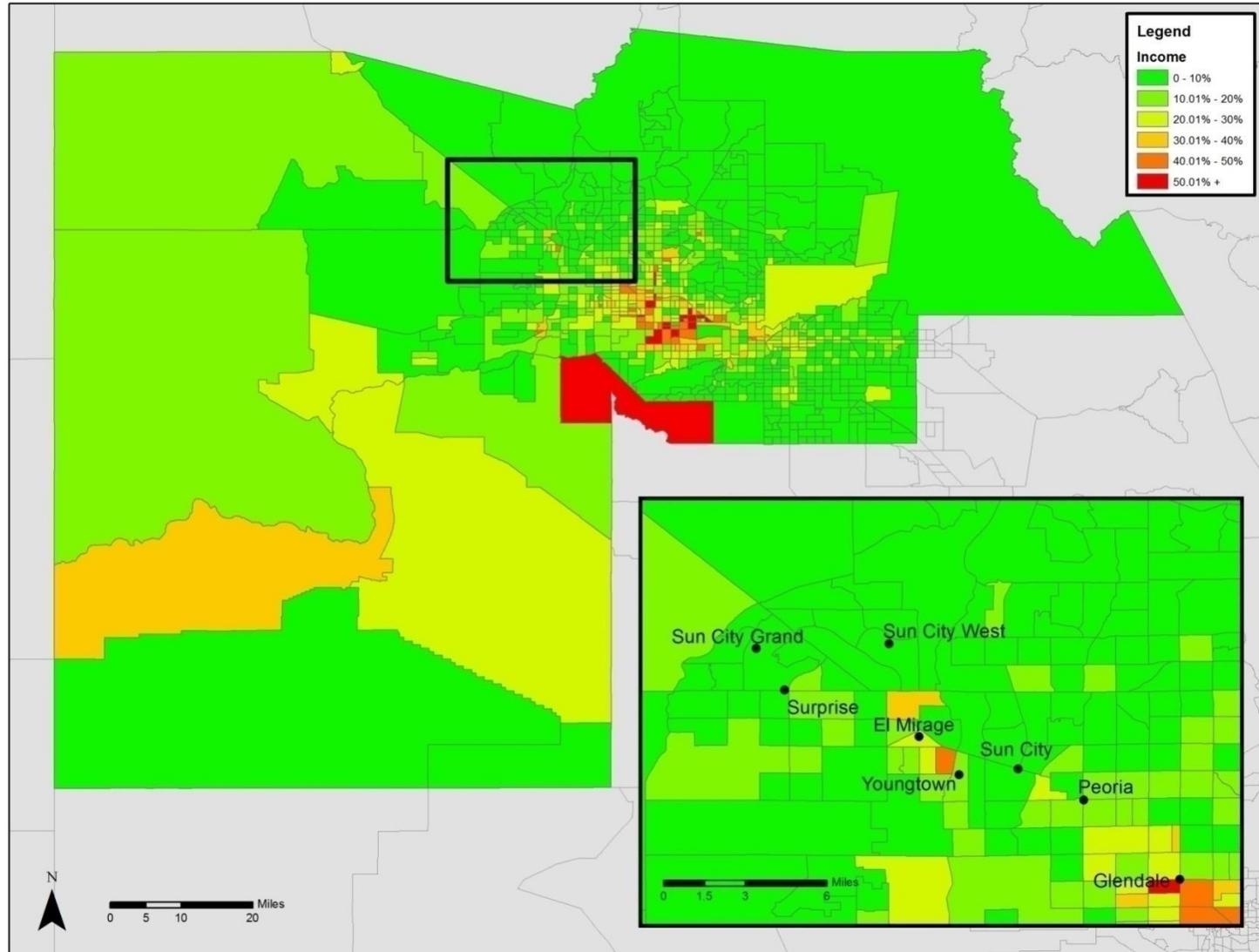
Single-family residential zones account for 46.5 percent of existing land-use and is projected to increase to 59.7 percent within the next 20 years. Retail is expected to see a modest increase while all other land-uses are projected to remain relatively stable.

Transit needs within the Youngtown limits are more modest than those in other Northwest Valley communities due to relatively few trip generators and limited resident population. Conversely, the few trip generators indicate an increased need for inter-community or regional travel, which is the largest priority for the community followed by access to park and ride facilities.

Study Area Demographic Patterns

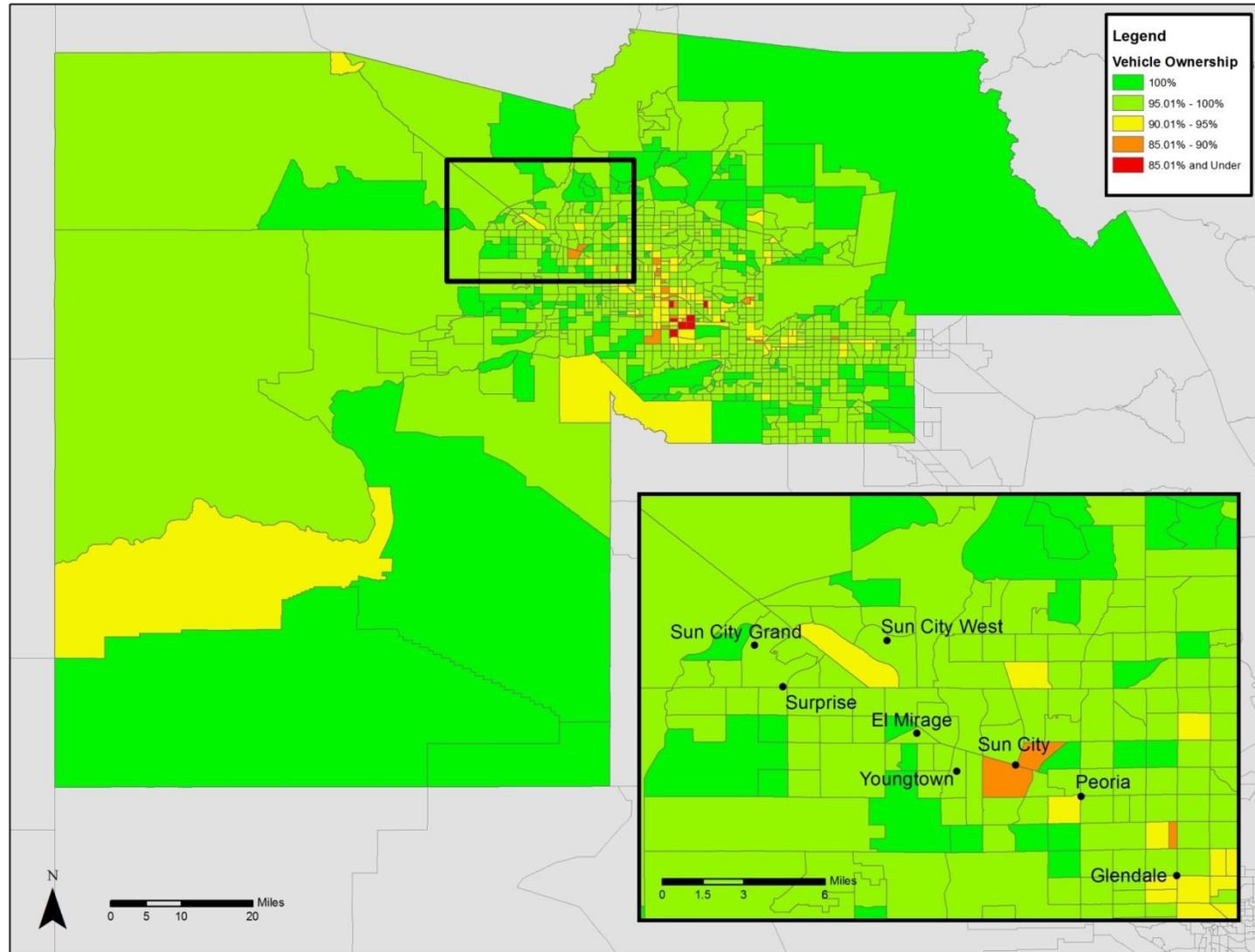
The following maps provide a visual representation of the population and demographic patterns within the study area, as indicated by 2010 Census Tract data.

Exhibit 2.1.1 Low-Income Residents by Census



Tract

Exhibit 2.1.2 Vehicle Ownership by Census



Tract

Exhibit 2.1.3 Youth Residents (age 17 and under) by Census Tract

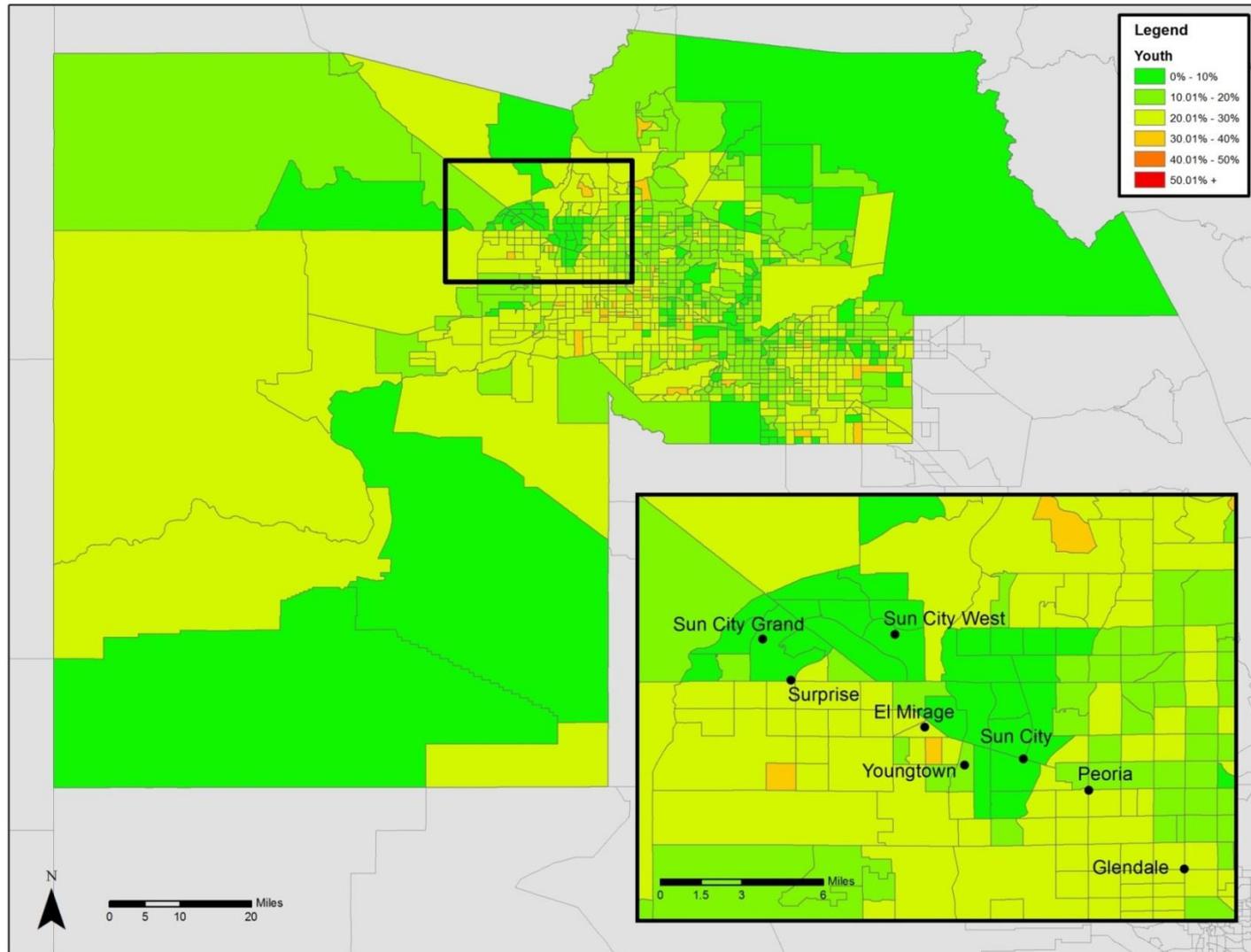
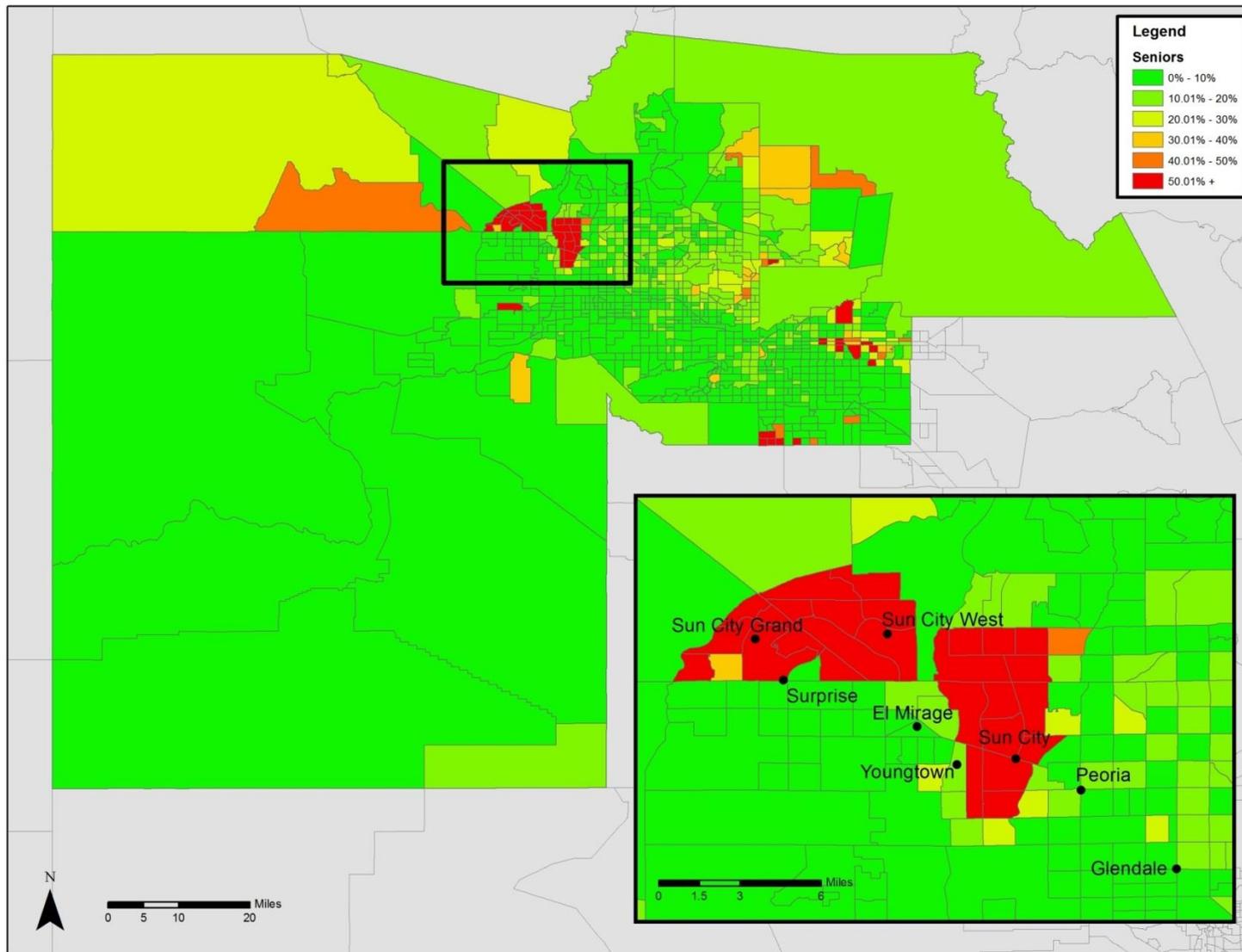


Exhibit 2.1.4 Senior Residents (age 65 and older) by Census Tract



2.2 INVENTORY OF EXISTING TRANSIT SERVICES

The first step toward improving mobility is to understand existing services and available amenities. Cataloging existing infrastructure and services facilitates planning for the near- and long-term and assists decision-makers in identifying areas that are in most need of improvement or enhancement. Maintaining a current inventory of transit infrastructure and services is also a key tactic in prioritizing future transit expenditures.

Valley Metro Local Routes

The Northwest Valley, currently one of Metro of Phoenix's largest sub-areas in terms of area and population, is projected for continued growth over the next 20 years. Despite this, there is currently only one local transit route extending west of Loop 101 (Agua Fria Freeway), the majority of the study area.

Route 106

Route 106 – Peoria/Shea serves local roads between its eastern limit in Scottsdale and its western limit in Peoria. Roads utilized are primarily Shea Boulevard in Scottsdale and Peoria Avenue in Phoenix, Glendale, and Peoria.

Key stops include, from west to east, 105th Avenue at Santa Fe, 99th Avenue at Peoria, 67th Avenue at Peoria, 43rd Avenue at Peoria, Metro Center, 19th Avenue at Peoria, Sunnyslope Transit Center, 32nd Street at Cactus, Paradise Valley Mall, Scottsdale Road at Shea, 90th Street at Shea, 124th Street at Via Linda, and Mayo Clinic Scottsdale.

The route serves three park and ride facilities, although none are located within the study area (the furthest west is the Metro Center Transit Center, located adjacent to the Peoria Avenue/Interstate 17 interchange in Phoenix).

Valley Metro Express Routes

Whereas local routes serve shorter trips within specific communities, express routes are geared toward inter-regional trips serving commuters traveling from suburban areas into the urban core. In this case, Valley Metro express routes serve areas in Surprise and Glendale, connecting with employment centers in Phoenix. There are three express routes serving the NW Valley.

Route 571

Route 571 – Surprise Express connects the suburban, residential areas in Surprise with employment centers in downtown Phoenix, mostly via the Grand Avenue corridor. The route runs solely during the peak commute, with three inbound runs (from Surprise to Phoenix) in the morning and three outbound runs (from Phoenix to Surprise) in the afternoon, though a fourth trip in each direction is

expected to be added in July 2013. This route is presently funded by the City of Surprise, though in the future will be funded jointly by the cities of Surprise, El Mirage, and Phoenix

Route 571 serves two park and ride lots: the Surprise Park and Ride at Bell Road and 134th Drive and the Walmart on 129th Avenue and Thunderbird Road. Key stops within Phoenix include First Avenue at Van Buren Street and the route terminus at 18th Avenue and Adams Street.

Route 573

Route 573 – Northwest Valley/Downtown Express connects populations in the NW Valley with downtown Phoenix via the limited access corridors Loop 101 (Agua Fria Freeway) and I-10.

Similar to Route 571, the Northwest Valley/Downtown Express serves peak-hour commuters with four trips during each peak period. The route travels along Loop 101 from Peoria in the north to the Loop 101/I-10 interchange in Tolleson. The route utilizes I-10 between Tolleson and Phoenix.

The northwest terminus is located in Glendale at the Community Church of Joy at the 75th Avenue/Rose Garden Lane intersection. This location serves as a *de facto* park and ride lot through an agreement between Valley Metro and the church. There are also park-and-ride lots at the intersections of 59th Avenue/Myrtle Avenue and 99th Avenue/Glendale Avenue in Glendale. Key stops in Phoenix include First Avenue at Van Buren Street and 177th Avenue at Jefferson Street.

Route 575

Route 575 – Northwest Valley/Downtown Express connects NW Valley commuters with Phoenix via the Loop 101 and I-17 corridors. Similar to Route 573, this route connects Peoria residents with employment destinations in Phoenix. This route utilizes the northwest portion of Loop 101 and the I-17 corridor between the Loop 101/I-17 interchange and downtown.

Valley Metro Limited Routes

Valley Metro also operates the Grand Avenue Limited (GAL) as a limited-stop service on weekdays.

Grand Avenue Limited (GAL)

Similar to the Valley Metro Express Routes, the GAL route runs two eastbound trips from the Peoria Park and Ride to Downtown Phoenix on weekday mornings and two westbound trips from Downtown Phoenix to the Peoria Park and Ride on weekday afternoons. The GAL service only stops at five locations (Peoria Park and Ride, Peoria Avenue and 84th Avenue, Glendale Park and Ride at 59th Avenue and Myrtle Avenue, 19th Avenue and McDowell Road, and 19th Avenue and Van Buren Street). This route replaced a previous local route that operated along Grand Avenue. The previous route was reconfigured to address safety issues associated with curbside stops along Grand Avenue adjacent to the BNSF Railway right-of-way.

Valley Metro RAPID Routes

RAPID routes are similar to Express Routes in that they stop less frequently so as to travel longer distances faster than local service buses. These routes are funded by the city of Phoenix and only operate within the city of Phoenix. Route scheduling is coordinated to align with peak commuting times in the morning and afternoon. Stops are limited to major transfer locations and park and ride lots, as well as destinations within Phoenix. None of the Valley Metro RAPID routes are located within the study area, although the I-10 West RAPID and the I-17 RAPID border the study area community of Glendale to the south and east, respectively.

Neighborhood Circulators

Circulators run on a frequent schedule (of often a “loop”) serving major destinations within a specific area, usually confined within high-density areas such as downtowns or central business districts for efficiency. The City of Glendale operates three circulator routes within its city limits, details of which are presented below.

Glendale Urban Shuttle 1 & 2

These Glendale Urban Shuttle (GUS) routes serve local roads in Downtown Glendale and the surrounding area. Route 1 runs in a counter-clockwise direction while Route 2 runs clockwise. GUS serves key trip generators in the area, including Glendale High School, the Maricopa County Superior Court Complex, Public Safety and City Court Complex, Glendale City Hall, and Wal-Mart. The bus is available to make stops at any point along the route with the exception of Glendale Avenue from 63rd Avenue through 67th Avenue. The service operates from 7am to 6pm Monday through Saturday, and between 8 am and 5:30 pm on Sunday.

Glendale Urban Shuttle 3

The third GUS route travels along local roads in the Glendale Central Corridor communities of Sahuaro Glenn and Manistee Ranch. Key locations served include Glendale Community College, the Glendale Library, and the Adult Center. Passengers can also transfer to GUS 1 and GUS 2 routes at locations along Northern Avenue. Service hours are Monday through Friday between 8 am and 5 pm.

Fare Summary

Exhibit 2.2.1 summarizes the current fares charged by each service type.

Exhibit 2.2.1 Fare Summary by Route and Fare Type for Valley Metro Transit Services

Fare Type	Local Routes	Local Reduced Fare*	Express Routes	Glendale Urban Shuttle
1-Ride	\$2.00	\$1.00	\$3.25	\$0.25
All-day pass	\$4.00	\$2.00	\$6.50	-
All-day pass (on-board bus)	\$6.00	\$3.00	\$8.50	-
7-day pass	\$20.00	\$10.00	-	-
15-day pass (new)	\$33.00	\$16.50	-	-
31-day pass	\$64.00	\$32.00	\$104.00	-

**Persons with a disability, seniors age 65 and older, Medicare cardholders, and youths ages six through 18 qualify for reduced fares on local buses.*

Dial-A-Ride Service

Dial-A-Ride (DAR) provides on-demand transit service that allows residents to reach daily destinations such as work, shopping, healthcare, and social service needs. Service characteristics vary by individual service or program. Some DAR services are restricted to certain population groups such as ADA-certified users or seniors. Some systems are used by the general public and supplement locations with limited local bus service. Most DAR services are arranged through a reservation system and operate within defined geographic boundaries, often delineated by city limits. Unlike traditional fixed-route buses, DAR routes and destinations are determined by riders, who call ahead to arrange to be picked up at a specified time and taken to their destination. DAR services generally maintain a 30-minute pickup window, stipulating that they will arrive up to 15 minutes before or after the agreed-upon pickup time.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) services are a subset of DAR services designed to provide on-demand transportation for ADA-certified passengers. ADA service operates within ¼-mile of all fixed routes.

Valley Metro Northwest Valley Dial-A-Ride

Northwest Valley DAR currently serves persons with disabilities and senior residents in the communities of El Mirage, Sun City, Sun City West, Surprise, and Youngtown. The service includes a cab component as well as traditional DAR vehicles. As part of a specific agreement with the City of Surprise, the service is also available to the general public for trips within Surprise. The Surprise DAR service also provides trips outside of Surprise, but only if the trips are for work or medical appointments. Valley Metro contracts with Total Transit, the parent company of Discount Cab. The service operates from 7 am to 5 pm, Monday through Friday. Call center hours are from 6 am to 8 pm, Monday through Friday. Exhibit 2.2.2 illustrates the five DAR service areas within the Northwest Valley.

Exhibit 2.2.2 Valley Metro Northwest Dial-A-Ride Service Areas

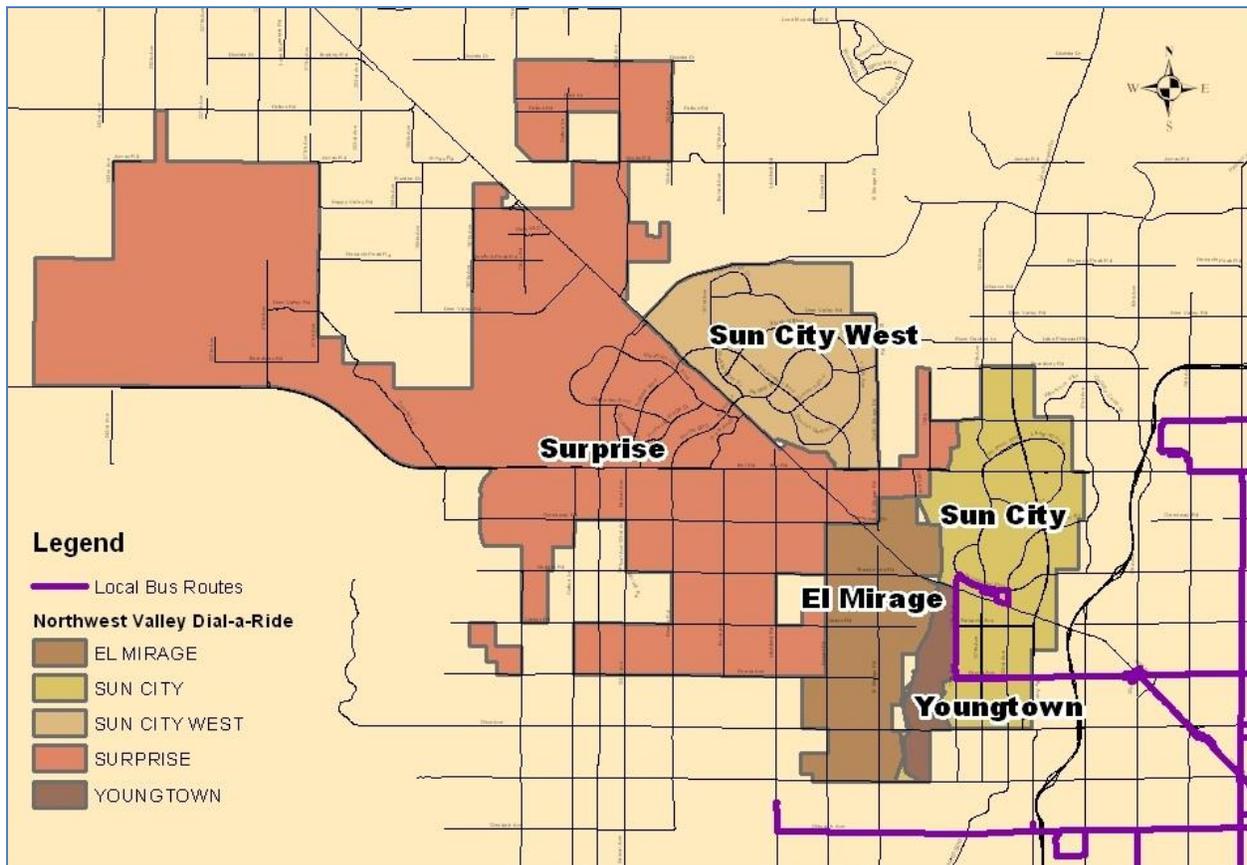


Image courtesy of Valley Metro

**Note: Surprise DAR service does not cover all of Surprise. See exhibit 2.2.4 for Surprise's DAR service area.*

Sun City, Sun City West, and Youngtown Dial-A-Ride

DAR service for these communities, shown in Exhibit 2.2.2 and also operated by Valley Metro, serves both ADA trips (\$2.00 per trip fare) as well as non-ADA trips (\$4.00 per trip). Valley Metro provides some eligibility-based discounts to Sun City and Youngtown residents.

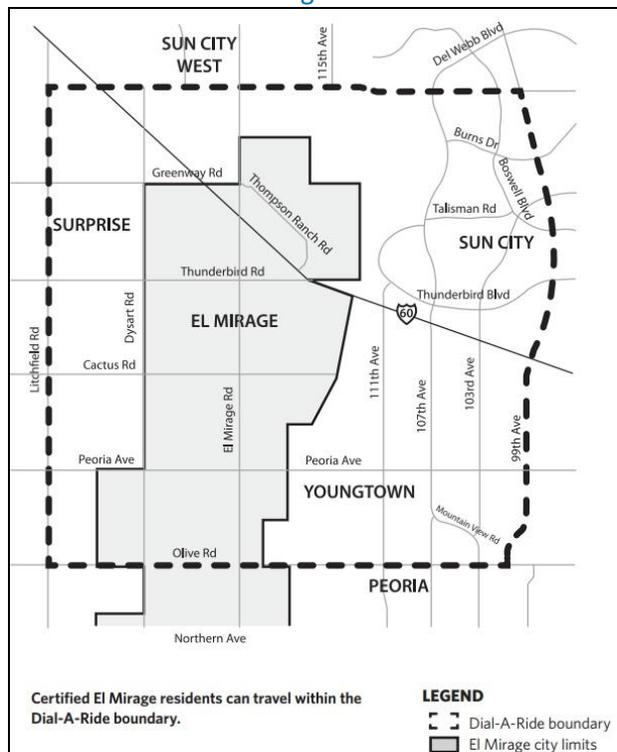
Transition to Valley Metro

Sun Cities Area Transit (SCAT), a now-defunct service due to funding shortfalls, was a not-for-profit organization that provided local DAR service from 1982 to 2010. Valley Metro now operates a service within unincorporated areas once served by the County Special Transportation Services program.

El Mirage Dial-A-Ride

The El Mirage DAR service is coordinated by Valley Metro's Northwest Valley DAR program and operates Monday through Friday from 8 am to 5 pm. Service is limited to El Mirage residents who are ADA-certified and meet low-income criteria. Certified El Mirage and Youngtown residents can travel within the DAR boundary south of Bell Road, north of Olive Avenue, west of 99th Avenue, and east of Litchfield Road. The dashed line in Exhibit 2.2.3 below delineates the DAR service area. Note that the boundary extends into some surrounding areas while southern portions of El Mirage are not within the DAR boundary.

Exhibit 2.2.3 El Mirage Dial-A-Ride Service Area



Surprise Dial-A-Ride

City of Surprise residents have access to Valley Metro's Northwest Valley Dial-A-Ride service, discussed above and shown in Exhibit 2.2.4 below. Transportation fees within Surprise are \$1.00 per ride while trips to or from Sun City, Sun City West, Youngtown, El Mirage, and the Boswell Hospital area is \$1.25.

Transition to Valley Metro

In August 2012, the City of Surprise city council voted to transition from in-house Dial-A-Ride service to Valley Metro-administered Dial-A-Ride service. The change came about due to rising program costs, ultimately causing the City to decline nearly 20 percent annually of DAR trip requests. The transition was expected to eliminate trip denials entirely, increase call center hours, and include door-to-door service rather than curb-to-curb service. The Valley Metro-operated DAR service will have hours of operation similar to those of the City-operated DAR service.

Exhibit 2.2.4 Surprise Dial-A-Ride Service Map

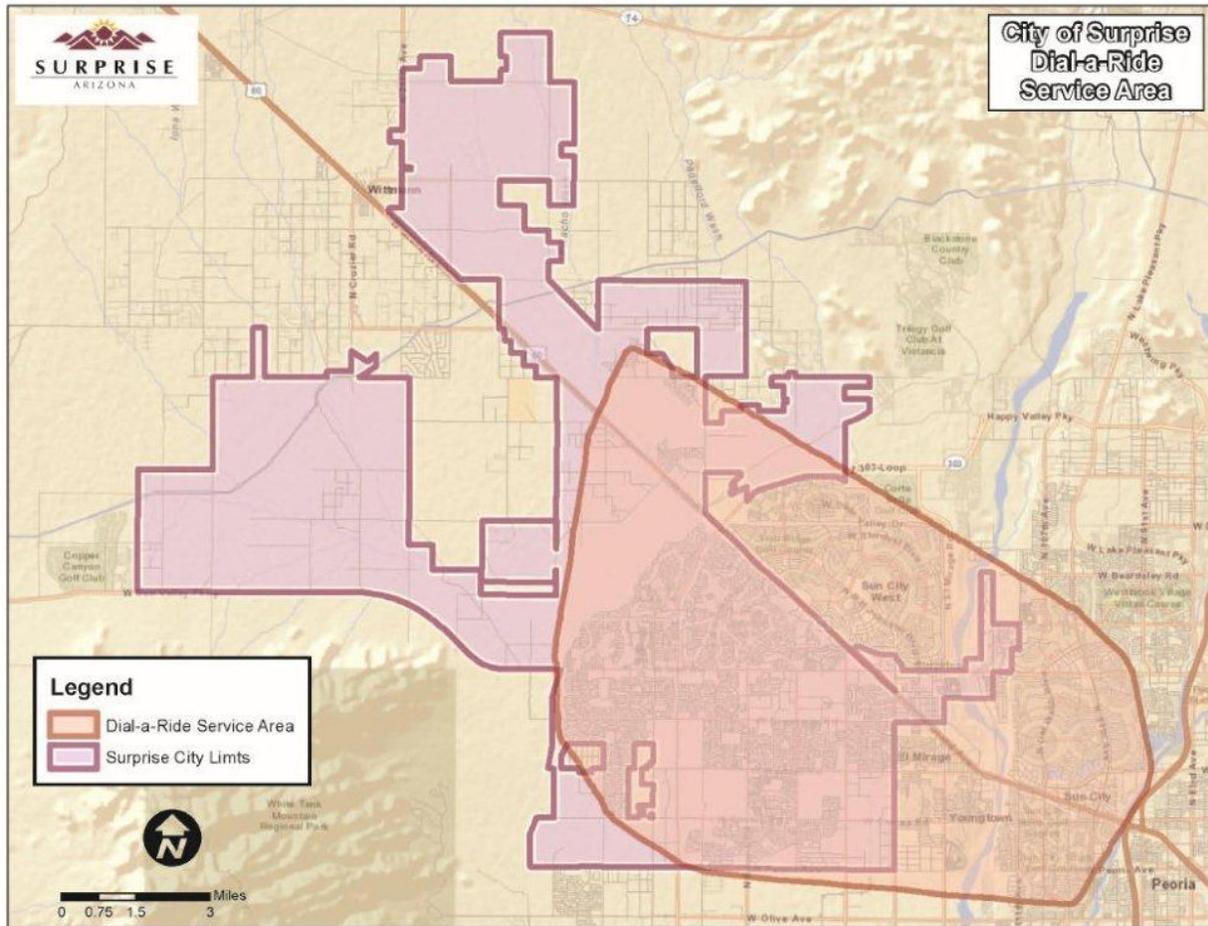


Image courtesy of the City of Surprise

Glendale Dial-A-Ride

The City of Glendale operates the Glendale DAR, the service area of which is shown in Exhibit 2.2.5. Service is available to the general public and serves locations throughout the city. Same-day Dial-A-Ride service is offered on weekdays from 7 am to 6 pm. Weekend and holiday service (7 am to 5 pm) is available, yet requires an advanced reservation.

Exhibit 2.2.5 Glendale Dial-A-Ride Service Area

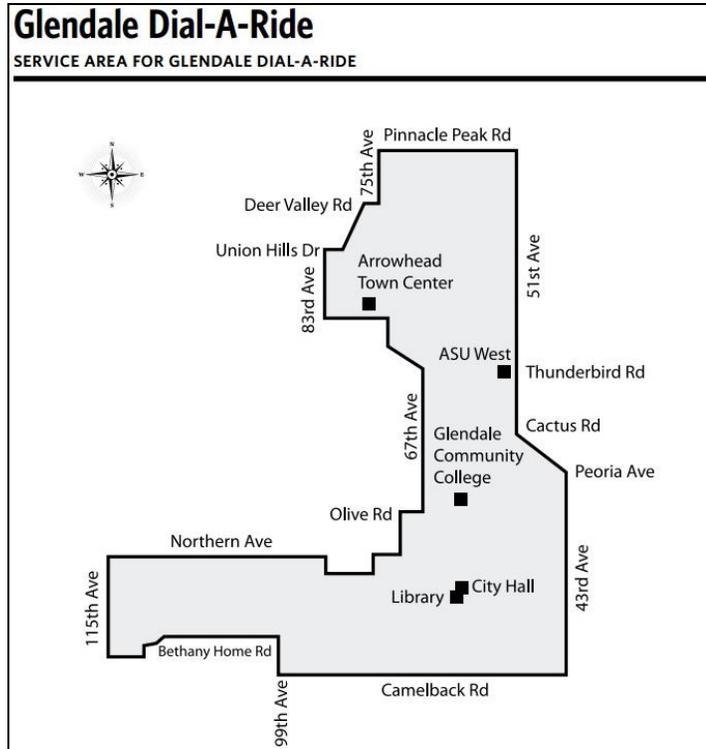


Image courtesy of City of Glendale

Peoria Dial-A-Ride

The City of Peoria Transit Division provides regular DAR service as well as a special Dial-A-Ride Plus (DAR+) service; which transports Peoria residents to medical facilities in neighboring Sun City and Glendale. DAR service is available for ADA trips as well as to the general public, although ADA trips cost less and are available during extended service hours. Reservations are required and can be placed between one and 14 days in advance.

Exhibit 2.2.6 Peoria Dial-A-Ride Service Area

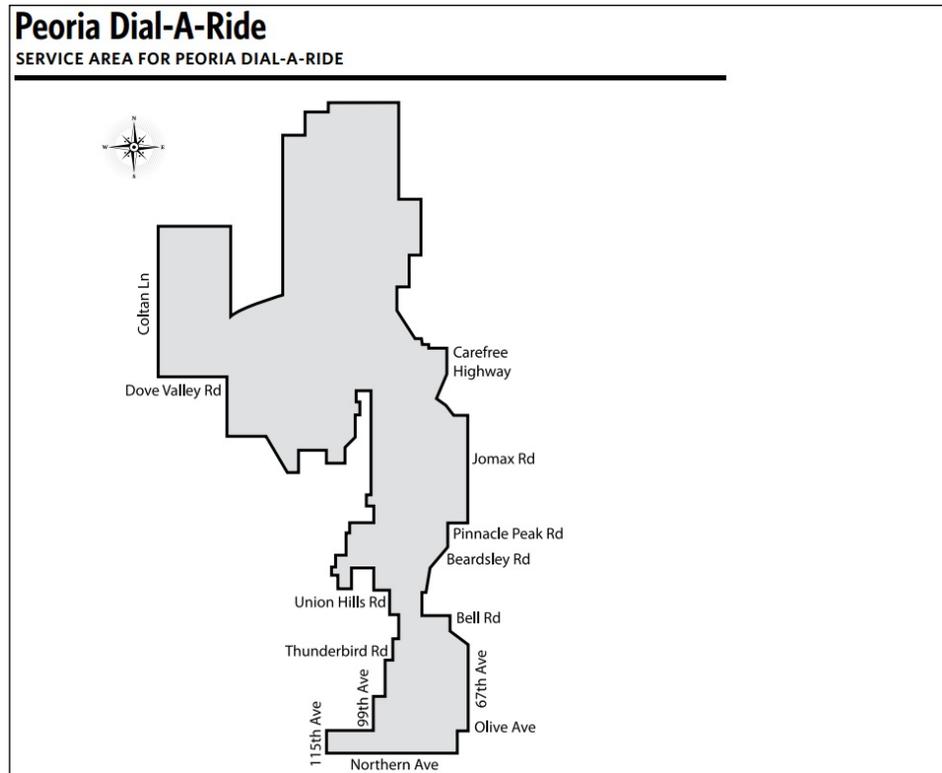


Image courtesy of Valley Metro

Dial-A-Ride Fare Summary

The following table summarizes the current fares charged by DAR services within the study area.

Exhibit 2.2.7 – Current Dial-A-Ride Fares

Fare Type	El Mirage	Glendale	Peoria	Sun City and Youngtown	Surprise
ADA-certified passenger	\$2.00	-	-	-	-
General Public	-	\$2.00	\$3.00	-	\$1.00 - \$1.25*
ADA Trips	-	\$2.00	\$2.00	\$2.00	-
Non-ADA Trips	-	-	-	\$4.00	-
ADA Companion and/or Personal Care Attendant	Free	-	-	-	-
Seniors and Persons with Disabilities	-	\$1.00	\$1.00	-	-
Ages 0 - 5	Free	Free	-	-	-
Ages 6 - 12	Free	\$1.00	-	-	-
Age 13 and up	-	\$1.00	-	-	-

**Trips within Surprise are \$1.00. Trips to/from Sun City, Sun City West, El Mirage, Youngtown, and the Boswell Hospital area are \$1.25.*

Other Programs and Services

The following section lists additional transportation-related services currently available to NW Valley residents.

Glendale Taxi Subsidy Program

Glendale offers this program to provide taxi subsidies to persons with special transportation needs. The City pays 75 percent of the overall fare for Glendale residents who receive qualifying physician-ordered recurring medical treatments and therapies such as dialysis, cancer treatments, and post-stroke therapy.

Glendale Bus Buddies Educational Program

The City provides a "Bus Buddies" program for senior adults. This program involves and encourages senior adults to use the public fixed route bus system and the GUS Bus.

Valley Metro Vanpool Program

Through this regional program, vans are provided to groups of six to fifteen commuters who share the monthly cost of the van.

Trip Reduction Programs

Large employers in the Metro Phoenix area provide their employees with a range of incentives to promote transit and vanpool use including subsidized transit passes.

2.3 TRANSIT AMENITIES

While transit infrastructure – particularly bus stop and transit center amenities – are often seen as less important than the delivery of transit service itself, the availability and quality of such amenities can have a profound effect on how a community perceives public transit. Bus stops and transit centers serve as the “front door” to the transit service. The presence of easy-to-understand signage, route information, lighting, and other customer-oriented elements reinforces the impression that the transit provider cares about the comfort and safety of its customers. Additionally, effective placement of amenities such as benches, shelters, and trash receptacles helps attract steady ridership.

Design Standards and Amenities Catalog

Each bus stop location in the Northwest Valley requires specific improvements aimed at enhancing the comfort, safety, and mobility of transit riders. As each community within the Northwest Valley plans for future development, transit service and amenity improvements must follow to appropriately address such demand. Discussed below are various transit amenity capital/equipment projects currently in place or recommended for placement within the various Northwest Valley communities.

Bus Stop Signs

The most fundamental element of transit infrastructure is the bus stop sign. Signage serves as the prime identifier of bus stop locations. Quality signs are both durable and easily visible any time of the day, including evening hours. Bus signs currently in place throughout the Northwest Valley vary in size and style. New bus stop signs and amenities need to be ADA-compliant in terms of font size, placement, and design.

Info-Posts

The info-post is a useful tool for displaying service information at stop locations. Generally, info-posts mount to sign posts and are comprised of an encased schedule, map, or other relevant service information. With advancements in technology, some info-posts have evolved to include Global Positioning System (GPS)-enabled devices that provide real-time route information to passengers waiting at stop locations. Stylistically, info-posts vary in size, shape, and color, but ultimately their primary purpose is to provide service information to users.



Benches

Comfort is an important decision-influencer within the transit industry, and benches play a significant role in making transit use more comfortable. Therefore it is important to place benches at locations that

warrant them. While benches vary in size and style, uniformity within an individual public transit system provides an identity that helps customers pinpoint stop locations.

Shelters

The core function of the bus shelter is to provide passengers protection from the elements (i.e., the sun or cold). Shelters are often equipped with benches to give passengers a place to sit while waiting for their vehicle. While technology has allowed for the development of more intricate models, the basic shelter consists of a roof, one or more walls, and a foundation (i.e., cement pad) on which to place it.

Trash Receptacles

Trash receptacles help keep both transit vehicles and stops clean by providing a place for passengers to dispose of any trash they may have before boarding. However, trash receptacles must be secure enough to limit vandalism.

Transit/Transfer Centers

Typically a transit center is a purpose-built facility served by multiple routes allowing for passenger transfers. Such facilities serve as hubs for local transit routes and may also include park and ride lots to facilitate intermodal connections.

Valley Metro operates fifteen transit centers within the region, including the Northwest Valley's Arrowhead Towne Center, located in Glendale near the Loop 101/Bell Road interchange. ATC is served by Valley Metro Routes 67, 170, 186, 573 and 575. The parking lot at ATC also serves as a park and ride for Routes 573 and 575. Safety concerns at this location have led to the development of a new transit center facility in Glendale.

List of Bus Stop Locations

A listing of all bus stops located within the study area is presented in Appendix A.

Park and Ride Facilities

Park and Ride facilities allow residents to drive to a centralized location to access transit, carpool or vanpool services. Park and Ride facilities may be formal lots, where a jurisdiction or other public entity owns the lot and makes it available to the public. However, a large number of lots are privately owned and co-located with shopping centers, major employment centers, and education hubs to encourage reduced reliance upon single-occupant vehicles while also allowing excess parking capacity to be repurposed to another use. Presented below is a listing of the current Park and Ride locations within the study area.



Exhibit 2.3.1 – Park and Ride Facilities

Jurisdiction	Location	Address	Routes Served
El Mirage	Walmart	129 th Ave and Thunderbird Rd. NE corner	Grand Ave Limited
Glendale	City property	59 th Ave and Myrtle Ave. NE and SW corners	Valley Metro Route 59, Grand Ave Limited, GUS
Glendale	Glendale Park and Ride	99 th Ave and Glendale Ave. NE Corner	Valley Metro Routes 70 and 573
Peoria	Peoria Park and Ride	Jefferson St and 84 th Ave. NE corner	Grand Ave. Limited
Surprise	City property	13327 W. Bell Rd	Valley Metro Route 571

Pedestrian and Bicycle Features

Bicycle and pedestrian amenities are an integral part of a complete transportation network. Whether for recreational use or as a method to commute to employment and education, these pathways offer a viable alternative to a motorized vehicle. Connectivity is key to maintaining a network of bicycle and pedestrian paths and a complete system can be made of a variety of devices from mixed-flow traffic lanes to striped bike lanes to Class 1 separated bike paths. Below is a listing of current as well as proposed bicycle and pedestrian improvement projects within the study area.



Exhibit 2.3.2 – Existing and Pending Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities

Existing Bicycle and Pedestrian Infrastructure		
<i>Jurisdiction</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Path or Feature</i>
Glendale	43rd Ave at Peoria Ave	Gateway Facility
Glendale	Alley 250 ft north of Glendale Ave from 58th Ave to 57th Dr	Alley Improvements and Pedestrian Walkway
Glendale	Glendale Ave to Glenn Dr and 58th Ave to 57th Ave	Pedestrian Improvements
Glendale	Grand Canal in Glendale from Loop 101 to New River	Multi-Use Pathway
Peoria	New River Trail at Peoria and Olive Ave.	Construct Underpass Crossings
Surprise	Bell Road: 141st Ave to Loop 303	Sidewalks
Future or Pending Bicycle Infrastructure		
<i>Jurisdiction</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Path or Feature</i>
Glendale	Bethany Home Rd to Northern Ave	New River Multi-Use Path
Glendale	Northern Ave to Bethany Home Rd	Multi-Use Path with amenities and lighting
Glendale	Maryland Ave in Discovery Park	Maryland Ave Bicycle Route Improvements
Peoria	Trail Gap between Northern Ave and Olive Ave	Multi-Use Path
Surprise	Bell Road: US-60 to 114th Ave	Multi-Use Path
Youngtown	Grand Ave and 111th Ave to Olive Ave and Agua Fria Parkway	Multi-Use Path

Source: MAG Regional Bikeway Plan

This page intentionally blank.

3

COMMUNITY OUTREACH SUMMARY

This page intentionally blank.

CHAPTER 3 – COMMUNITY OUTREACH SUMMARY

Given the overarching objective of creating a *market-driven* plan, the Northwest Valley Local Transit System Study (NWVLTSS) included extensive public involvement. The public involvement activities were created specifically to engage study area communities as *partners* in the planning process. This partnership ensures the Study's recommendations align with the communities' visions and desires for future transit service. Additionally, it recognizes local citizens and stakeholders as the experts on their respective communities and emphasizes local control of the resulting plan.

The public involvement effort for the study was designed as an overall program consisting of interrelated activities and methods, as noted below. While each phase included individual activities, it also tied into the other phases to provide a complete, holistic representation of public opinion of transit and mobility trends. Public involvement activities were also staged throughout the entire project, rather than being included as a step needing to be completed before continuing with the rest of the plan. As a result, the output of the activities factors significantly into the study's recommendations and strategies.

This section discusses the methodology and outcome of the public involvement aspect as outlined in the scope of work. The program consisted of four overall phases:

1. Marketing,
2. Community survey,
3. Community meetings, and
4. Stakeholder input.

Marketing activities such as direct mail pieces, fliers, media releases, and email promotions were designed as the initial method of engaging the public, and were implemented throughout the entire project to raise awareness and promote community involvement. The Marketing phase is discussed in Section 3.1. The Community Survey was the most expansive aspect of gauging public opinion in terms of participation. A review of the survey methods and results is presented in Section 3.2. Community meetings, discussed in Section 3.3, were held to garner in-depth views on the specific accessibility and mobility needs affecting specific populations and communities. The final activity sought stakeholder input, as discussed in Section 3.4.

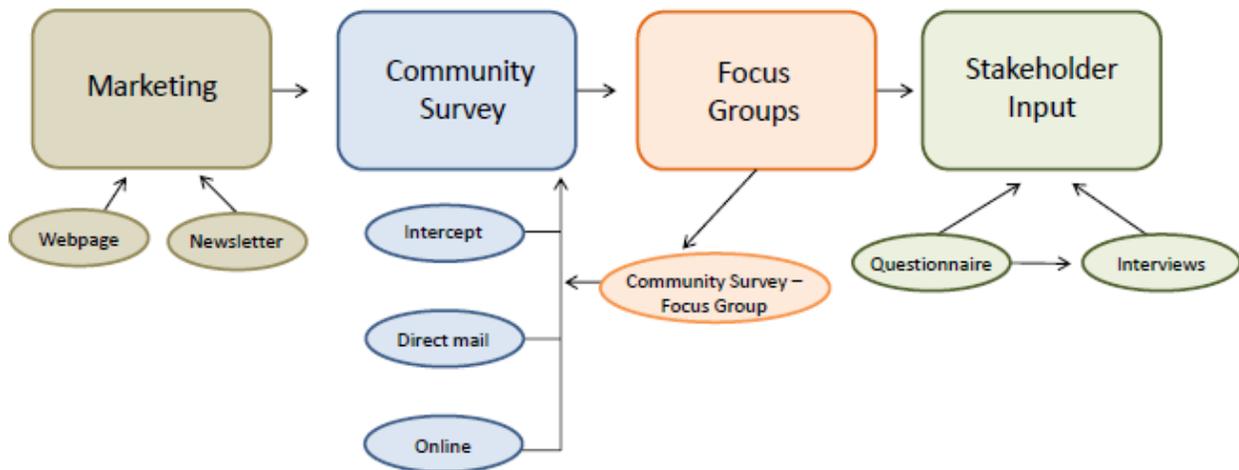
Public Involvement Approach

The Project's Public Involvement Plan was organized by activity based on anticipated level of, beginning with the broadest, most expansive outreach activity (a community survey) and ending with the most targeted activities (community meetings and stakeholder interviews). The approach was designed to optimize outreach efforts by allowing for the inclusion of response data throughout the entire outreach process.

Significant trends discovered in the initial round of survey responses were identified and included as discussion items in the first round of community meetings and stakeholder activities. In particular, preliminary survey responses included many questions regarding the City of Surprise’s Dial-A-Ride transition to Discount Cab. The issue was then added as an agenda item for subsequent community meetings. Additionally, each of the initial community meetings included a discussion regarding where new service should be located after initial survey results indicated many respondents placed a high priority on serving new areas and/or destinations. Similarly, input garnered throughout community meetings activities could be used to help verify and interpret survey data. This structure allowed for “real time” explanation and discussion on key mobility issues affecting the public.

Exhibit 3.1.1 represents the four phases included in public involvement.

Exhibit 3.1.1 Public Involvement Approach



3.1 MARKETING

Marketing efforts were conducted to raise overall awareness of the project as well as promote active public involvement. The approach to marketing for this project emphasized the use of diverse media and strategies in order to reach the largest possible audience. Specific techniques, as discussed below, included the development of a project webpage, traditional media releases and phone calls and emails to project stakeholders.

Project Webpage

The project webpage, nvwtransit.azmag.gov, functioned as a “hub” for marketing and promotion throughout the entire project, especially during scheduled public involvement activities. The web page was contained within the overall MAG website [www.azmag.gov] and located within the “Projects” section. It included a brief description of the project, a list of study area communities, project contacts, and details on available public involvement activities.

In addition to providing basic project information, the webpage also supplemented outreach activities by offering additional opportunities for concerned citizens to participate in and provide input for the project. It included a link to an online survey via Survey Monkey for those who did not have the opportunity to take the survey in person or via standard mail. During community meeting recruitment and promotion, the webpage included specific community meeting event details. All marketing materials and publications (media releases, flyers, etc.) included the project webpage address to direct people to these opportunities.

Media Releases

Media releases were distributed prior to the project community meetings. The media releases described the project and listed available involvement activities, including online activities. These were customized to specific communities, including community meeting details such as address, time, and contact information. Releases were sent to the *Arizona Republic*, the highest circulated newspaper in the Metro Phoenix, as well as smaller, community-specific outlets and neighborhood newsletters, including *Peoria NOW*, *YourWestValley.com*, *Sun City Community Newsletter*, *The Sun City West Foundation Newsletter*, *Grand Times*, and the *Youngtown Village Reporter*. Additionally, each participating city posted links to the media releases on their respective websites.

Television

An infomercial was utilized as an additional marketing strategy to engage the public and inform residents of the project. Additional emphasis was placed on the available community meeting activities scheduled throughout the Northwest Valley. The taping occurred on October 3, 2012 and the piece aired for about a week on Surprise Channel 11. Additional community meeting advertisements were aired on Surprise Channel 11 during the week of January 7, 2013.

Project Flyers and Brochures

Several informational flyers and brochures were created and distributed as another element of the overall marketing campaign for the project. These contained a general project summary as well as links to the project webpage and online community survey and project manager contact information. These were distributed to various locations in the study area during the course of public involvement activities.

An additional flyer was created for distribution by project surveyors during the intercept survey. The flyer directed residents to the online survey and was intended for those unable to take the survey in-person.

Project Management Team Coordination

The Project Management Team (PMT), and their respective communities, provided additional resources for raising project awareness and promoting involvement activities. All marketing activities and materials were provided to The PMT for dissemination throughout their respective communities. Coordination with the PMT created a regional communication network, greatly expanding the reach of marketing activities. Through PMT direction, city and community websites were able to promote involvement via articles, event calendars, newsletters, and their in-house distribution lists. More information about the PMT is presented in Section 3.4.

3.2 COMMUNITY SURVEY

This section provides an overview of the community survey. It includes a review of the overall survey approach and discusses the individual survey methodologies used as components of the survey. Findings are summarized and analyzed by individual question.

The community survey was designed with the primary purpose of gaining significant feedback from the communities and residents within the study area. The survey was a significant part of the public involvement activities and sought to target the highest number of overall participants. The survey was released in a variety of media, including in-person intercepts, mail, and online. These methods were supported by additional marketing and cross-promotional activities; for example, community meeting attendees had the option to either complete personal intercept surveys at the meeting or take them home and mail them back. The survey also served as an introduction to the overall project for residents throughout the Northwest Valley. While there were varying methodologies used to conduct the community survey, the survey content remained consistent across all formats and methods.

Survey questions were designed to develop an understanding of the typical study area resident. Voluntary questions addressed respondent travel behavior, demographic makeup, economic characteristics, and mobility needs or priorities. Questions and response options were developed in conjunction with the Project Management Team. The survey consisted of 24 multiple-choice questions (17 questions for all respondents, six questions specific to transit riders, and one question specific to non-riders). In addition to the multiple choice questions, the survey included two fill-in questions, one area for additional comments, and a name and contact information fill-in section. Of the multiple choice questions, 15 included additional “other” options allowing for respondents to write in specific responses.

The survey was designed to be completed with minimal effort while providing a robust and descriptive output for analysis. The structure and questions were identical across all survey modes to avoid statistical irregularities. Small allowances were made for formatting and adapting the survey to the internet. In total, 2,605 valid responses were collected. The intercept survey instrument is provided in Appendix B.

Intercept Survey

The intercept survey was administered between Tuesday, September 4 and Saturday, September 8, 2012. Each surveyor was equipped with a clipboard, high-visibility vest, and name tag for identification. The team conducted the survey at high-activity sites centrally located within the study area. These activity centers included shopping centers, civic buildings, and recreation centers. Surveys were administered throughout each day, including high-activity time periods such as peak

commuting hours, in order to ensure the highest participation as well as a full sampling of the area population.

Intercept surveys were collected in El Mirage (405), Surprise (439), and Youngtown (75). In addition to the central location of these communities, many selected survey sites bordered, or were within close proximity to, the senior communities of Sun City, Sun City Grand, Sun City West, and Sun Village of Surprise.

The method of administering the intercept survey was predominately in the form of interviews, although respondents were offered the option of completing the survey on their own. The typical time required for survey administration was about 3-4 minutes, depending on respondent input. About half of the surveyors were bilingual (English/Spanish) to facilitate administering the survey to Spanish speakers. Participants who were unable to begin or complete the survey due to time constraints were provided a flyer with project information and the link to the online survey.

Additional intercept surveys were collected at the various community meeting activities held throughout the project. Community meeting participants were provided the survey and a pencil prior to the beginning of the community meeting, as well as a postage-paid return envelope to return the survey at a later time if necessary. In general, survey responses from community meeting participants were statistically similar to other survey participants. However, the optional fill-in comments received from meeting respondents tended to be lengthier and more detailed. Raw survey responses, including verbatim comments from respondents, are presented in Appendix C.

Mail Survey

A direct mail (household) survey was conducted to reach populations that were less likely to participate in intercept or online surveys, as well as to ensure participation within specific communities, such as Sun City. Every detail of the mailer design was customized to encourage the highest rate of participation. The mail survey consisted of an exterior envelope, the survey instrument and a pre-paid postage interior envelope. A random selection of mailed surveys also included a “double chance card,” which gave recipients the opportunity to enter twice into a drawing for a \$50 gift card. For the City of Peoria, 1,500 households were mailed a postage-paid survey.

The survey instrument within the mailer was designed with a large font size in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act standards to accommodate all recipients. It also included a brief description of the project and an explanation on the importance of the survey. The project webpage (nvwtransit.azmag.gov) was cited on each side of the paper.

The exterior envelope was customized with MAG- and project-related artwork to convey the legitimacy of the mailer and ensure it would not be regarded by recipients as “junk mail.” The

return address included the MAG logo, name, and address. Attention-grabbing graphics were located on the envelope to alert recipients of the survey (“Important Survey Enclosed!”) and the incentive (“Enter to win a \$50 VISA gift card!”). Envelopes were individually stamped to align with mail survey best practices, which show that a stamp provides a personalized appearance and therefore yields higher returns as opposed to printing postage directly onto the envelope. Additionally, the interior (return) envelope included a pre-paid postage permit and was addressed to MAG.

A random selection of mail surveys included a “double-chance card” to encourage participation. Upon completion, respondents who filled in the “double-chance card” were entered twice into the drawing for the \$50 gift card incentive.

The mail survey was critical to the overall survey effort because it offered distinct opportunities that were not available through the intercept survey. The mail survey provided access to the survey for communities located away from the central study area, residents without phone or internet, and residents affected by mobility issues.

A master contact list of more than 1,288 names was compiled as a result of the community survey. This list was used throughout project events and activities to update those interested in following the project. All those who expressed interest in participating in community meetings were contacted by phone or email with details of events within their respective communities.

In total, 10,639 mail surveys were distributed throughout study area communities. Sampling was based on community population. Specifically, mail surveys were sent to random households in Glendale (1,500), Peoria (1,500), Sun City (2,000), Sun City Festival (639), Surprise/Sun City Grand (2,000), Sun City West (2,000), and Youngtown (1,000). These mail surveys yielded a response rate between 8.5 and 19.2 percent. Exhibit 3.2.1 lists the respondents and the response rates for each community.

Exhibit 3.2.1 Direct Mail Response Rate by Community

Community	Respondents	Response Rate (%)
Glendale	127	8.5
Peoria	135	9.0
Sun City	383	19.2
Sun City Festival	78	12.2
Surprise / Sun City Grand	346	17.3
Sun City West	278	13.9
Youngtown	122	12.2
El Mirage	N/A*	N/A*

**The City of El Mirage declined participation in a household survey.*

Online Survey

The community survey was also available online through Survey Monkey from August 30, 2012 until January 10, 2013. The online version of the survey allowed people to participate who did not receive a direct mail or intercept survey. In contrast to the mail and intercept surveys, the online version had no restrictions on who could complete the survey and thus had a larger potential pool of respondents. The project website, materials, and flyers all included links to the online survey for residents interested in providing their opinions. QR codes were included on some flyers to make access to the survey more convenient for Smartphone users.

Several activities were undertaken to raise awareness of the online survey. A link to the online survey was included on project media releases, community newsletters, and television broadcasts. The link was also shared by the PMT throughout the communities for distribution through traditional networks. *Peoria NOW*, a monthly publication of Peoria-centered news and current events, published a link to the online survey in their December 2012 issue. In total, 151 surveys were collected through Survey Monkey, a free online survey and questionnaire service.

Survey Processing

Once all survey data was gleaned, the consultant team performed data cleaning and validation for all surveys to filter out non-valid responses and remove data entry errors. The surveys from each mode were combined into a master database and analyzed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software. Frequency distributions were generated to highlight trends and data cross-tabulations were created for analysis. After statistical processing, results were exported into Microsoft Excel to generate charts and tables.

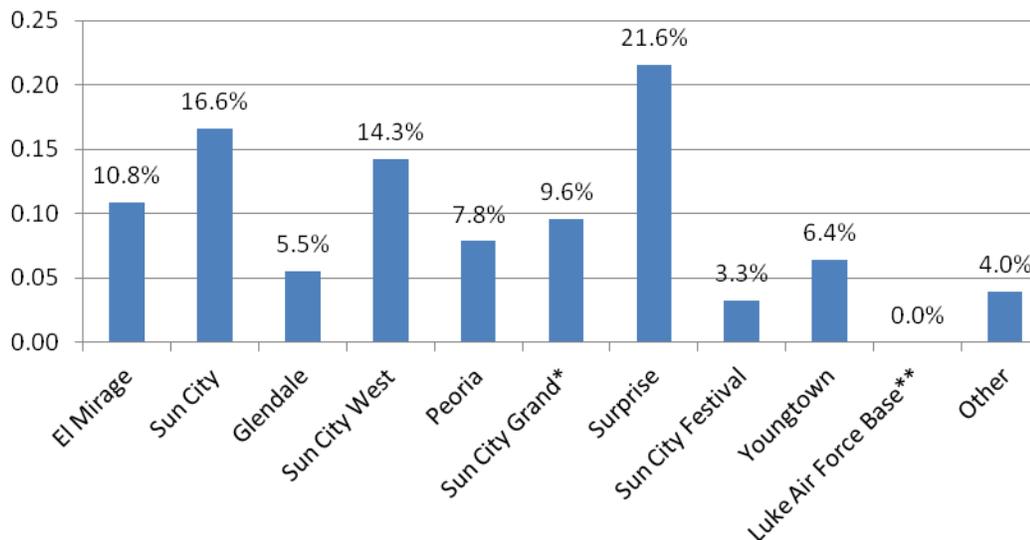
Findings

The following provides a summary of key findings from the total combination of surveys.

Question 1. In which community do you live?

The first question identified respondents by community and was critical for establishing statistical significance by community as well as within the entire study area. In addition to providing the summary of the number of respondents by community, this question was essential in tracking the response rate. The question listed the nine identified study area communities, Luke Air Force Base, and “Other” as response options. The distribution of respondents is shown in Exhibit 3.2.2.

Exhibit 3.2.2 Respondent Community



*Sun City Grand is within the City of Surprise.

**Only one respondent indicated Luke Air Force Base as their residence.

Of the 103 respondents indicating “Other,” a significant number lived in Wittmann (33), Phoenix (14), and Waddell (13). Exhibit 3.2.3 lists the distribution of “Other” responses.

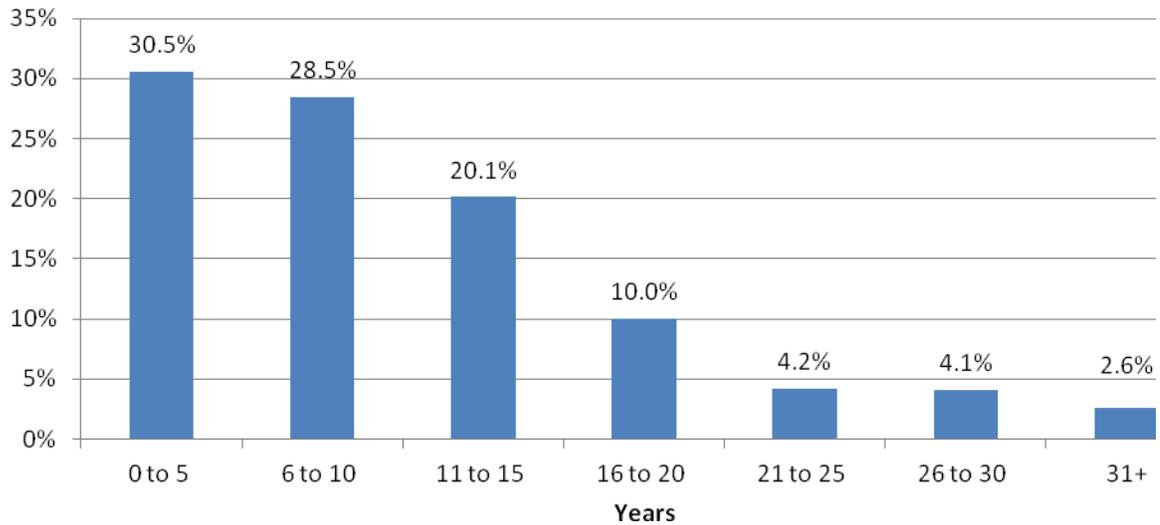
Exhibit 3.2.3 Distribution of “Other” Communities

Community	Responses
Wittmann	33
Phoenix	14
Waddell	13
Buckeye	5
Corte Bella	4
Wickenburg	4
Homeless	3
Two Responses or Less	27

Question 2. How long have you lived in this community?

Length of residence was included as one of the two fill-in questions on the instrument. However, responses are categorized here in five-year groupings for simplicity. Information derived from Question 2 shows that about 60 percent of respondents have lived in their respective communities for ten years or less. Exhibit 3.2.4 shows the grouped response rates for length of residence.

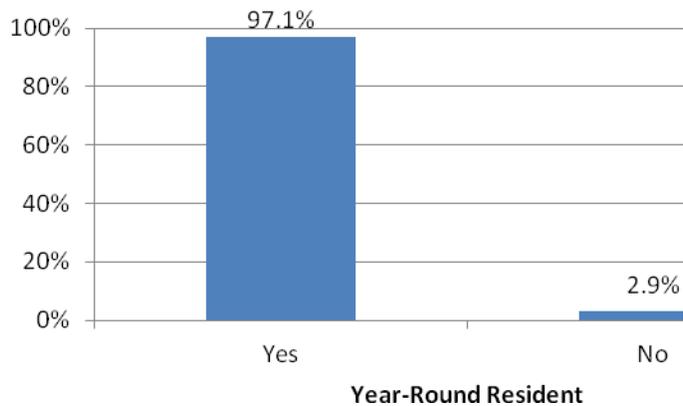
Exhibit 3.2.4 Length of Residence



Question 3. Do you live in this community year-round (Year-round defined as 12 months)?

A preliminary review of study area demographics indicated a significant number of residents live within the study area on a seasonal basis, leaving during the hottest portions of the summer. Question 3 was intended to gauge the percentage of respondents that live in the Northwest Valley for part of the year relative to the overall population, a finding that would impact transit service decisions. Interestingly, Exhibit 3.2.5 shows that 97 percent of respondents are year-round residents with only 69 respondents, or about three percent, indicating residency in other areas during portions of the year.

Exhibit 3.2.5 Year-Round Residents



Question 4. What are the nearest cross-streets to your home?

Question 4 was included to reaffirm the geographical distribution of survey respondents. As highlighted by Exhibit 3.2.6, of all responses, Bell Road and Grand Avenue were cited as the most common cross-streets.

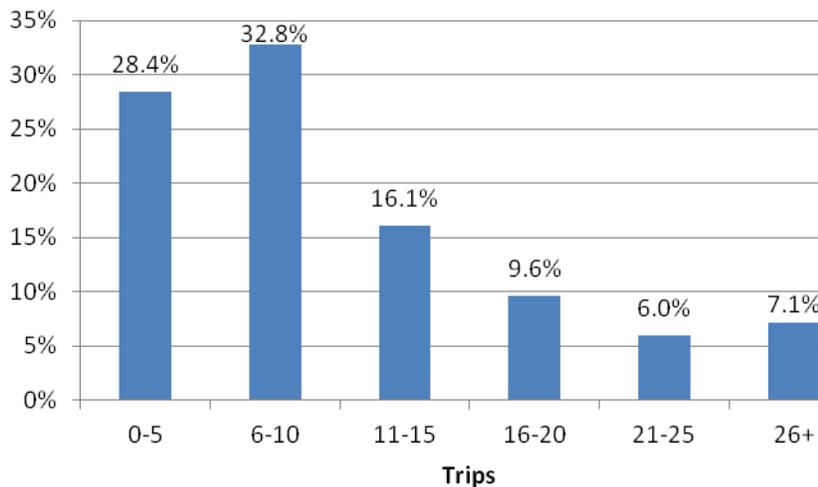
Exhibit 3.2.6 Top Responses for Intersecting Road

Intersecting Road	Count
<i>Bell Rd</i>	375
<i>Grand Ave</i>	263
<i>99th Ave</i>	149
<i>Mountain View Road</i>	128
<i>Deer Valley</i>	103
<i>RH Johnson</i>	87
<i>Del Webb</i>	75

Question 5. How many trips do you make in a typical week?

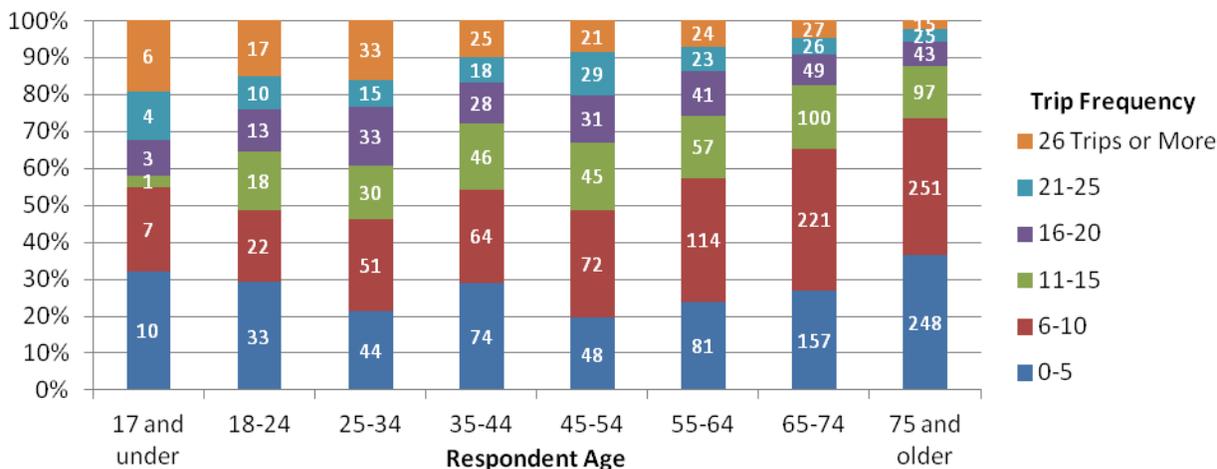
The most cited choice for the number of trips was six to ten per week, which was selected by 831 respondents, or 33 percent. For this question, a ‘trip’ was implied to mean a trip in a vehicle. As Exhibit 3.2.7 indicates, about half of survey respondents reported making ten or fewer trips in a typical week.

Exhibit 3.2.7 Trips per Week



The higher proportion of seniors, who typically make fewer trips compared to other age groups in the study area compared to the overall national population, could be one explanation for this difference. Another contributing factor to the low number of reported trips per week could be a result of survey respondents underestimating their number of weekly trips by neglecting short trips and trip chains, or combinations of trips. Exhibit 3.2.8 highlights the distribution of trip frequencies by age.

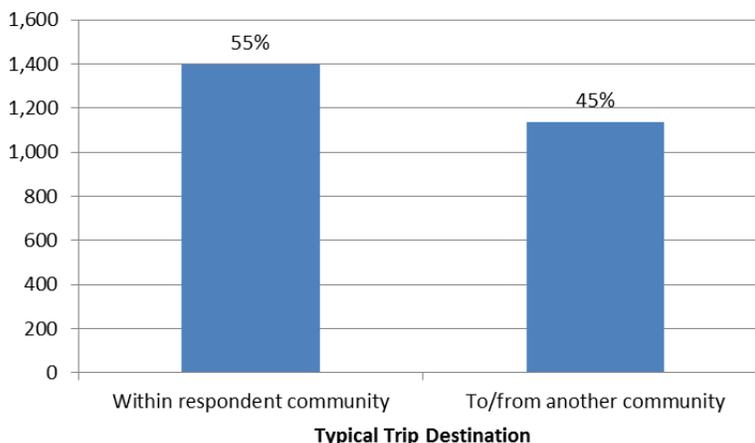
Exhibit 3.2.8 Trip Frequency by Age



Question 6. Where do most of the trips you make in a typical week occur?

Exhibit 3.2.9 demonstrates that respondents make about the same number of trips within their communities (55 percent) as they do between Northwest Valley communities (45 percent). This distribution shows a need for both local and regional mobility options.

Exhibit 3.2.9 Typical Trip Destination



When reviewing this statistic, it is important to keep in mind the size and geographic proximity of many of the communities, especially the Sun City communities, relative to their surrounding neighbors. For some of these communities, making a short trip of a mile or less constitutes making a trip from one community to another. It should also be noted that some respondents may not be certain of where one community begins and another ends due to the often seamless borders between Northwest Valley communities. Exhibit 3.2.10 shows the responses of destinations specified as “another community.”

Exhibit 3.2.10 Commonly Cited Trip Destinations

Destination	Count
Surprise	225
Phoenix	155
Glendale	89
Peoria	84
NW Valley*	83
Sun City	39
Sun City West	33
Arrowhead Mall	28
Scottsdale	17
El Mirage	9

* “NW Valley” includes respondents listing multiple communities or responses such as “All around,” “Various places,” etc.

Of all study area communities, the community with highest percentage of inter-community trips was Sun City Festival (about 85 percent). The community with the highest percentage of local trips was Surprise, with 68 percent of respondents typical trips located within the community and only 32 percent being made to other communities. Exhibit 3.2.11 identifies responses to Question 6 by community.

Exhibit 3.2.11 Typical Local/Inter-Community Trips

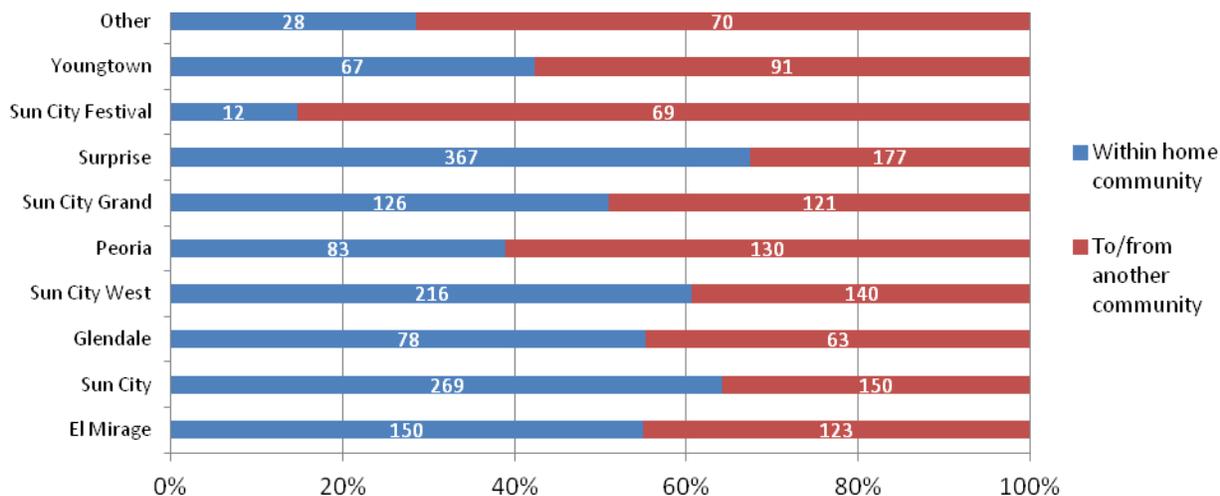


Exhibit 3.2.12 depicts the top destinations per community of respondents indicating a typical trip as “to/from another community.” Phoenix was the most popular inter-community destination for respondents from Glendale, Peoria, Sun City, and Surprise. Phoenix is also in the top three for El Mirage, Sun City Festival, and respondents with “other” home communities. For reference, a map of the Northwest Valley is included as Exhibit 3.2.13.

Exhibit 3.2.12 Top Inter-Community Destinations by Community

El Mirage	Surprise	43.3%
	Phoenix	23.9%
	Glendale	6.0%

Sun City Grand	Surprise	18.8%
	Sun City West	15.6%
	NW Valley	14.6%

Glendale	Phoenix	47.2%
	Surprise	9.4%
	Peoria	7.5%

Sun City West	Surprise	54.5%
	Sun City	10.0%
	Glendale	9.1%

Peoria	Phoenix	30.9%
	Surprise	21.0%
	Glendale	18.5%

Surprise	Phoenix	30.7%
	Peoria	13.9%
	Glendale	12.9%

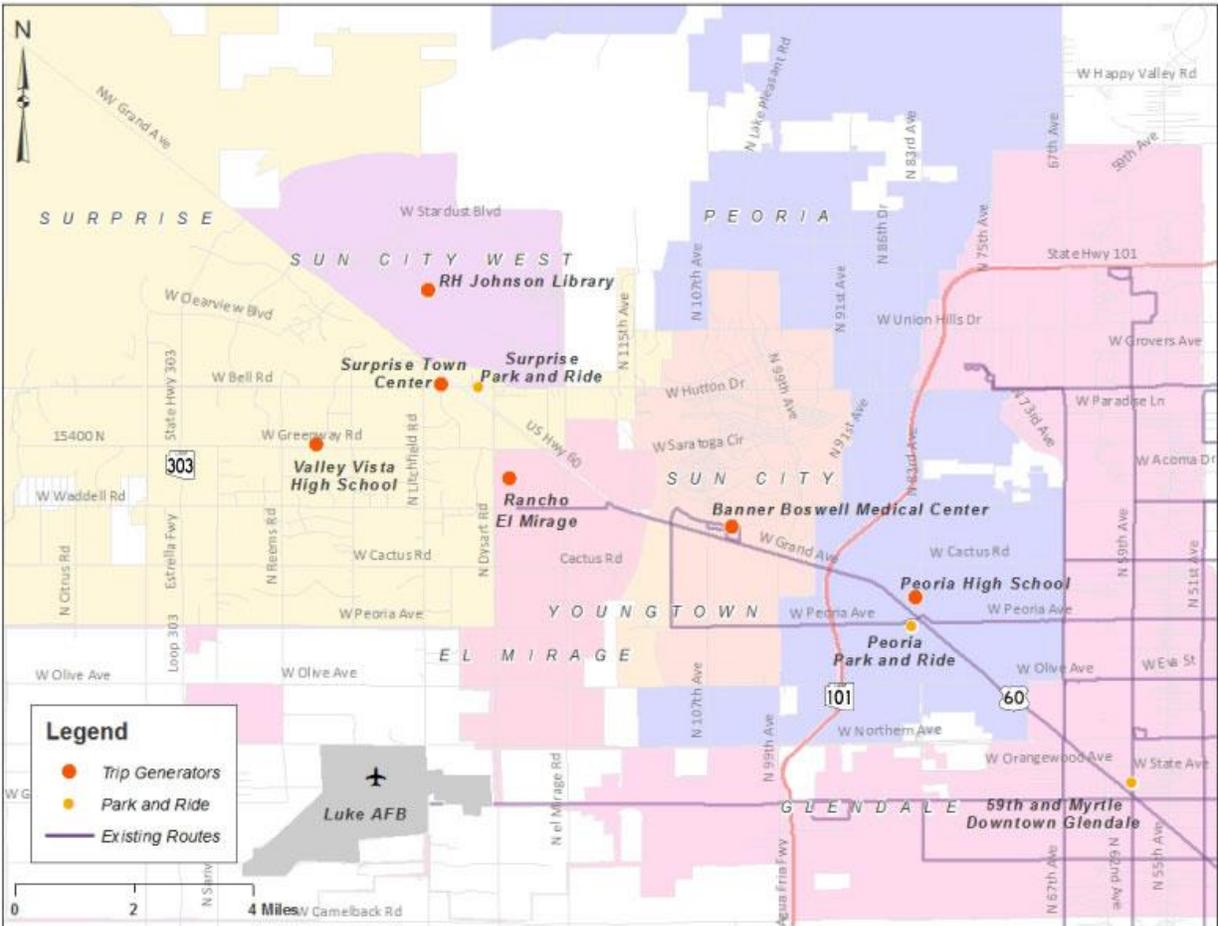
Sun City	Phoenix	21.0%
	Peoria	20.2%
	Glendale	16.0%

Youngtown	Peoria	18.3%
	NW Valley	18.3%
	Surprise	15.5%

Sun City Festival	Surprise	75.0%
	NW Valley	10.0%
	Phoenix	5.0%

Other	Surprise	40.4%
	Phoenix	9.6%
	NW Valley	7.7%

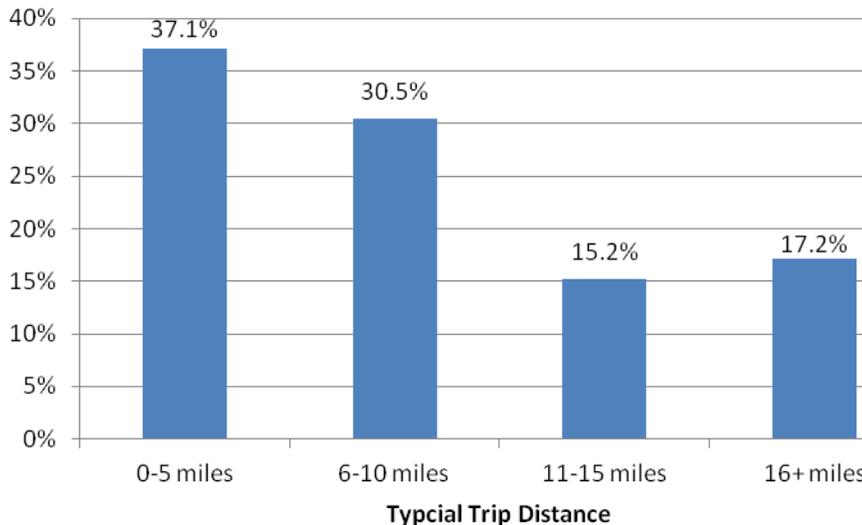
Exhibit 3.2.13 Study Area



Question 7. Approximately how far do you travel on a typical trip?

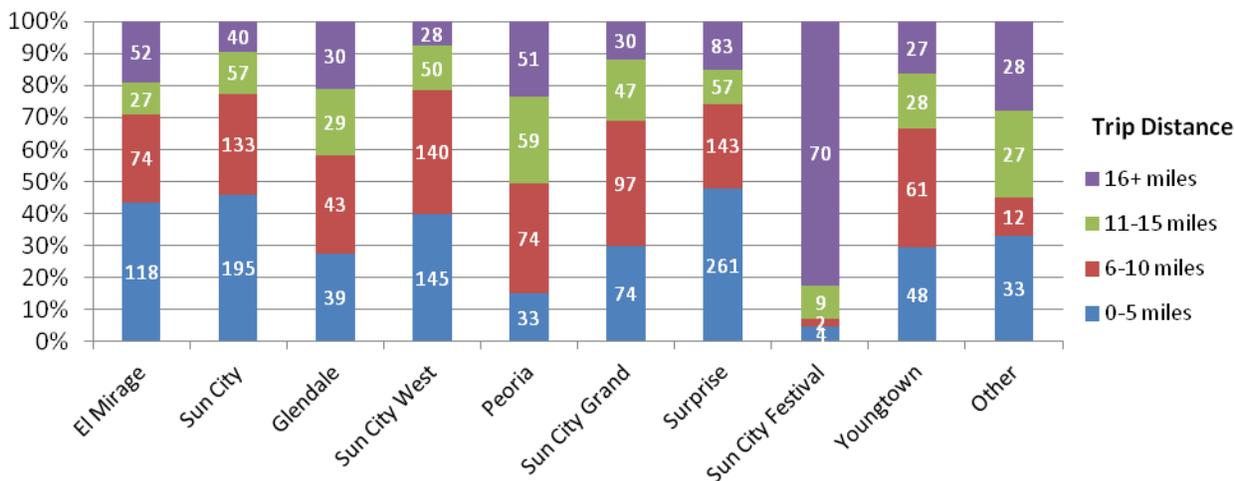
The shortest distance category, “0 – 5 miles,” was the most selected option by respondents representing 37 percent of the overall response. Exhibit 3.2.14 displays the relative frequencies of each distance grouping for Question 7.

Exhibit 3.2.14 Typical Trip Distance



Typical trip distance varied among study area communities. El Mirage, Sun City, and Surprise showed a relatively high number of responses in the 0 – 5 miles category. Sun City Festival, located on the far west of the study area and geographically distanced from other communities, predictably had a high number of responses in the 16+ miles category. Exhibit 3.2.15 displays responses to Question 7 by community.

Exhibit 3.2.15 Typical Trip Distance by Community



The large proportion of senior residents in the study area appears to influence the typical trip length for the overall population. Senior residents and/or retirees, with typical trip purposes identified as shopping or recreation, likely make the most convenient and/or shortest trip

possible (compared to a full or part-time worker with less flexible trip choices). Exhibit 3.2.16 displays the distribution of typical trip length by age group.

Exhibit 3.2.16 Typical Trips Distance by Age Group

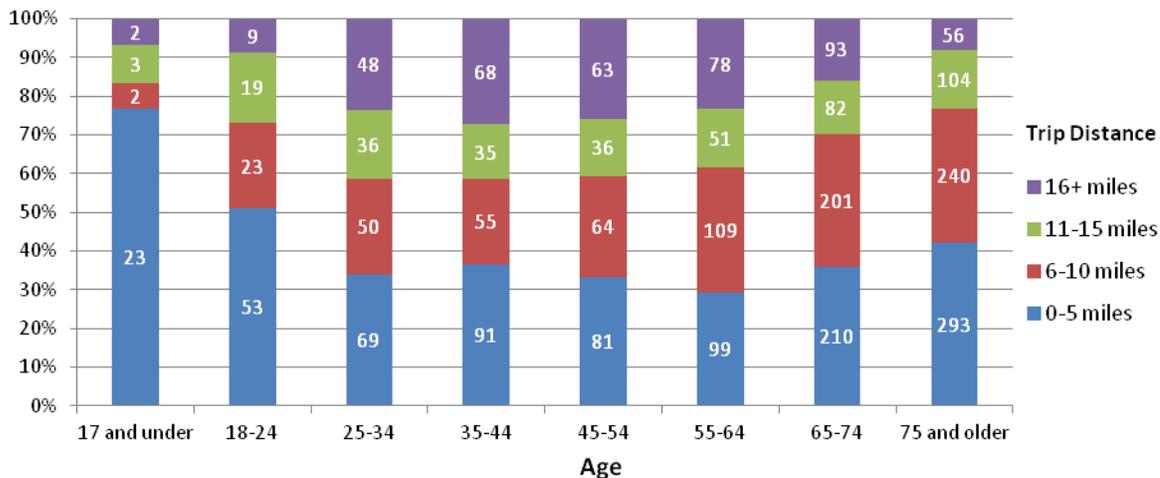
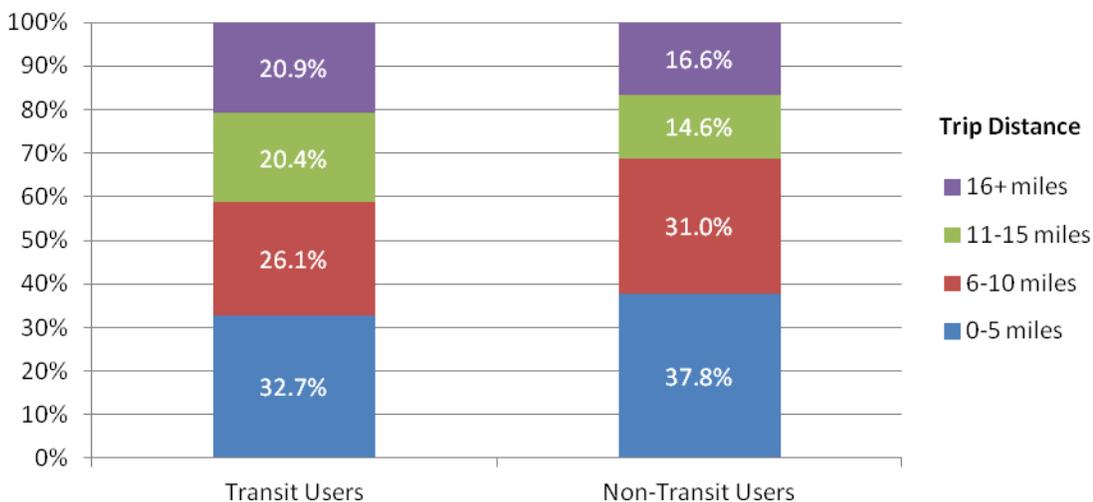


Exhibit 3.2.17 displays the distribution of transit users by distance traveled. The data indicates that the distribution of trips made by transit users is fairly consistent with respect to distance, while non-riders display a more typical pattern of community-oriented travel.

Exhibit 3.2.17 Transit Usage by Travel Distance



Question 8. What is your primary means of transportation that you use in a typical week?

A majority of respondents (84 percent) drive alone in their personal vehicles for typical trips. “Getting rides” received seven percent of responses and was the second most frequent category by a large margin over remaining categories. Exhibit 3.2.18 displays the percentage of responses for Question 8. Of the Dial-A-Ride (DAR) options specified by respondents, Surprise DAR (4) and Discount Cab (2) were the most frequently cited. Discount Cab and “airport shuttle” were also cited by four respondents within the “taxi or privately-run service” category. Many respondents also identified a golf cart as a common means of transportation (27 responses).

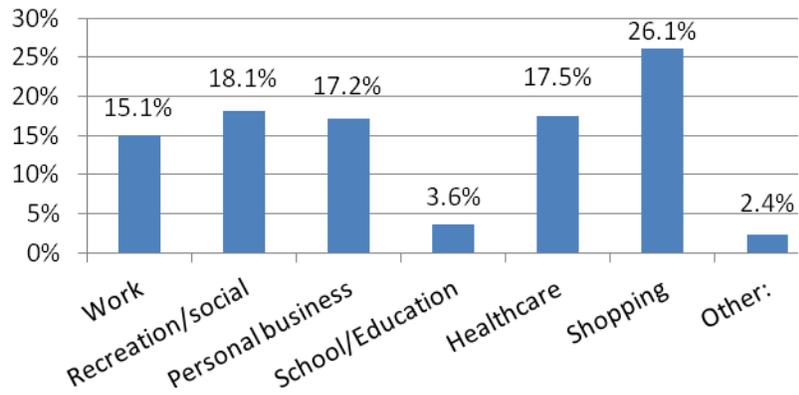
Exhibit 3.2.18 Typical Means of Transportation

Response	Frequency
Personal vehicle (drive alone)	84.4%
Get rides from family member or friend	7.0%
Social service organization/non-profit transportation	0.8%
Walk	1.6%
Bicycle	1.4%
Wheelchair/scooter	0.3%
Carpool/vanpool	0.6%
Valley Metro local bus, express bus, or van pool	0.9%
Dial-A-Ride	0.8%
Taxi or privately-run service	0.5%
Other public transit	0.2%
Other	1.4%

Question 9. What are your typical travel purposes?

The most typical trip purpose for study area respondents was “Shopping” with 1,534 responses, or about 26 percent. Recreation/social (18 percent), Healthcare (18 percent), Personal business (17 percent), and Work (15 percent) were also popular selections. Only about four percent of respondents indicated “School” as a typical trip purpose, though this low percentage likely reflects the fact that only six percent of survey respondents were 24 years old or younger. These numbers are reflective of the study area demographics and confirm study population and demographic analyses depicting an aging region with a large percentage of retirees. Exhibit 3.2.19 presents the distribution of responses for Question 9.

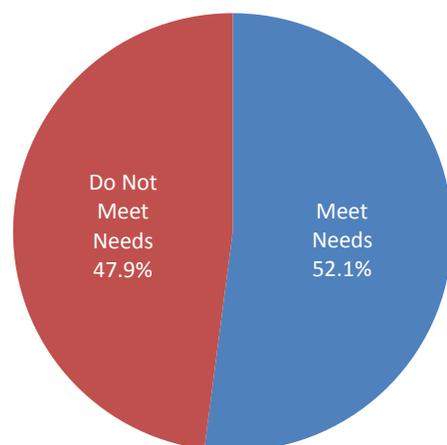
Exhibit 3.2.19 Typical Travel Purpose



Question 10. Do the transportation options in your community meet your needs?

Exhibit 3.2.20 indicates that available transportation options meet the needs for a majority of respondents. Interestingly, despite this response a large proportion of residents also indicated a desire to see additional options. For example, the intercept survey team received many first-hand comments regarding this question from residents with the personal vehicle as their primary means of transportation. Many respondents indicated that although their needs were met at the time, changes in ability to drive, employment status, or the addition of new drivers in the household would reduce their mobility options. Similar responses were submitted in the mail-in version of the survey.

Exhibit 3.2.20 - Adequacy of Community Transportation Options



Question 11. Has the absence of transportation options affected your ability to...?

Respondents indicating that their needs were not currently being met were prompted to indicate specific options. The most common response simply reflected a general desire for public transit availability (316 responses – this number refers to an amalgamation of similar comments such as “Any,” “Anything,” “Availability,” “Service,” “Transit,” etc.). Of the more specific options, Bus (58), Light Rail (50), Dial-A-Ride (32), and Rail (32) were also popular. Exhibit 3.2.21 displays the breakdown for each affected activity. The full list of answers is included in Appendix C.

Exhibit 3.2.21 Affected Activities

- *Access healthcare?*

Response	Count	Percentage
Yes	335	12.9
No	1951	74.9

- *Access social service programs?*

Response	Count	Percentage
Yes	251	9.6
No	1,879	72.1

- *Access school or vocational training?*

Response	Count	Percentage
Yes	184	7.1
No	1,687	71.2

- *Access work or employment opportunities?*

Response	Count	Percentage
Yes	218	8.4
No	1,819	69.8

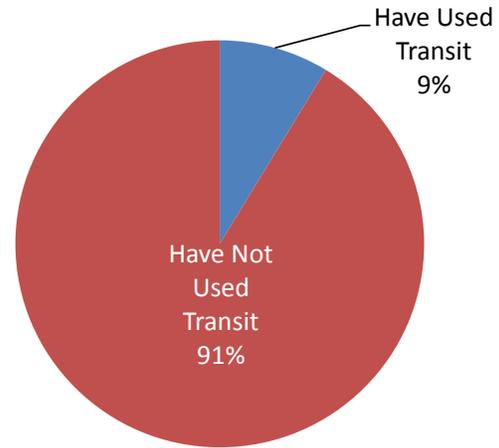
Most respondents did not cite having been negatively impacted by a lack of transportation options in the NW Valley. Of the four subcategories within this question, residents’ ability to “Access healthcare” is the most frequently impacted by transportation deficiencies compared to other trip purposes.

Similar to the previous questions, it should be noted that many respondents included a qualification to the question (via comments during intercept surveys as well as via side notes on the mailer survey). The many “not yet...” responses likely indicate that respondents are concerned about being able to meet their transportation needs once they are no longer able to drive.

Question 12. Have you used public transit in the past 90 days?

This question was posed to estimate the number of transit users, or riders, and non-riders within the study area. As a follow-up, transit riders were prompted to specify the most recent route or service used. Most respondents had not used transit within 90 days of survey completion. Exhibit 3.2.22 illustrates the difference between the amount of riders and non-riders.

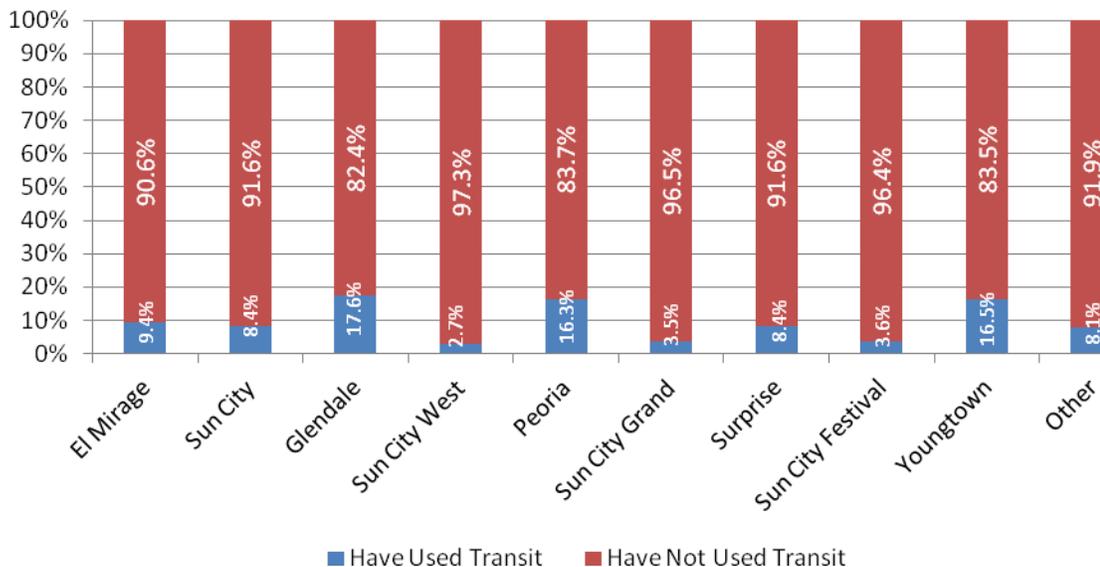
Exhibit 3.2.22 Riders vs. Non-Riders



Of the small percentage of actual transit riders, the most commonly used service was identified as the Metro Light Rail System (28.5 percent), followed by Valley Metro Route 106 (12.1 percent), and Dial-A-Ride (12.1 percent). Many riders (12.7%) also listed general services (i.e. “Bus” or “Taxi”).

Exhibit 3.2.23 displays the percentage of transit users by community. Given Glendale, Peoria, and Youngtown have local transit service; it is reasonable that these communities would have the highest percentage of transit usage. El Mirage, served by Valley Metro’s Grand Avenue Limited service, has the highest proportion of transit usage (9.4 percent) for any community currently lacking local transit service.

Exhibit 3.2.23 Transit Usage by Community

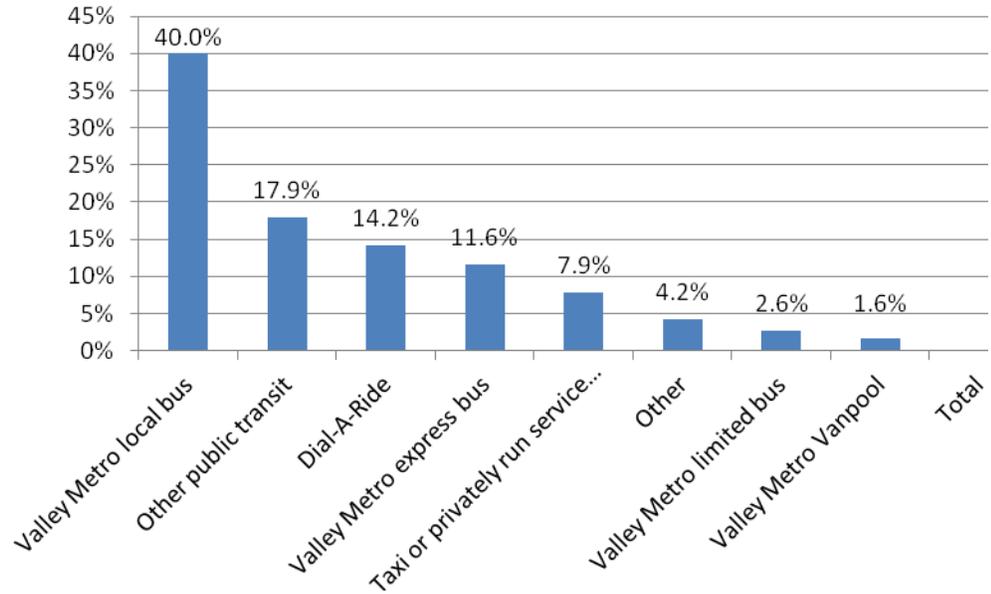


Questions 13 through 18 were included for transit riders only. Non-riders were directed to skip to Question 19. However, due to the fact that some non-rider respondents gave answers to questions 13 through 18, we eliminated their answers from the data for questions 13 through 18.

Question 13. What form of public transit do you typically use?

Exhibit 3.2.24 shows a breakdown of which forms of public transit riders most typically use. The most commonly used form of public transit for study area respondents was identified as the Valley Metro local bus (40 percent of riders). “Other public transit” services and Dial-A-Ride were common forms of public transit as well, being selected by 18 percent and 14 percent of respondents, respectively. Among the 35 respondents who indicated using some other form of public transit, 29 reported using the Valley Metro light rail service.

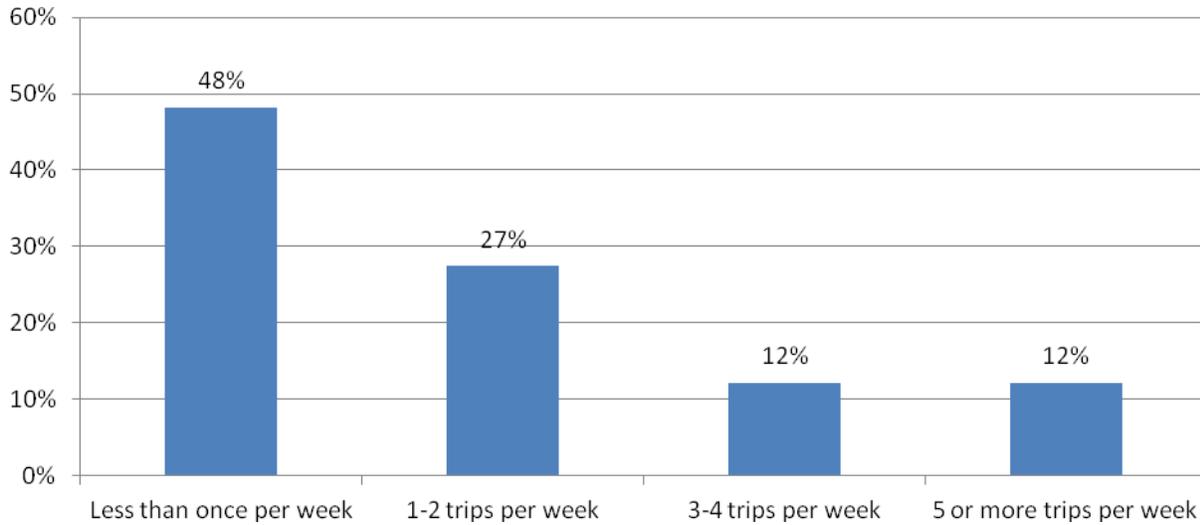
Exhibit 3.2.24 Most Common Forms of Public Transit among Riders



Question 14. How many times a week do you typically ride public transit?

Exhibit 3.2.25 indicates that most riders use transit less than once per week. Frequent riders making three or more trips a week make up two percent of overall study area population.

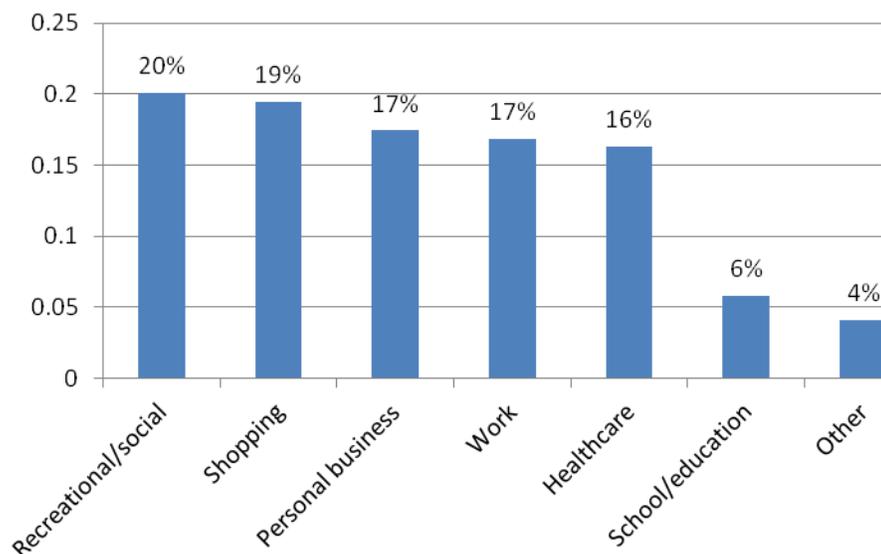
Exhibit 3.2.25 Transit Use Frequency



Question 15. What are your typical travel purposes when using public transit?

Exhibit 3.2.26 displays the percentage of responses regarding trip purpose for transit users. Trip purposes for transit riders generally align with overall trip purpose figures for the entire population. Shopping and recreation are the top two categories, followed by personal business and work.

Exhibit 3.2.26 Transit Rider by Typical Trip Purpose



Question 16. What service improvement would encourage you to use public transit more often?

Exhibit 3.2.27 reveals the respective frequencies for service improvement preferences. The most common response from riders is “serve new/different areas.” This option included an additional space for identifying specific desired areas. Among the new areas that respondents indicated, the most popular were Phoenix (receiving 11 percent of responses for new service areas), Sun City, and Surprise (both with nine percent). In addition to expanded geographic service, riders also selected increased service frequency as a desired improvement. Nearly ten percent of survey participants requested other improvements, with the most popular being more ADA accommodations, more “availability” (four responses each), and light rail (three responses).

Exhibit 3.2.27 Transit Rider Preferred Service Improvement

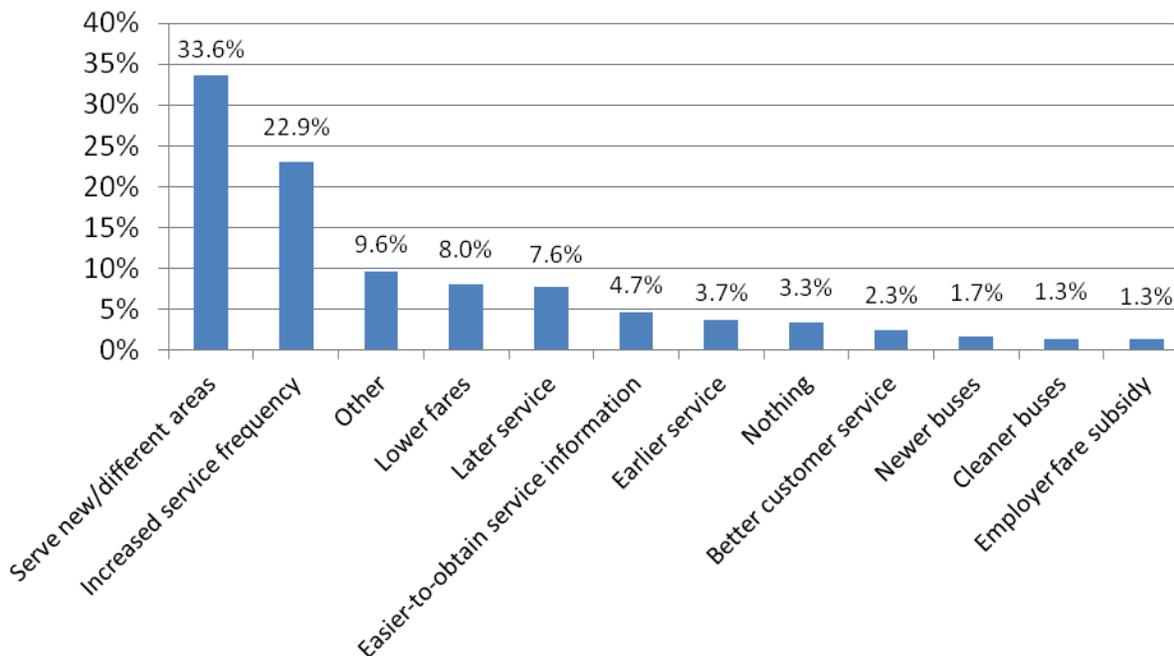
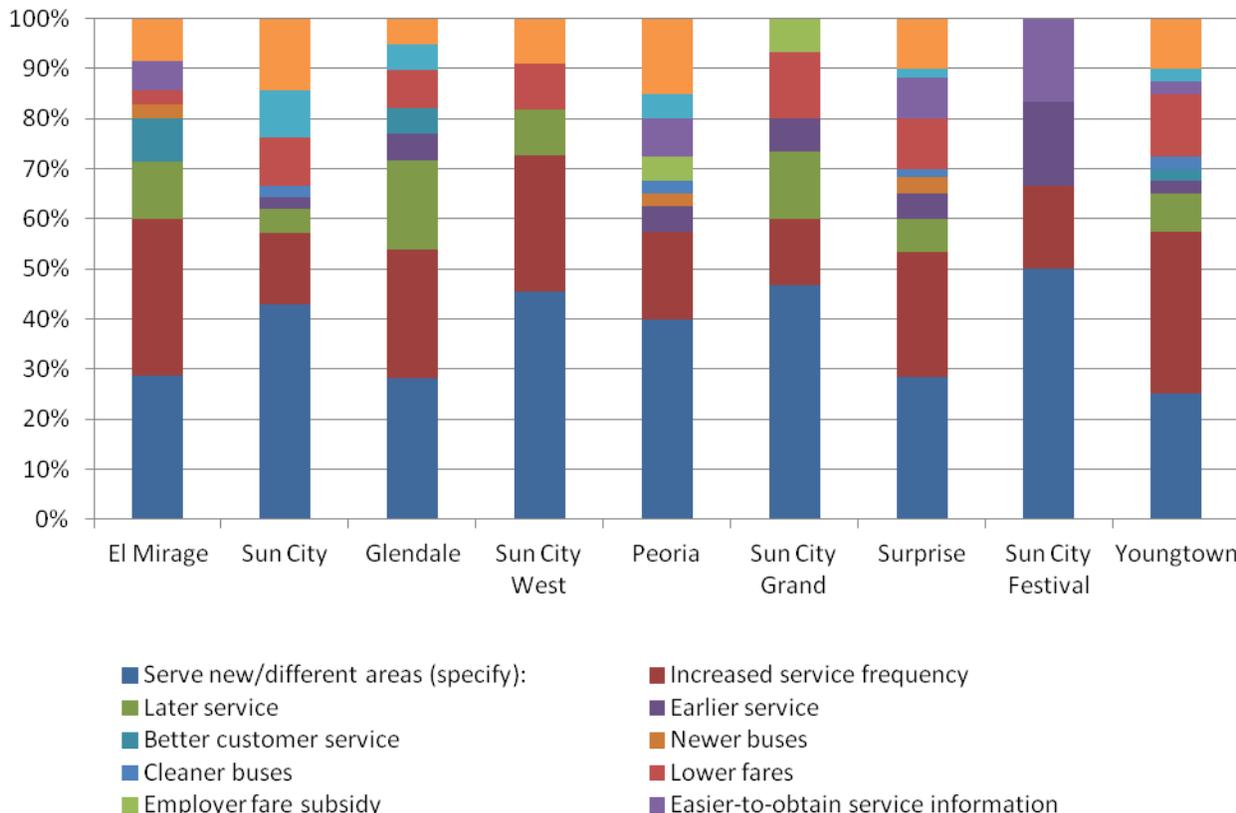


Exhibit 3.2.28 presents the distribution of preferred service improvements among transit users by community. While most communities had a noticeable preference towards serving new/different areas, respondents from El Mirage and Youngtown generally preferred more frequent service.

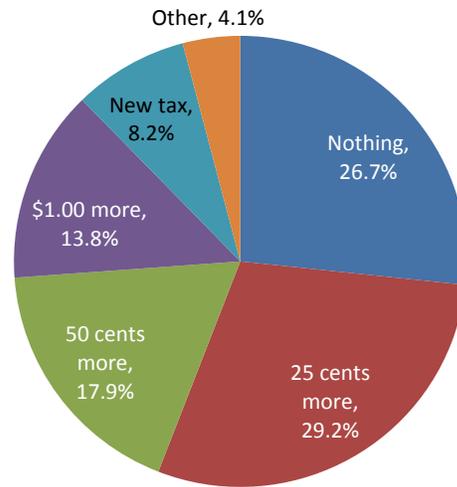
Exhibit 3.2.28 Improvement Preference by Community



Question 17. If a fare increase or funding source was needed to implement your preferred transit service improvement, how much more would you be willing to pay per trip?

The chart in Exhibit 3.2.29 indicates that approximately three quarters of respondents would support paying more for transit service if it resulted in service increases. However, during the intercept survey, Question 17 proved to be confusing for many of the study participants as they did not understand the link between it and Question 16. There appeared to be a guarded response so as to not be “locked in” to agreeing to a certain monetary amount (e.g., one comment asking, “Elaborate on the proposed options first, then I will give my answer.”). This feeling may be due to the fact that some respondents were somewhat unsure of what a “normal” fare hike amount would be.

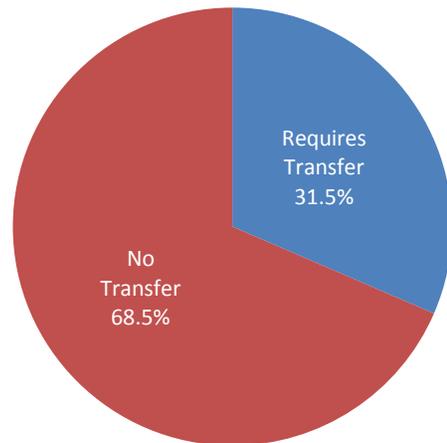
Exhibit 3.2.29 Support for Fare Increases



Question 18. Do you have to transfer during your typical trip?

Exhibit 3.2.30 displays the percentage of riders who must transfer between bus routes. Most riders, about 69 percent, do not require transfers for their typical trips.

Exhibit 3.2.30 Incidence of Transfer



Question 19 was asked only of non-riders. Riders were directed to skip to Question 20, which resumed the section of survey questions intended for all respondents.

Question 19. What, if anything, would encourage you to use public transit?

Question 19 asks non-riders to indicate preferred service improvements that would encourage them to use transit. As Exhibit 3.2.31 shows, the greatest share of responses from non-riders (17 percent) indicated that no service improvement would encourage them to use public transportation. However, many non-riders shared a desire with riders for greater frequency (13 percent) and service to new areas (8.5 percent). Exhibit 3.2.31 displays the relative frequencies of each response.

Exhibit 3.2.32 shows the most common responses to specified destinations. The top locations included Surprise, Phoenix, Arrowhead Mall, the airport, and Sun City. Of those entering responses for the “other” option, the most common entry indicated “a change in personal circumstances,” such as not having access to a vehicle, as one of the top factors that would encourage them to use transit. Other popular responses included adding light rail and “Dial-A-Ride” service, though respondents indicating the latter improvement may not be aware of existing Dial-A-Ride services. A complete list of responses is included in Appendix C.

Exhibit 3.2.31 Non-Rider Preferred Service Improvement

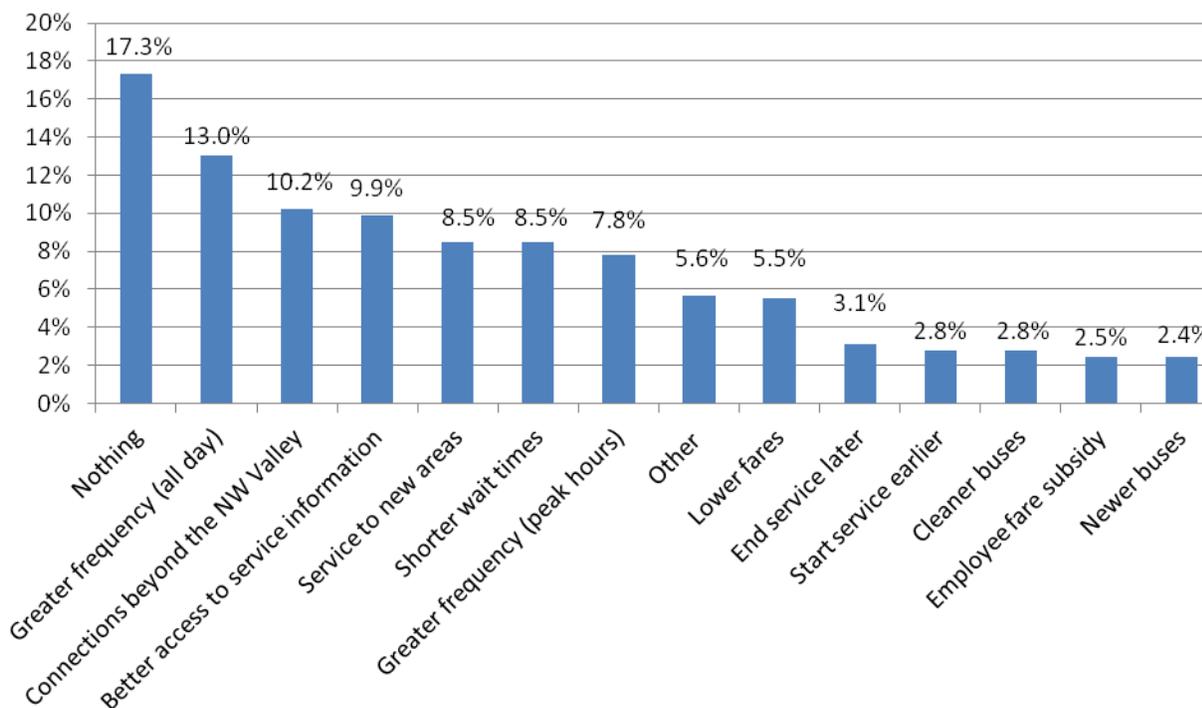


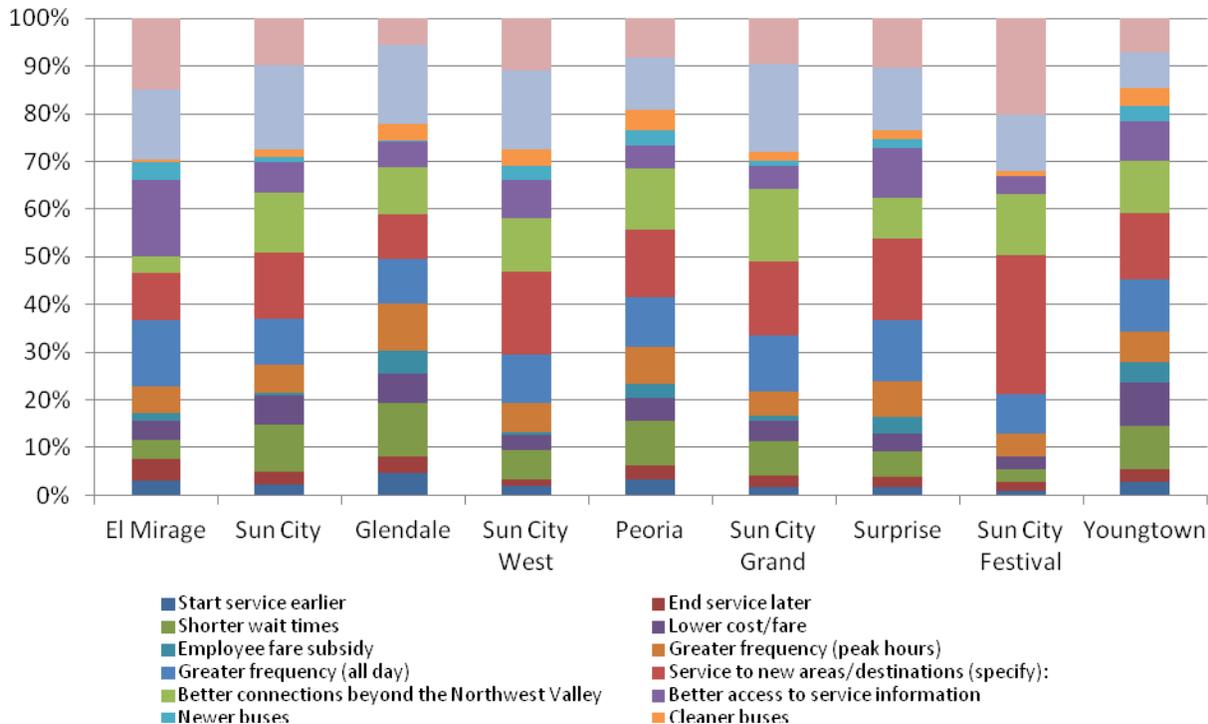
Exhibit 3.2.32 New Areas/Destinations Recommended for Service (Non-Riders)

Area/Destination	Count
Surprise	82
Phoenix	64
Arrowhead Mall	27
Airport	24
Sun City	23
Sun City West	21
Glendale	20
El Mirage	17
Peoria	15
NW Valley*	12

* "NW Valley" includes respondents listing multiple communities or responses such as "All around," "Various places," etc.

Exhibit 3.2.33 displays the preferred service improvements for non-riders by community. When compared with Question 16 (preferred service improvements for riders), non-riders place greater emphasis on having better access to service information, suggesting increased outreach and advertising, in addition to providing service, could increase ridership.

Exhibit 3.2.33 Non-Rider Preferred Service Improvement by Community

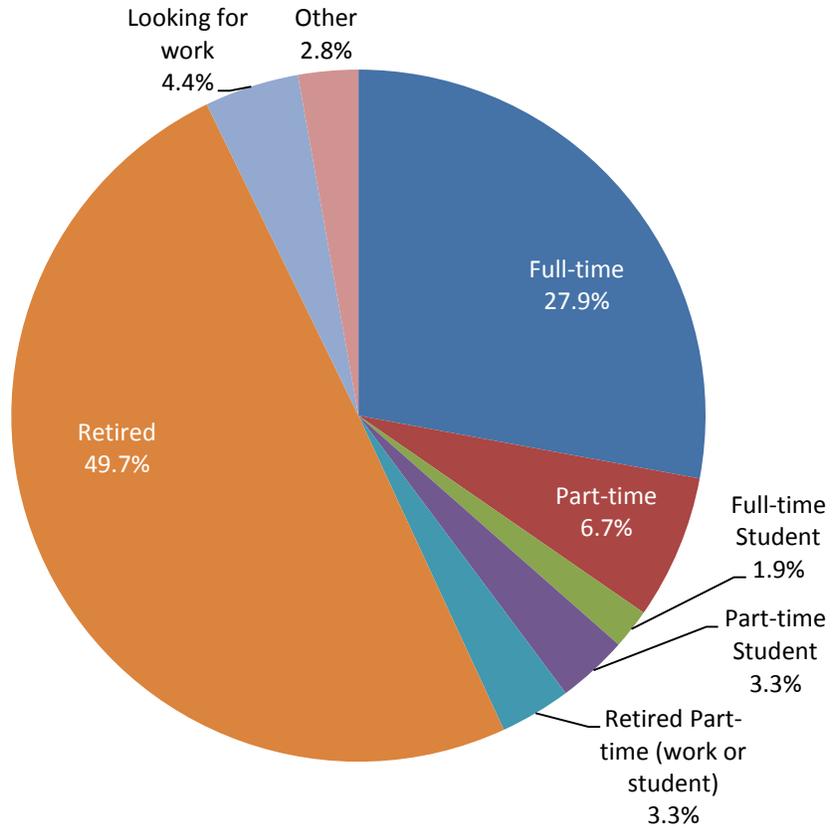


The balance of the remaining questions was asked of all respondents. These questions are demographic in nature. Some of these questions may have lower response rates as many individuals were unwilling to provide personal information.

Question 20. What is your current employment status?

Retirees comprised nearly half of all survey respondents. The second largest group was full-time workers (28 percent). Exhibit 3.2.34 illustrates the distribution of employment status.

Exhibit 3.2.34 Employment Status



Question 21. Do you speak a language other than English at home?

Exhibit 3.2.35 illustrates the primary language of the survey’s respondents. The majority of respondents (81 percent) indicated being solely English speakers. Sixteen percent of respondents cited speaking another language in the home, with 12 percent specifying *Spanish*. Three percent of respondents skipped this question. Exhibit 3.2.36 illustrates that transit riders speak languages other than English more often than non-riders.

Exhibit 3.2.35 Respondent Language

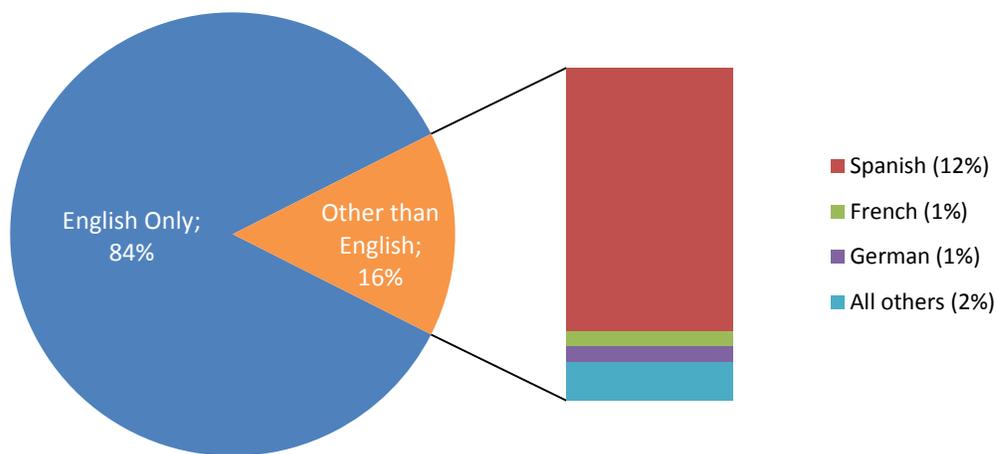
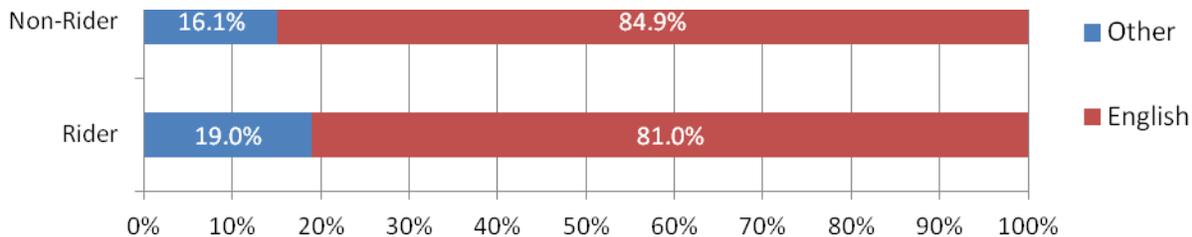


Exhibit 3.2.36 Language Spoken at Home



Question 22. How many private motor vehicles are available in your household?

Exhibit 3.2.37 indicates about six percent of surveyed respondents did not have a vehicle available within their household. About 83 percent have one or two vehicles, and about 11 percent had three or more vehicles available.

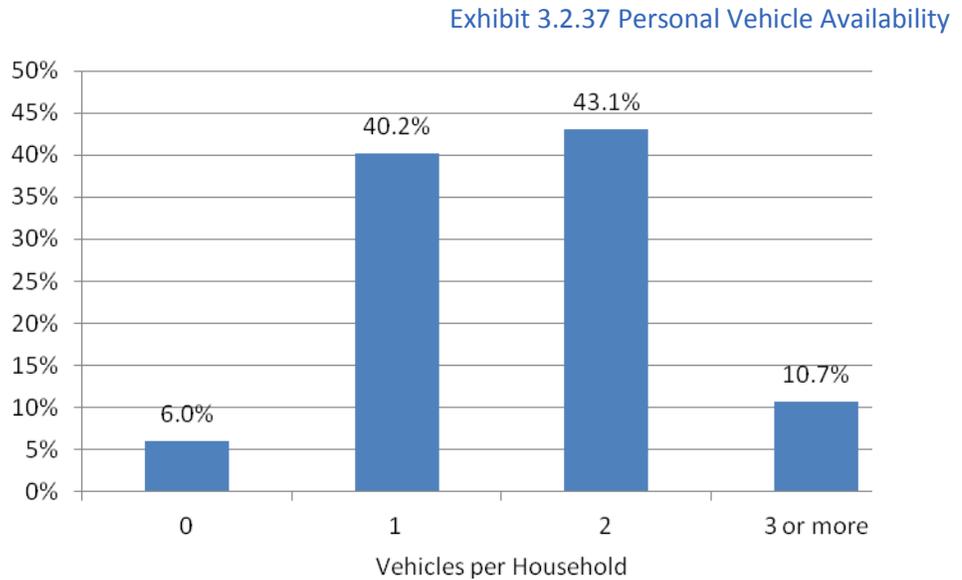
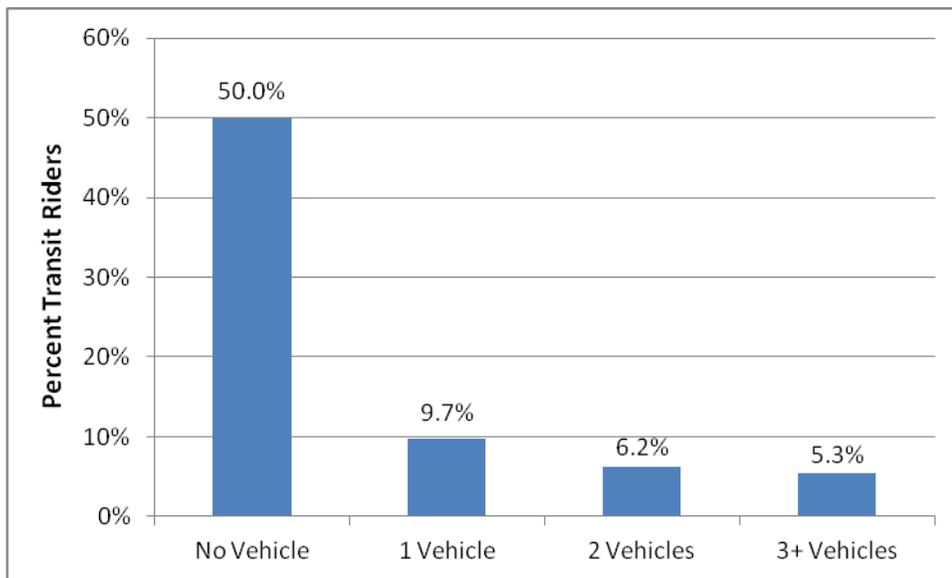


Exhibit 3.2.38 illustrates the differences between rider and non-rider vehicular ownership. As expected, a greater percentage of persons without a car rely upon public transit.

Exhibit 3.2.38 Available Vehicle vs. Transit Use



Question 23. What was your total household income in 2011?

Exhibit 3.2.39 indicates that 34 percent of respondents had 2011 incomes of \$55,000 or greater and 11 percent earned less than \$15,000. Twenty percent declined to answer.

Exhibit 3.2.39 Household Income

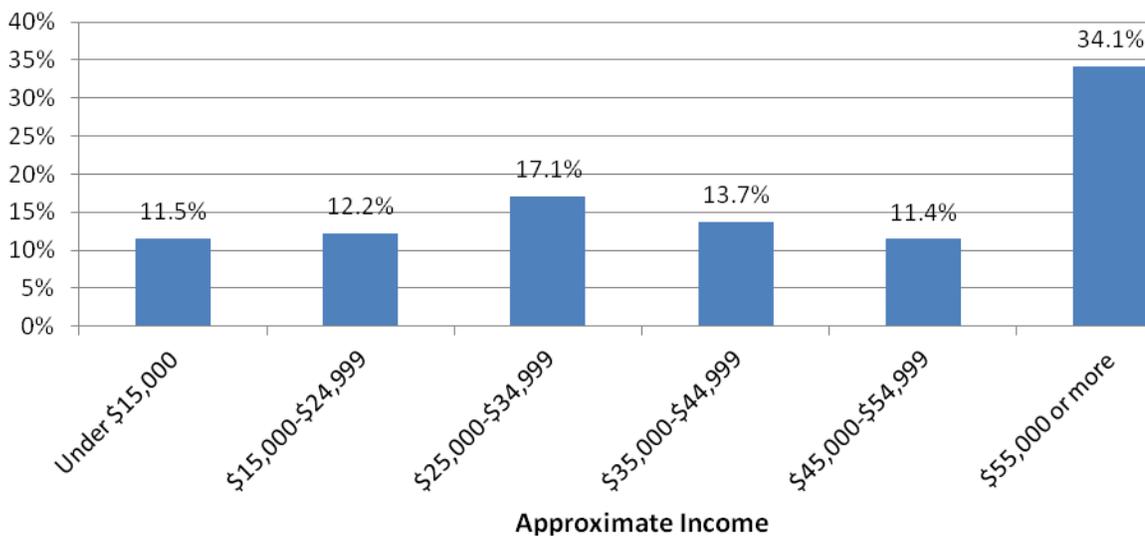
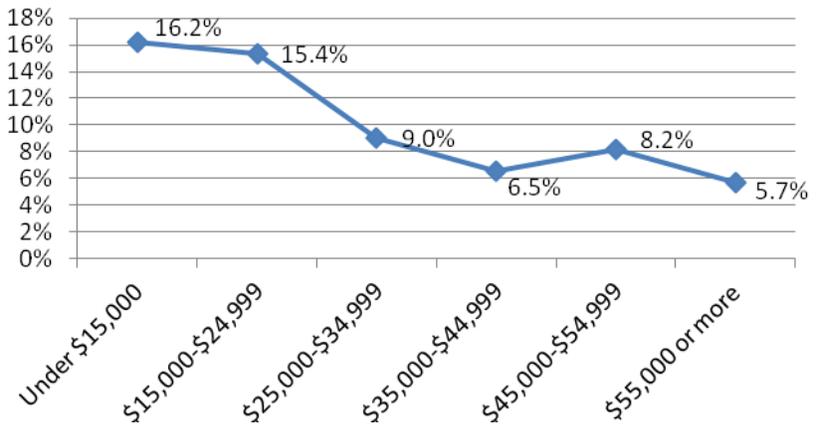


Exhibit 3.2.40 displays the differences in income between riders and non-riders and indicates that transit use declines as household income increases. However, it should also be noted that of the 181 survey respondents who use public transit, 39, or about 22 percent, have stated incomes of more than \$55,000. This suggests that a significant portion of the Northwest Valley’s potential transit ridership is comprised of “choice riders.”

Exhibit 3.2.40 Ridership and Household Income



Question 24. What is your age?

Exhibit 3.2.41 shows respondents' age groups. The age distribution is consistent with results for predominant employment status (retired) and trip purpose (shopping, recreation, etc.). Results for this question show that about half of respondents are over the age of 65. Exhibit 3.2.42 displays the different age distributions between riders and non-riders and suggests riders tend to be younger than non-riders.

Exhibit 3.2.41 Respondent Age

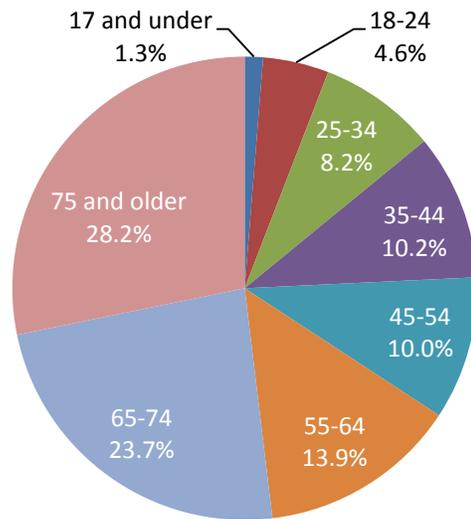
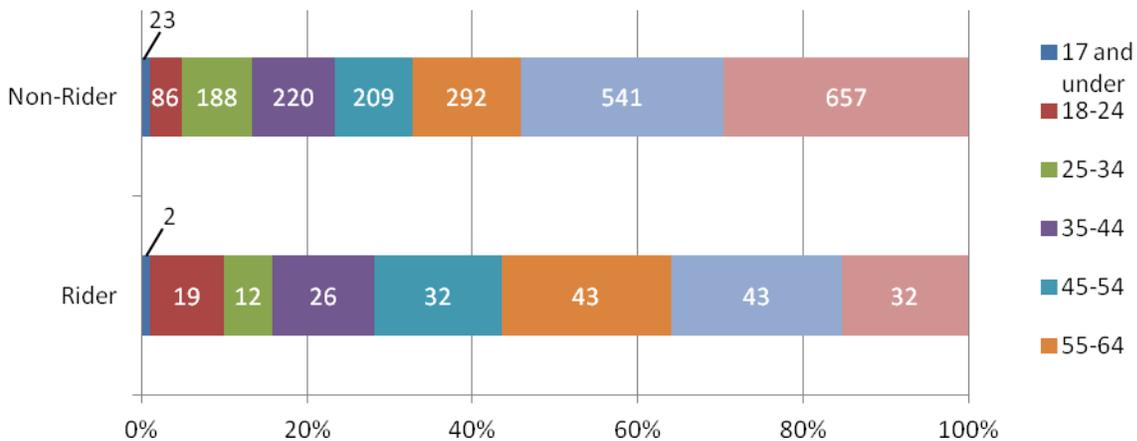
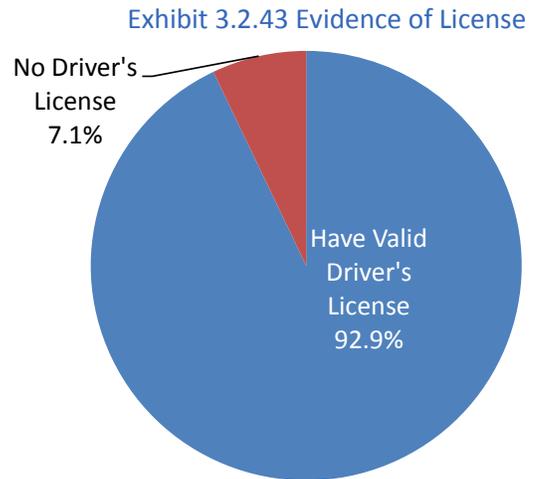


Exhibit 3.2.42 Respondent Age by Ridership



Question 24. Do you have a valid driver license?

As Exhibit 3.2.43 shows, approximately 93 percent of survey respondents have a valid driver license. Of the respondents that do not have a license, 19 percent use public transit. Only seven percent of those with a driver license use transit.



3.3 COMMUNITY MEETINGS

Community meetings were held with the primary purpose of soliciting detailed, in-depth feedback and comments from interested study area residents. These groups complemented the community survey, which was geared toward obtaining a large *quantity* of input, by giving residents an opportunity to provide more *qualitative* information regarding mobility issues affecting their communities.

On one level, the groups provided a forum for the project team to introduce the study to the public and inform them on project activities. More importantly, however, these efforts were intended to place area residents as the driving force behind findings and recommendations. Community meetings allowed the project team to gain insight into transportation needs and priorities for specific communities and populations. Particular emphasis was given to encouraging participation from underrepresented and transit-dependent groups including seniors, youth, and persons with disabilities.

Community meeting involvement consisted of two overall phases. The first phase took place during September and October 2012. This phase predominately centered on discussions with attendees regarding transit system awareness and use, mobility issues, transportation needs, and service priorities. The intent of this phase was to take resident-generated recommendations and priorities and utilize them as resources for drafting the service plan.

The second round of community meetings took place in January 2013 as a follow-up to the initial drafting of service recommendations. This phase gave attendees the chance to review and comment on the draft service recommendations. This review was an essential component of the overall public involvement plan as it helped ensure the draft recommendations appropriately “captured” public input provided during Phase 1.

Phase 1

The initial round of community meetings was spread over multiple days between Monday, September 24 and Monday, October 15, 2012. The specific times, dates, and locations of the events are listed in Exhibit 3.3.1. This phase consisted of fourteen in-depth community roundtables, scheduled throughout the study area at all times of the day to make the meetings available to as many residents as possible. Activities included an introduction to the project, a presentation of preliminary survey results, and a discussion of transportation issues specifically oriented toward the hosting community as well as the attendees themselves.

During these community meetings, the project team emphasized the important role of public involvement. Attendees were placed in the role of the expert and were encouraged to share their experiences and insights. The resulting information garnered during these meetings proved

invaluable and was used extensively in the draft service recommendations. A summary of the comments from each community is provided below.

Exhibit 3.3.1 Community Meeting Schedule – Phase 1

Community	Date	Time	Location	Address	
Sun City West	9/24	10 AM - 11 AM	RH Johnson Lecture Hall	19803 RH Johnson Blvd	Sun City West, AZ 85375
Sun City Festival	9/24	1 PM - 2 PM	Celebration Hall East	26501 W Desert Vista Blvd	Buckeye, AZ 85396
Sun City Festival	9/24	3 PM - 4 PM	Celebration Hall East	26501 W Desert Vista Blvd	Buckeye, AZ 85396
Sun City Grand	9/25	10 AM - 11 AM	Palm Center	19726 N Remington Dr	Surprise, AZ 85374
Sun City Grand	9/25	1 PM - 2 PM	Palm Center	19726 N Remington Dr	Surprise, AZ 85374
Sun City West	9/25	4:30 PM - 5:30 PM	RH Johnson Lecture Hall	19803 RH Johnson Blvd	Sun City West, AZ 85375
Sun City	9/26	1:30 - 2:30 PM	Bell Center	16820 N 99th Ave	Sun City, AZ 85351
Sun City	9/26	3:30 - 4:30 PM	Bell Center	16821 N 99th Ave	Sun City, AZ 85351
Peoria	10/2	2 PM - 3:30 PM	Public Safety Admin Building	8351 W Cinnabar Ave	Peoria, AZ 85345
Surprise	10/3	11:30 AM - 2 PM	Surprise Senior Center	15832 N Hollyhock St	Surprise, AZ 85378
Surprise	10/3	6 PM - 7:30 PM	NW Regional Library	16089 Bullard Ave	Surprise, AZ 85374
El Mirage	10/4	3 PM - 4:30 PM	Senior Center	14010 N El Mirage Rd	El Mirage, AZ 85355
Peoria	10/4	6 PM - 7:30 PM	Pinnacle Peak Fire Station	23100 N Lake Pleasant Rd	Peoria, AZ 85345
Sun Village	10/15	10:30 AM - 11:30 AM	Sun Village Community Center	17300 N Sun Village Pkwy	Surprise, AZ 85374

Sun City West. Meetings held on September 24, 2012, at 10:00 AM and on September 25, 2012, at 4:30 PM. Total attendees: 24. Comments included:

- Attendees collectively expressed a desire to improve access to the following locations:
 - Banner Hospital,
 - Arrowhead Mall,
 - Downtown Phoenix,
 - Christown Mall,
 - Paradise Valley, and
 - Wickenburg.
- Some attendees use Valley Metro’s fixed-route service.
- City of Surprise service will transition to Discount Cab in October 2012.
- There was concern over the loss of Sun Cities Area Transit (SCAT).
- There is a perceived lack of convenience for people who do not drive.
- There is interest in establishing rail service to Downtown Phoenix on the Grand Avenue Corridor.
- Multiple attendees expressed a desire for a shuttle linking Sun City West to future rail service, and identified Grand Avenue and R H Johnson Boulevard as their preferred location for the future rail station.

- There was a request for service from Sun City West to Sky Harbor Airport.
- Attendees spoke of a need to identify current transit and mobility needs and priorities, as well as those within a five-year timeframe.
- One attendee's first priority was a better connection to Grand Avenue. His second priority was a connection to Downtown Phoenix.
- There was a stated preference for basic rail stations (platform and parking) as opposed to major (expensive) infrastructure.
- Attendees expressed a need for improved outreach and availability of transit service information for seniors.
- Attendees did not want to drive and park in Downtown Phoenix.
- One attendee preferred realistic, short-term solutions versus long-term inter-city rail service.
- Multiple attendees asked for service between outlying, residential locations with central attractions, such as Downtown Phoenix.
- An attendee was concerned that train depots are closing in Phoenix and Glendale, and as such, that there will be no rail service in Phoenix.
- One attendee asked for bus service from Bell and Grand Avenue with limited-stop and express service.
- There was a desire for express bus service to Downtown Phoenix (versus building a rail line).
- Staff was asked to promote future meetings via the Property Owner and Renter Association (PORA) in the weekly email newsletters. Staff was also asked to speak at the local Kiwanis Club and Lions Club meetings.
- One attendee noted how nice it was to have multiple travel options.

Sun City Festival. Meetings held on September 24, 2012, at 1:00 PM and 3:00 PM. Total attendees: Three. Comments included:

- Attendees collectively expressed a desire to improve access to the following locations:
 - Downtown Phoenix,
 - Arrowhead Mall,
 - Prasada (in the future),
 - Banner hospitals (Sun City and Sun City West),
 - Sky Harbor Airport, and
 - Scottsdale.
- There was a stated overall desire for local circulators (i.e., links to grocery stores).
- One attendee noted how Sun City Festival's distance from key activity centers (healthcare, shopping, cultural) presents a problem for some residents.

- An attendee noted that transit demand is likely seasonal, with October through April having the highest number of residents.
- One attendee asked if the Surprise Dial-A-Ride fleet set for retirement could be utilized to provide local transit service, including weekend and event-specific service.

Sun City Grand. Meetings held on September 25, 2012, at 10:00 AM and 1:00 PM. Total attendees: 14. Comments included:

- Attendees collectively expressed a desire to improve access to the following locations:
 - Downtown Phoenix (specifically the Downtown Phoenix Courthouse),
 - Arrowhead Mall,
 - Mayo Clinic, and
 - Any connections making light rail more feasible.
- There were a variety of questions relating to Dial-A-Ride (DAR) service. Some of them were in regard to the City of Surprise's DAR transition, while others were asking for better access to DAR service information, and others simply asked for increased DAR service.
- One attendee asked for better access to transit information for seniors (possibly in *Sun City Grand Times*).
- Staff was asked if they could make a similar presentation to the local Disabilities Commission.
- An attendee noted the seasonality for ridership, stating many Sun City Grand residents will not return until mid to late October.
- One attendee asked that Valley Metro promote future project meetings in SCG newspaper and via local Channel 22.
- An attendee stated that he learned about the community meeting via the local newspaper and direct mail.
- Many attendees stated that Sun City Grand residents feel "cut off" from other portions of the community and NW Valley.
- One attendee requested express/limited stop service to light rail.
- One attendee stated a preference for taxis and small shuttles over larger buses.

Sun City. Meetings held on September 26, 2012, at 1:30 PM and 3:30 PM. Total attendees: 23. Comments included:

- Attendees collectively expressed a desire to improve access the following locations:
 - Downtown Phoenix,
 - Surprise (using the Bell Road Bus), and
 - Arrowhead Mall.
- There was a discussion regarding the best possible means of providing service between Sun City and Downtown Phoenix. While one attendee believed that bus service is preferable, another attendee stated a preference for using local (existing) train tracks to get to Downtown. Another attendee stated that there should be, at the very least, limited stop/express service to the Downtown Phoenix’s cultural events/venues.
- Multiple attendees stated a need for more community linkages to Phoenix’s rail service.
- An attendee expressed her disappointment regarding the end of the SCAT program.
- There was a discussion regarding transit funding. One attendee asked whether or not a funding plan was already in place. Another attendee believed there should be a tax district to pay for transit improvements. Another attendee stated that service expansion should draw on funding from malls and other shopping centers.
- Multiple attendees stated a desire for small community circulators as their top service expansion priority. However, another attendee stated a need to focus on “Valley-wide service.”
- There was a short discussion regarding golf carts. While one attendee stated that golf carts can be used to travel from Bell Center to connections in Phoenix, another attendee asked for more regulations relating to golf carts.
- One attendee mentioned that the priorities for service expansion should be shopping opportunities, especially grocery stores.
- An attendee requested later evening service on all existing lines.
- One attendee stated, “We need to act like the large metro area that we are.”
- An attendee believed there should be light rail along I-10.
- There was a discussion about meeting promotion. One attendee learned about the meeting via the newspaper, while another attendee believed staff should promote future meetings via *The Independent*. One attendee stated that daytime meetings were better for more people.
- There were multiple complaints about a lack of Dial-A-Ride service in Sun City.
- An attendee asked for improved access to ADA certification (periodic certification days in NW Valley), as well as a better driver education and outreach program for

seniors. There were additional comments calling for improved access to general transit service information.

- One attendee asked, “Why does Sun City lack representation within MAG?”
- There was a stated preference for a “green” transportation fleet.

Peoria. Meeting held on October 2, 2012, at 2:00 PM. Total attendees: Nine. Comments included:

- There was a discussion relating to Dial-A-Ride and other services for persons with limited mobility. One attendee described Dial-A-Ride as “the biggest issue” for Peoria. Another attendee claimed that not enough people in Peoria are ADA certified.
- Multiple comments related to Sunday service (specifically relating to church schedules). One attendee believes it would be possible to have volunteer drivers/shared rides provide greater access to churches.
- An attendee noted that it takes too long to make transfers.
- An attendee noted that while the Northwest Valley cannot keep up with [Phoenix], there should be better funding options.
- One attendee believed fixed-route service was particularly limited in Peoria, and wondered why the City was not partnering with outside companies to provide greater mobility and transit service.

Surprise. Meetings held on October 3, 2012, at 11:30 AM and 6:00 PM. Total attendees: 56. Comments included:

- Attendees collectively expressed a desire to improve access to the following locations:
 - Arrowhead Mall, and
 - Bell Road and Grand Avenue.
- There were various questions regarding the City’s Dial-A-Ride service. For example, one attendee asked, “How far in advance will calls need to be placed [in the new transition plan]?” Another attendee noted that Surprise’s Dial-A-Ride only travels to other Surprise locations, even if many riders are trying to go shopping outside the City’s service area.
- There was a collective desire for more local service. One attendee stated that it was difficult for people to “get to school, see friends, do social activities, or ride to the mall.” Another attendee mentioned how he believed many people feel isolated in Surprise.
- Multiple attendees stated a preference for a local bus loop linking popular destinations/attractions. There was a perceived idea that while Valley Metro

provided frequent and extensive service in the North Valley, there was little service in the North West Valley and the Southwest Valley.

- One attendee asked that staff “first [operate] local transportation, and then worry about the connection to light rail.”

El Mirage. Meeting held on October 4, 2012, at 3:00 PM. Total attendees: Eight. Comments included:

- Attendees collectively expressed a desire to improve access the following locations:
 - Downtown Phoenix, and
 - Various local destinations, including:
 - Walmart (Thunderbird Road and Dysart Road),
 - Gateway Park,
 - Local medical offices,
 - Local grocery store,
 - Various schools on Dysart Road, and
 - Mountain College.
- One attendee stated his preference for local circulators that accepted reservations (Dial-A-Ride).
- There was a brief discussion about advertising. Staff asked, “How did you learn about the workshop?” Answers included:
 - Phone,
 - Newsletter,
 - Intercept survey, and
 - Senior Center (bulletin).
- One attendee stated that passengers should never have to walk one mile or more for bus access.
- An attendee mentioned that Valley Metro schedules are not well organized.
- An attendee noted, “To get to Downtown Phoenix for jury duty, it would take 1.5 hours to get from Youngtown to Central Avenue.”
- One attendee indicated a willingness to pay for “reliable service.”

Phase 2

The second round of community meetings was spread across three days from Monday, January 28, 2013, to Wednesday, January 30, 2013. The specific times, dates, and locations of the events are listed in Exhibit 3.3.2. This phase consisted of eleven community meetings, encompassing eight cities within the study area. In contrast to the first set of community meetings, these meetings presented the public with results from the first round of community meetings and the community survey, as well as potential service recommendations.

Exhibit 3.3.2 Community Meeting Schedule – Phase 2

Community	Date	Room Reserved Time	Time	Location	Address	
Sun City West	1/28	12:30-2:00 pm	1:30 PM	Sun City West Foundation	14465 RH Johnson Blvd	Sun City West, AZ 85375
Peoria	1/28	5:30 - 7:30 pm	6:00 PM	North Peoria Police Center	26900 N. Lake Pleasant Pkwy	Peoria, AZ 85383
Peoria	1/29	1:30-3:30 pm	2:00 PM	Development and Community Services Building	9875 N 85th Avenue	Peoria, AZ 85345
El Mirage	1/28	3:00-5:00 pm	3:30 PM	El Mirage Community Center	12145 NW Grand Ave.	El Mirage, AZ 85335
El Mirage	1/29	4:00-6:00 pm	4:30 PM	El Mirage Community Center	12145 NW Grand Ave.	El Mirage, AZ 85335
Sun City	1/28	9:00-11:00 am	9:30 AM	Fairway Recreation Center, Arizona Rooms 3/4	10600 Peoria Ave.	Sun City, AZ 85351
Sun City Grand	1/29	9:00-11:00 am	9:30 AM	Apache Room in Chaparral Center	19781 N. Remington Drive	Surprise, AZ 85374
Surprise	1/30	6:30-9:00 pm	7:00 PM	Marley Park Heritage Club	13118 N Founders Park Blvd.	Surprise, AZ 85379
Surprise	1/30	3:00-5:00 pm	3:30 PM	Sun City Branch Library	16828 N 99th Ave	Sun City, AZ 85351
Surprise (Sun Village)	1/30	10:00-12:00 pm	10:30 AM	Sun Village Community Association	17300 N Sun Village Pkwy	Surprise, AZ 95374
Youngtown	1/29	7:00 - 9:00 pm	7:00 PM	Youngtown Community Clubhouse	12035 N Club House Square	Youngtown, AZ 85363

Generally speaking, attendees from each community were receptive to the recommendations as presented, though a few community members expressed concerns regarding financing service improvements. In addition to the presentations, each community meeting included a question and answer period, as well as conversations relating to a variety of transit-related topics. A summary of these comments for each community is provided below.

Sun City. Meeting held on January 28, 2013 at 9:30 AM. Total attendees: 34. Comments included:

- One attendee, who uses Valley Metro buses, stated that many people are unaware of Metro Bus 106. This attendee then suggested more advertising for available transportation services, especially for the people who cannot drive.
- An attendee asked whether service from Boswell Medical Center to Phoenix is a rumor or not. MAG Project Manager Marc Pearsall replied Valley Metro Route 106 serves this corridor.
- An attendee asked for an explanation as to how Sun City received funding.
- One attendee exclaimed, “We need to act as a metropolitan area rather than individual cities.”
- There was a conversation regarding the loss of SCAT (Dial-A-Ride service in Sun City). One attendee asked how she would be able to get to Arrowhead Towne Center as a result of this decision.
- An attendee stated that she would like more transportation options when she cannot drive or walk. She then stated a desire to get to Downtown Phoenix, but taking taxis to get there would be too expensive.
- Many members of the community were in agreement that a local circulator is the best way to get people where they need to go. They placed an emphasis on medical offices, shopping, and getting to/from Surprise. They also requested the bus be ADA compliant.
- One attendee was thankful for an advertisement in a local newspaper for informing her about this meeting.
- There was a discussion in which a representative from one of the project stakeholders (Benevilla) asked the group about their experience regarding the loss of Dial-A-Ride services. Additionally, it was mentioned there is taxi service through Green Cab available for Sun City destinations.
- There was a discussion relating to transportation and the elderly. A 90-year-old attendee told a story regarding how she had to recognize that [her generation] is aging and will not be able to drive forever. She then stated how public transportation allows seniors to socialize.
- An attendee mentioned that the local senior center and Benevilla provide transportation options for seniors.
- There was a discussion about how to help “homebound” people leave the house.
- One attendee stated, “Transportation should just be done and not talked about so much.” He also stated, “Transit will eventually pay for itself.”
- One attendee asked if a downtown circulator had ever successfully operated in Sun City. In reference to SCAT, it was noted that the definition of success is subjective,

and while SCAT suffered financial challenges, there was no mandatory fare collection.

- One attendee asked that the recommendations add service to 99th Ave., potentially to Union Hills.
- Another attendee asked for later evening service.

Sun City West. Meeting held on January 28, 2013, at 1:30 PM. Total attendees: 7. Comments included:

- One attendee asked if the Discount Cab \$4.00 trip was a one-time trial, as well as whether or not it was successful.
- An attendee asked about the status of Avondale Transit.
- There was a discussion regarding City of Surprise funding for transit service.
- One attendee asked if Sun City West's mayor had a preference for rail or buses. Consultant Dan Boyle answered by saying that funding for rail can be a problem, and that rail costs [at a minimum] \$16 million per mile.
- There was a discussion regarding how people heard about the meeting. One audience member said they read about the meeting in neighborhood paper, while another said they heard about it from the Foundation.
- An attendee asked if this project would replace Discount Cab. The project manager answered by claiming there were no such plans within the plan's recommendations.
- An attendee wondered if we could use the Foundation's bus fleet.
- There was a general discussion regarding branding and marketing of transit services.

El Mirage. Meetings held on January 28, 2013, at 3:30 PM and January 29, 2013, at 4:30 PM. Total attendees: 13. Comments included:

- Dr. Spencer Isom (City Manager for El Mirage) indicated his support for a rail station in El Mirage, and is not as supportive of a similar stop in Surprise. He also exclaimed, "In the next year, funding will be available for two more vehicles [for El Mirage]."
- There was a discussion regarding the proposed circulator. One person asked the bus to travel to the YMCA in El Mirage. Another attendee asked about the partnership between El Mirage and the new circulator.
- An attendee noted that there is a current realignment effort on Greenway Blvd.
- An attendee explained that entry level jobs are difficult to obtain, and that he is unable to get out of El Mirage to any jobs. He then stated how not everyone has "nine to five" jobs, and that some people work on weekends.

- An attendee noted that El Mirage did not have much local employment, and that transit for work should be the foremost priority.
- There was a general consensus regarding the need to provide transportation from El Mirage to Surprise, and that city circulators should connect together.
- An attendee noted how attitudes toward public transit have changed over the years.
- One attendee complained that a two-mile ride from El Mirage into the next town is not currently possible, and reliable service must be in place before people give up their cars.
- An attendee asked that more people take advantage of existing routes and to build off of them.
- One attendee cited concerns from people she knew relating to travel training, gated communities, and weather extremes.
- An attendee mentioned a variety of Valley Metro pilot projects, including for alternative transportation options and other tools designed to help seniors stay independent.
- One attendee said that bus service should take people from one “village” to another.
- One attendee liked the concept of a local circulator.
- One resident asked, “How is Northern Parkway construction taken into consideration with this project?” The resident also mentioned the expansion on El Mirage between Olive and Peoria (in relation to the new YMCA), and wondered how will children be able to safely cross the street.
- A resident stated he was pleased with City of El Mirage City Council’s vision.
- One attendee believed that older people should have more access to Dial-A-Ride, even if service is limited, and he would like to develop a “culture of ridership” within El Mirage.
- There was a request to have a shuttle around El Mirage for young people to have frequent service to various local points of interest.

Peoria. Meetings held on January 28, 2013, at 6:00 PM and January 29th at 2:00 PM. Total attendees: 12. Comments included:

- One attendee asked how soon residents would have a light rail that gets people out to Peoria. The City’s Deputy Public Works Director stated this would not happen in the near future.
- An attendee wondered if there would be a bus to Peoria City Hall. The City’s DPWD mentioned the City is considering methods to expand Valley Metro, Glendale, and Peoria services.

- One attendee mentioned that medical facilities should receive more of an emphasis in the proposed changes.
- There was a discussion regarding practical service improvements, as opposed to unrealistic dreams.
- One of Peoria's residents noted while ADA requires all cities to make ADA transit a priority, Peoria has not done so. She also recommended the following, many of which were addressed by The City's DPWD:
 - Have a community meeting for disabled people only,
 - Make ADA transit service a priority,
 - ADA and Dial-A-Ride service is needed seven days a week,
 - Get people to the Recreation Center.
 - Peoria should drop the ¼-mile rule that requires demand-response service to operate within ¼-mile of existing transit service.
 - Any new/future service should be focusing on Peoria's medical services as opposed to hospitals in Surprise.
- There was a request to provide contact information on route brochures for disabled accommodations.
- There was a general discussion regarding having more appealing bus shelters.

Sun City Grand. Meeting held on January 29, 2013, at 9:30 AM. Total attendees: 4. Comments included:

- An attendee asked about what service already existed in Sun City Grand. Marc Pearsall/MAG gave the community member specific route information.
- One attendee wondered why the West Valley is so far behind the East Valley. A conversation ensued regarding the differences in the two areas' histories and politics.
- Multiple questions were asked regarding the impact of "snow birds" in relation to future transit.
- One attendee believed it was better to combine Sun City Grand with the other Sun Cities as opposed to Surprise, and that we should get past the political boundaries.
- There was a general feeling that many political leaders were most interested in light rail because light rail is viewed as a "sexy" idea.

Youngtown. Meeting held on January 29, 2013, at 7:00 PM. Total attendees: 11. Comments included:

- Youngtown Mayor Michael LeVault was in favor of a local circulator. He also mentioned each Northwest Valley city agreed to join in improving Grand Ave. He also said he would like to see more (Valley Metro Route 106) buses on 111th Ave.
- One attendee believed we should send “You’re Invited” notices to people’s homes for the project’s final meeting.
- There was a discussion regarding weekend service. One attendee asked whether or not our survey asked respondents specifically about weekends.
- One attendee asked why the Northwest Valley was behind the rest of the nation.
- An attendee stated he was really looking for a circulator between Youngtown and El Mirage, as well as nicer bus shelters instead of elaborate benches.
- An attendee asked what the Youngtown government can do to help improve transit. Another attendee mentioned Youngtown’s financial woes.
- There was a discussion regarding Youngtown’s low-income residents. One attendee asked if service could be subsidized.
- One resident mentioned that Discount Cab is limited, and it will not take her where she needs to go. She also noted that the Discount Cab dispatcher did not give her correct information.

Surprise – Sun Village. Meeting held on January 30, 2013, at 10:30 AM. Total attendees: 17. Comments included:

- Surprise Councilmember Mike Woodard reminded residents that Surprise has Dial-A-Ride vehicles that are sitting and not being used.
- An attendee asked how the City of Surprise could finance a local circulator. Discussion of various funding opportunities, while the project manager discussed various lessons regarding funding.
- An attendee asked, “How can all cities have an integrated system and services?”
- One participant asked what a circulator pass looks like and how much it costs.
- An attendee wanted to know how to retain transit ridership.
- Attendees wanted to know how new malls and housing will be included in the transportation plan.
- A participant was concerned that the planned light rail connection would bring drugs and homeless people into the area.
- Several attendees raised questions regarding bus shelters and benches.
- One attendee mentioned the importance of frequency in service.

Sun City – Library. Meeting held on January 30, 2013 at 3:30 PM. Total attendees: 8. Comments included:

- One participant was surprised so few people showed up to the meeting.
- There was emphasis that this meeting was very important.
- An attendee stated they would like to see service to “Fairway.”
- A participant mentioned that there are many recreation centers and doctors’ offices in Sun City and Surprise, but there is no way to get there.
- An attendee pointed out that Sun City and Sun City West are unincorporated areas and thus have no mayor or city council.
- One participant asked: “Do residents need to contribute?”
- An attendee asked how the plan would be financed and if taxes would go up.
- An attendee expressed a desire for more evening service, particularly to attend community meetings and groups.
- One participant stated not wanting to specify the time of their ride home when using Dial-A-Ride service.
- A participant requested that a circulator serve Sun City recreation centers.
- An attendee suggested that a local circulator could connect to Phoenix or Arrowhead.
- One attendee stated that “surrounding cities don’t care...if Sun City people can get around [since they are unincorporated].”

Surprise – Marley Park Heritage Club. Meeting held on January 30, 2013, at 7:00 PM. Total attendees: 9. Comments included:

- A participant requested clarification of the difference between light rail and other options to move people from Phoenix to Marley Park.
- An attendee wanted to know how different options would be paid for. Several funding opportunities were discussed, including federal or local taxes, as well as private sources and potential public-private partnerships.
- An attendee wanted to know whether the transportation plan encompassed all cities together or if it considered them separately.
- One participant wanted to know, “What is concrete?”
- An attendee wanted to know why Grand Avenue was more important than Bell Road. The project manager answered that Bell Road has more traffic and is the “busiest street in the Northwest Valley.”
- One attendee wanted to know what the main goal was going into this study.
- An attendee wanted to know how car traffic factors into the study.

- An attendee asked about the discount cab program, including how the cabs operated and how much they cost.
- There was a general concern among attendees as to how unincorporated areas are included in the plan and how they pay and contribute.
- Signal timing would need to be adjusted on Bell Road and Grand Avenue, and that Bell Road will need a dedicated right turn lane.
- A participant asked if there were any comments about the Northern Parkway in the report.
- An attendee wanted to know if the new mall in Surprise will be accounted for in the plan.

3.4 STAKEHOLDER INPUT

The primary stakeholder groups in the Northwest Valley study are the Project Management Team and Northwest Valley Transportation Stakeholders Group (organized by Benevilla). The Project Management Team (PMT) is comprised of representatives from the municipalities within the study area, the County of Maricopa and MAG. The Northwest Valley Transportation Stakeholders Group (held at Benevilla) is composed of representatives from advocacy organizations working in various areas of social service who share a desire for improved transit service in the Northwest Valley.

Beginning in spring of 2012, Moore & Associates met with the Northwest Valley Transportation Stakeholders Group three times to provide the Committee with updates on their progress with the study as well as receive feedback from Committee members.

The project team has worked extensively with the PMT which represents each of the jurisdictions within the study area. Each member provided instructions to most effectively perform outreach within their specific municipality, including media through which to administer surveys, coordination with community representatives, and venues at which to hold community meetings. Drawing upon this input from the PMT, the project team hosted more than two dozen community meetings throughout the study area. These community meetings provided ample opportunity for all interested parties to provide their input on the study. In addition, these community meetings were attended by leaders of religious, business, and community organizations whose extensive community connections allowed them to further expand outreach efforts and provide even more community feedback on the study. As a follow up, three Open Houses were held in May 2013 in order to present the final recommendations to the public.

4

SERVICE
RECOMMENDATIONS

This page intentionally blank.

CHAPTER 4 – SERVICE RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter outlines recommended transit service development for the future of the Northwest Valley. The recommendations are based on the perceived needs of the community as identified by the various public outreach efforts described in Chapter 3 as well as demographic and existing conditions data discussed in Chapter 2.

The recommendations are specific to both time-scale and to individual communities. Our near-term recommendations focus on the immediate transit needs perceived by residents of the various Northwest Valley communities. These recommendations include both the identification of new fixed-route services, additional scheduling requirements, and the implementation of new services to handle localized needs. The mid-term recommendations build on short-term concepts while adding levels of service to the involved communities. The long-term recommendations require significant changes in local land use and development before implementation.

4.1 RECOMMENDATIONS BY TERM

The following list summarizes the recommendations for the Northwest Valley, organized by timeframe.

Near-Term Recommendations

- Establish an Intergovernmental Cooperative Agreement among the communities of El Mirage, Glendale, Peoria, Surprise/Sun City Grand, Sun City, Sun City West, Sun City Festival (in the Town of Buckeye), and Youngtown to handle administrative and funding activities for local transit in the Northwest Valley.
- Combine Express Routes 571 and Grand Avenue Limited into one route, and increase its span-of-service to include mid-day hours.
- Create six local circulators that respectively serve trip generators within the communities of El Mirage, Peoria, Surprise, Sun City and Sun City West.
- Create a volunteer driver program for the Sun City Festival community.
- Continue the Northwest Valley Dial-A-Ride (DAR) program and adjust its service area where needed to comply with ADA requirements regarding fixed-route service.

Mid-Term Recommendations

- Extend Valley Metro Route 138 to Surprise via Thunderbird Road, Waddell Road, and Litchfield Road.
- Extend Valley Metro Route 170 into Surprise via Bell Road.
- Increase service to Banner-Boswell Medical Center on Route 106 to provide 30-minute headways.
- Increase service on the six community circulators as demand and funding warrant.

Long-Term Recommendations

- Support eventual implementation of high-capacity transit service from Surprise to Downtown Phoenix along Grand Avenue.
- Extend the proposed Valley Metro route connecting Goodyear to Luke AFB via Litchfield Road north to Surprise.
- Establish Valley Metro service along 83rd Avenue through Peoria to Arrowhead Town Center
- Extend Valley Metro Route 90 west along Olive Avenue and north along 111th Avenue to the intersection with Peoria Avenue.
- Extend Valley Metro Route 138 west along Thunderbird Road to Loop 303, with possible service to the future Prasada development.
- Extend Valley Metro Route 170 west along Bell Road to Loop 303 to serve future development along the Loop 303 corridor.
- Transition the Sun City Festival volunteer driver program to a limited express service from Sun City Festival to Surprise.

Near-Term Recommendations with Discussion

Form an Intergovernmental Cooperative Agreement between Northwest Valley Communities and Valley Metro

The communities of El Mirage, Glendale, Peoria, Surprise, and Youngtown along with the County of Maricopa, MAG, and Valley Metro would form an Intergovernmental Cooperative Agreement, which will be referred to as simply a 'cooperative agreement.' The cooperative agreement would establish a framework for Northwest Valley communities to jointly assume administrative and financial responsibilities related to providing transit service. Such responsibilities would include operator contract procurement, marketing, and ensuring that transit service throughout Northwest Valley communities had a consistent brand and coordinated service to best facilitate mobility within the Northwest Valley. Financially, a cooperative agreement would set up a framework under which

Northwest Valley communities would be jointly responsible for procuring federal, state, and local funding with which to operate transit service.

Establishing a cooperative agreement would have several advantages over having each Northwest Valley community independently procure and administer its own transit service. From a service standpoint, a cooperative agreement would promote more coordinated service planning, with a focus on facilitating transit travel throughout the Northwest Valley rather than just within each community. Financially, the cooperative agreement members could form a new tax district encompassing all Northwest Valley communities. Having such a multi-community tax district to finance transit service instead of relying on each community tax itself independently would help ensure intercommunity transit connectivity and a uniform level of transit service throughout the Northwest Valley. In addition, a cooperative agreement will better position Northwest Valley communities to request federal and state funding because it will enable them to pool resources for securing grant funding to support the plans' recommendations.

Combine Express Route 571 and Grand Avenue Limited into one route, Increase Span of Service to Encompass Mid-Day Hours

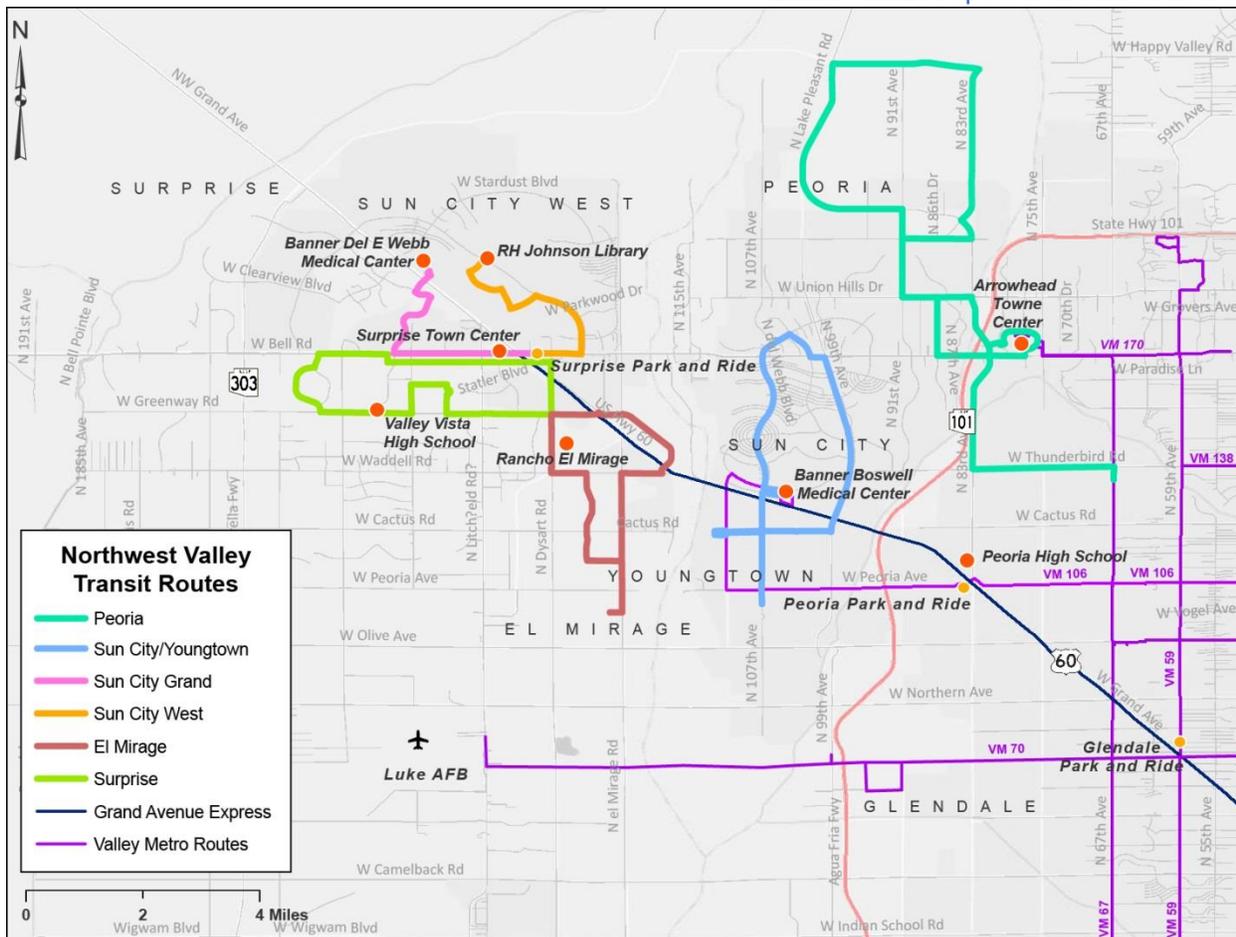
Both community surveys and meetings indicated a need for more regular service from the Northwest Valley to downtown Phoenix throughout the day, rather than only during the morning and evening peaks. To help meet this need, we propose creating the Grand Avenue Express, shown in Exhibit 4.1.1, which effectively combines the services of Valley Metro's existing Grand Avenue Limited and 571 Express routes. These two routes currently both serve the Grand Avenue corridor, but provide service to different areas. The Grand Avenue Limited connects the Peoria Park-and-Ride and Glendale to Downtown Phoenix, while Express Route 571 connects Downtown Phoenix to Surprise and El Mirage. By combining these two routes and providing minimal additional service, the Grand Avenue Express could provide service from the Northwest Valley to downtown Phoenix approximately every two hours throughout the day.

The new Express Route would have three pickup locations feeding into Phoenix: the Surprise Park-and-Ride (on Bell Road near Grand Avenue), the Peoria Park-and-Ride (Jefferson Street near 84th Avenue), and the Glendale Park and Ride (59th Avenue and Myrtle Avenue). The sections of El Mirage currently served by Valley Metro Route 571 would not be directly served by the Grand Avenue Express Route, but users in these areas will be able to access the Express Route by using the El Mirage circulator and making a timed-transfer as shown in Exhibit 4.1.1. Furthermore, the proposed Grand Avenue Express runs adjacent to a future Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) site that, according to El Mirage's 2010 General Plan, will be located along Grand Avenue between Thompson Ranch Road and Greenway Boulevard.

Create Six Local Circulators Serving the Communities of El Mirage, Peoria, Surprise, Sun City and Sun City West.

Significant public input from each community indicated that residents wanted both access to destinations within their local communities and to have the capability of traveling to other parts of the Phoenix area. The most cost-effective method of providing such service is the creation of four new fixed-route circulators to serve the communities of El Mirage, Peoria, Sun City, and Surprise, and two deviated fixed-route circulators that will respectively serve the Sun City Grand and Sun City West areas. Local circulators like the ones proposed below have been implemented with great success in other parts of the Phoenix region. For example Valley Metro’s Route 277 in Mesa has enjoyed steady ridership increases through its five-month pilot period, and nearly 70 percent of its users deemed the service “excellent.” Exhibit 4.1.1 shows one possible routing setup for the five Northwest Valley circulator routes.

Exhibit 4.1.1 Proposed Circulator Routes



Though specific route options may be determined at a later date, participants of the community meetings and the community survey indicated a need for service to the following local locations:

- Banner-Boswell Hospital and, to a lesser extent, Banner Del Webb Hospital,

- Surprise Town Center (Grand Avenue and Bell Road),
- Local schools, such as Valley Vista High School,
- Various local medical offices,
- Libraries and community centers, and
- Shopping centers.

Each of the six circulators should connect these and other key destinations within the areas in which they operate. Each circulator route should also connect with the proposed Grand Avenue Express service and have timed-transfers to allow the circulators to act as feeders to the Grand Avenue Express and promote regional connectivity. Where feasible, each circulator route should link up with other transit routes and allow users to make timed transfers. Individual circulator routes are described in more detail below in the community-specific recommendations.

In addition to considering community input when developing the circulator routes, the project team also followed more general guidelines¹ to increase each circulator's success. These guidelines, provided below, will help Northwest Valley communities evaluate the proposed routes that the project team has put forth and inform changes to the routes should they be necessary in the future. Several aspects of successful circulators in suburban settings similar to the Northwest Valley include:

- *Connections to hubs*, including major transit hubs that facilitate transfers to other transit services, and “people” hubs such as commercial centers that connect people to shopping and other needs.
- *Linking of services*, which goes hand-in-hand with connecting to hubs, provides timed transfers between routes and services where possible. Linked services allow transit users to access more destinations at a lower service cost while minimizing the inconveniences related to transferring. This greater connectivity makes the transit system useful to more users and in turn increases ridership.
- *Serving denser corridors*, including corridors of higher-density housing and concentrated retail and employment destinations. Providing service to such denser areas increases the number of destinations and potential riders per route-mile.
- *Addressing transit's traditional markets*, including lower-income populations and those without vehicle access. While our demographic analysis at the census tract level did not reveal any particular strong potential transit markets in this regard, Northwest Valley communities should use any local knowledge available to identify and serve such markets if they plan to implement any service changes.

¹ See TCRP Report 55, *Guideline for Enhancing Suburban Mobility Using Public Transportation*.

Continue Northwest Valley Dial-A-Ride (DAR) Service and Adjust Service Area Where Needed to Comply with ADA Requirements Regarding Fixed-Route Service

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires that all transit providers make Dial-A-Ride (DAR) service available within ¼-mile of any fixed-route transit service. Currently, Valley Metro's Northwest Valley Dial-A-Ride service provides DAR service in much of the study area while Peoria and Glendale have their own DAR services. Valley Metro and the Cities of Peoria and Glendale should continue their respective DAR programs but amend their services as needed to comply with ADA requirements. Where DAR services are needed, these agencies should use an appropriate combination of DAR vans and contracted taxi service that most economically address ADA service requirements.

The flexible routes serving Sun City West and Sun City Grand would follow a regular route and schedule like the three fixed-route circulators, but be able to deviate from its normal route by up to a quarter of a mile in order to pick up passengers. This deviated fixed-route aspect will reduce implementation costs by waiving the ADA service requirement that applies to new regular fixed-route services. However, deviated fixed-route services are inherently less able to operate on a predictable schedule, which makes timed transfers with other routes more difficult. In order to facilitate timed-transfers, the proposed routes for deviated fixed-route service would have buses show up to transfer points up to 15 minutes early if there were no route deviations, providing a "time cushion" to allow route deviation if necessary. More details on timed-transfers for the deviated fixed-route services are described in the community-specific recommendations below.

Create a Volunteer Driver Program for Sun City Festival (in Town of Buckeye)

The community of Sun City Festival does not currently have the population to warrant traditional fixed-route service expenditures, nor is the community geographically near other existing services. Given the low expected farebox recovery ratio for demand-response service in Sun City Festival, this study recommends implementing a local volunteer driver program. One potential program model is New Jersey's EZ Ride program. EZ Ride users arrange a ride as late as 24 hours in advance and pay an annual membership fee plus an extra per-trip fee for the service. These fees cover the purchase/leasing costs, maintenance, and insurance costs of EZ Ride vehicles. Drivers are volunteers who commit to being available to provide rides during a regular period each week. Such a program would be significantly cheaper than providing DAR service to Sun City Festival, while still providing a means for its residents to access shopping and medical needs in Surprise.

Peoria and Glendale

Neither residents of Peoria nor residents from the sections of Glendale within the study area expressed a significant immediate need to have greater access to other areas within the Northwest Valley. As such, there are no recommended Glendale-specific or Peoria-specific near-term service expansions. However, since the bus stops on the proposed Grand Avenue Express Route would

provide greater geographic accessibility to residents of these two communities, this plan recommends that Valley Metro better align current Glendale and Peoria route schedules to facilitate timed-transfers to the Express Route.

Merchant-Funded Circulator Service to Arrowhead Towne Center

Attendees at nearly all community meetings expressed a desire for transit access to Arrowhead Town Center, though such service is not financially feasible in the near-term. As a potential alternative, there may be enough demand such that merchants at Arrowhead Mall may be willing to contribute financially to a shuttle service between Arrowhead Towne Center and one or more of the Northwest Valley Communities. While not a formal recommendation, representatives from the Northwest Valley communities included in this study may in the future want to meet with Arrowhead Towne Center merchants to discuss the possibility of implementing such a service.

Mid-Term Recommendations

As the population in the Northwest Valley and local transit ridership increase with the presence of the circulator routes, Valley Metro should increase its transit service in the Northwest Valley accordingly. In the mid-term phase, Valley Metro should increase the Northwest Valley's regional connectivity by extending Valley Metro Routes 138 and 170 into the study area as described below and shown in Exhibit 4.1.2.

Extend Valley Metro Route 138 West and North to Surprise

Valley Metro Route 138's present terminus is at Thunderbird Road and 59th Ave. Reflective of The Maricopa Association of Governments 2010 Regional Transportation Plan, Valley Metro should extend Route 138 to Surprise via its current path along Thunderbird Road, then continuing onto Waddell Road and north along Litchfield Road to the Surprise Towne Center. This extension would provide a direct connection to Valley Metro service for residents in El Mirage and Surprise, providing opportunities for residents using the El Mirage, Sun City, and Surprise circulators to connect with the route.

Extend Valley Metro Route 186 or Route 170 into Sun City

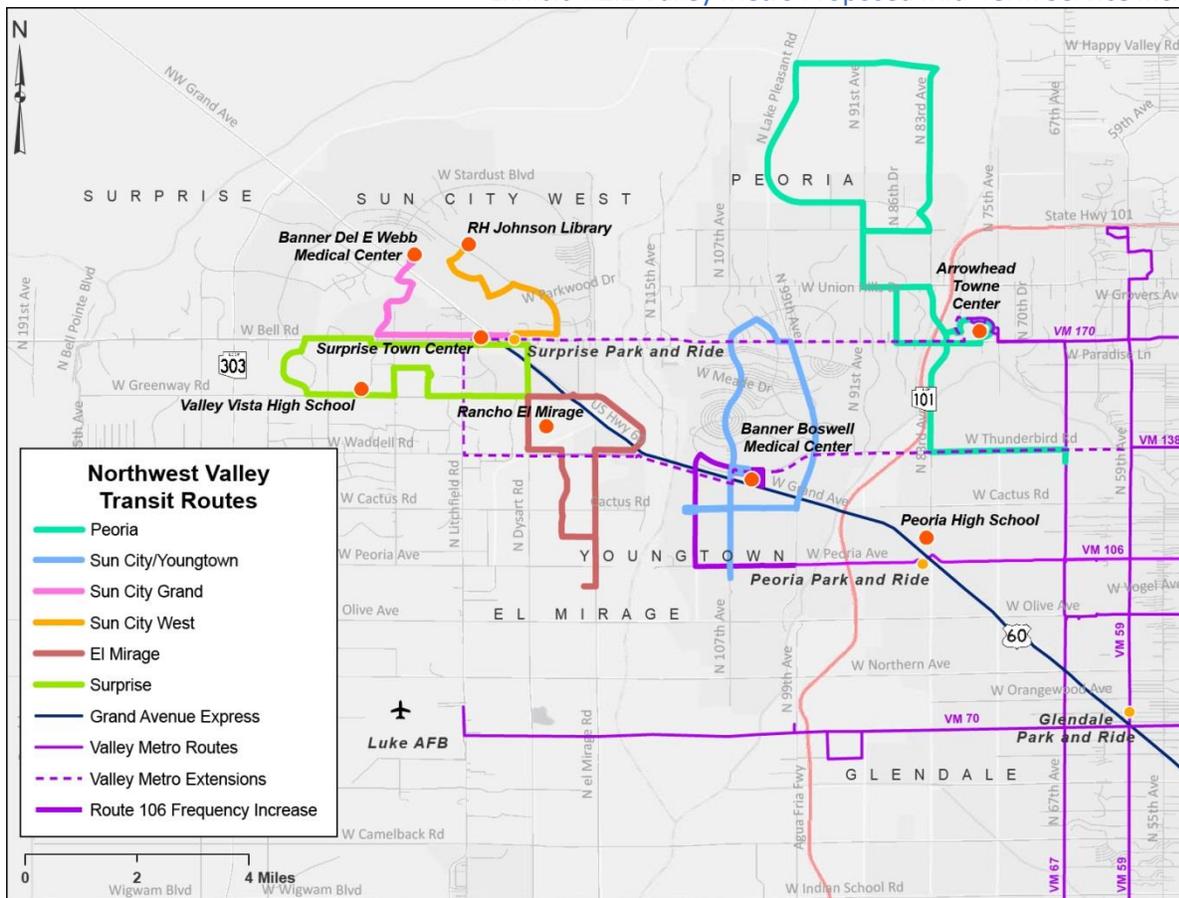
Presently, Valley Metro Route 170 ends at Arrowhead Mall, and it is recommended that it continue west to the Surprise Towne Center or Surprise Park and Ride. This extension will provide a direct link between Surprise and Arrowhead Mall, a connection that many survey and community meeting participants expressed a strong desire for. In addition, this extension would allow Valley Metro Route 170 to link up with the Sun City, Sun City Grand, Sun City West, and Surprise circulators, allowing them to act as feeders.

Increase service to Banner-Boswell Medical Center on Route 106

In the mid-term, Valley Metro should continue all bus runs on Route 106 to Banner-Boswell Medical Center, which would provide service to the Medical Center every 30 minutes instead of every 60

minutes like it does currently. This service increase would benefit Youngtown residents by providing greater access both to Banner-Boswell Medical Center as well as the rest of the connections along Valley Metro Route 106. This service increase would be contingent upon population and ridership growth, as well as funding availability.

Exhibit 4.1.2 Valley Metro Proposed Mid-Term Service Increases



Increase Service on the Six Community Circulators as Demand and Funding Dictate

As a part of the mid-term or possibly long-term implementation phase, the six circulator routes may increase their service area, run more frequently, or a combination of both. Any service improvements should likely be undertaken during or after implementation of the recommended Valley Metro service increases. This is because any significant circulator service increases would require the operators to purchase additional vehicles and hire additional drivers in order to maintain the recommended headways outlined below in the community-specific recommendations, requiring more funding than will initially be available.

To obtain additional funds, each circulator would need to demonstrate sufficient ridership on the initial routes in order to justify funding for service increases. While this sufficient level of ridership may come about even without the recommended Valley Metro extensions, circulator ridership will likely be higher with the Valley Metro extensions since they would make the circulators a part of the regional transit network, rather than more isolated, local transit services. In addition, being able to show that the circulators are a part of the regional transit network will provide a more compelling case to receive additional funding.

ADA Compliance in the Mid-Term

As is the case with implementing the fixed-route circulators, if Valley Metro or circulator extensions provide fixed-route service to areas not currently receiving DAR service, new DAR service must begin in those areas in order to be ADA compliant. In addition, as demand for DAR services in the study area changes, the mix of taxi and DAR vans should be modified so as to maintain DAR service provision as economically efficient as possible.

Long-Term Recommendations

Over time, the population, population density, employment density, and transit dependent populations for the Northwest Valley are expected to grow. Given this trend, greater levels of service and inter-connectivity will need to be established. Long-term route recommendations are presented below in Exhibit 4.1.3.

Establish a high-capacity transit facility along Grand Avenue

If the study area's population increases according to MAG's projections, future high-capacity transit service will be necessary to accommodate travel demand. Therefore, this study proposes the eventual transition from express bus service along Grand Avenue to a high-capacity transit line.

Depending upon available financing, this service may require significant infrastructure changes along Grand Ave. Stops along the route, such as current Park-and-Ride lots, would become regional transit centers (for example, a Surprise Transit Center), furthering the need to coordinate existing services around these focal points. Service frequency would increase to meet new travel demand, potentially as frequent as every 15 minutes during peak hours.

The cost of implementing high-capacity transit service along Grand Avenue will depend upon the year-of-expenditure, whether it will be a bus- or rail-based service, the number of vehicles to be purchased, any necessary facility improvements, and other factors. Additionally, such a line will likely need to include stops in areas not within this plan's study area, such as other locations within Phoenix, Sky Harbor Airport, etc. The specific route determination will dramatically affect the final capital cost estimates. Similarly, operational cost estimates will depend upon the route options and both the span of service and service frequency.

There are various requirements for high-capacity transit service in the Northwest Valley to be considered a necessary expenditure. In addition to the population requirements, this service should not be created “in a vacuum.” Instead, this line would need to be part of a regional BRT, light rail, or commuter rail system. In other words, this high-capacity transit line should be created in conjunction with other fixed-guideway systems throughout the region.

Extend the proposed Valley Metro route connecting Goodyear to Luke AFB via Litchfield Road north to Surprise

Given that there are numerous residents in the Surprise area who work at Luke Air Force Base, Valley Metro should consider extending this line, which is proposed to travel from Goodyear to Luke Air Force Base, north to the Surprise Park and Ride.

Establish Valley Metro service along 83rd Avenue through Peoria to Arrowhead Town Center

Valley Metro would begin service along 83rd Avenue to connect Arrowhead Mall, Old Town Peoria, and parts of Glendale as proposed in Peoria’s 2011 Multimodal Transportation Plan. This connection would allow direct access to Arrowhead Mall from Peoria, and allow more residents in Peoria to access the proposed Grand Avenue Express.

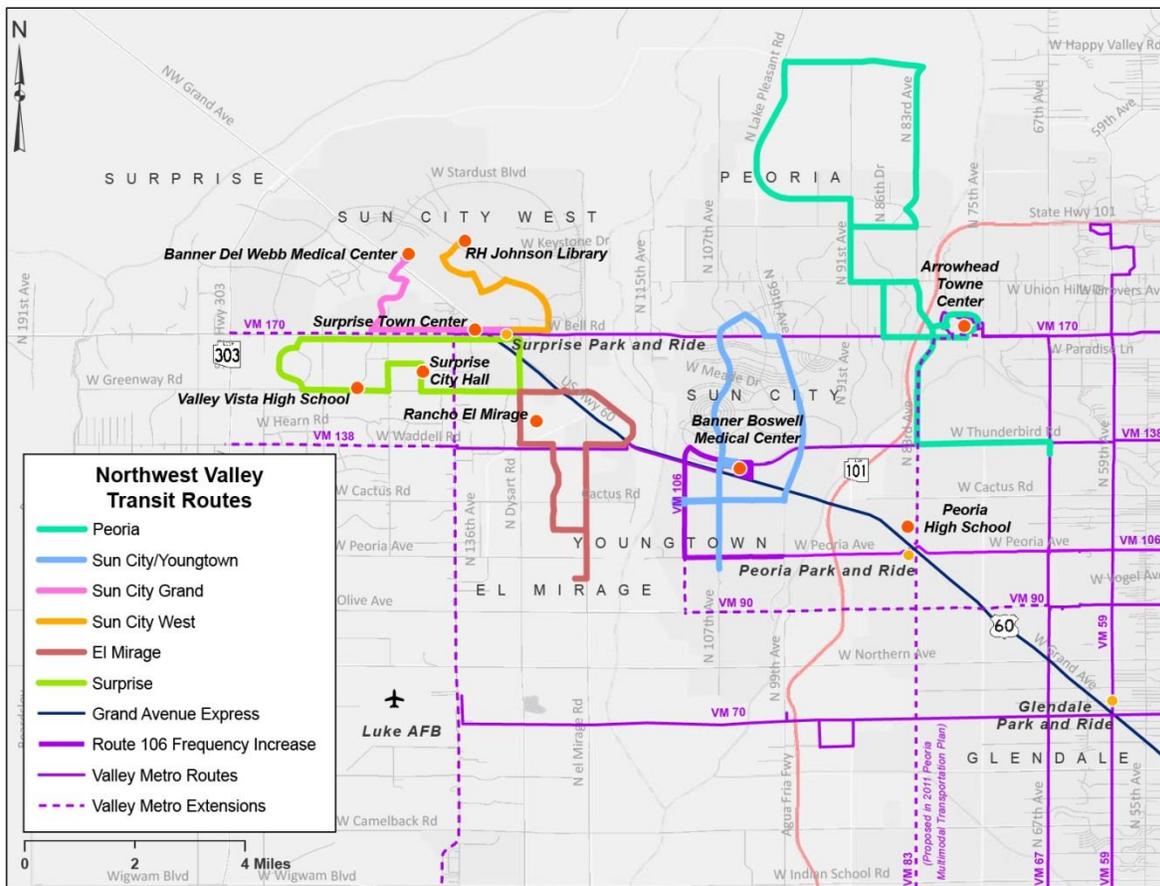
Extend Valley Metro Route 90 west along Olive Avenue and north along 111th Avenue to the intersection with Peoria Avenue

As population increases Along the Olive Ave. corridor, Valley Metro should extend Route 90 westward along Olive Avenue out to 111th Ave., then northward to Peoria Avenue.

Extend Valley Metro Routes 138 and 170 west to Loop 303.

As population and job density increase along the Loop 303 corridor through new developments such as Prasad, there will likely be increased demand for service in the western parts of the study area. To meet this demand, Valley Metro should extend these routes westward along their current corridors to Loop 303. Note that if Valley Metro Route 138 is extended to Loop 303, it should stop traveling north to Surprise via Litchfield Road. Such a jog would add significantly to the route’s distance, and passengers wishing to reach Surprise could instead transfer to the proposed Litchfield Road route.

Exhibit 4.1.3 Valley Metro Long-Term Service Recommendations Map



Transition the Sun City Festival volunteer driver program to a limited express service from Sun City Festival to Surprise

Lastly, this plan recommends the implementation of a flexible route service from Sun City Festival (not shown in map) to the future Surprise Transit Center in the long term if demand is sufficient. If implemented, this line would operate as a deviated fixed-route service similar to the proposed circulator for Sun City West since providing DAR service to complement fixed-route service in Sun City Festival would be, in any event, economically unfeasible.

4.2 RECOMMENDATIONS BY COMMUNITY

The following sections assess the implications of each applicable recommendation by community. Each section begins with a matrix that describes the applicable recommendation by timeframe, source of information, expected total cost (in 2012 dollars) if available, each community's local route share based on mileage, and likely funding mechanisms. A discussion follows each matrix.

SURPRISE/SUN CITY GRAND

Exhibit 4.2.1 Surprise and Sun City Grand Specific Recommendations

Term	Recommendation	Source	Project Cost (total)	Share	Funding
Near-term	Establish a Cooperative Agreement with other study area communities	Community meetings	Potential increase in administrative expenses.	TBD	TBD
Near-term	Establish two local circulator routes to serve Surprise and Sun City Grand	Community meeting	\$3,455,425 for first five years	All	Prop 400, FTA Section 5307, STP Flexible Funding
Near-term	Convert Express Route 571 and Grand Avenue Limited (GAL Route) into one Express Route.	Community Survey, Community meetings	\$500,000 additional operating costs for first five years	One of five stops	Prop 400, LTAF, FTA Section 5307, STP Flexible Funding.
Mid-term	Extend Valley Metro Routes 138 and 170 into Surprise	Community survey and meetings, RTP	Pending Valley Metro estimation	TBD	Prop 400, LTAF, FTA Section 5307, STP Flexible Funding.
Mid-term or long term	Expand Surprise and Sun City Grand circulator service as demand dictates	Community meetings	TBD	TBD	Prop 400, FTA Section 5307, STP Flexible Funding
Long-term	Transform regional Express Route into a high-capacity transit line	Community Survey	TBD	TBD	FTA Section 5309, FTA Section 5307, CMAQ, STP Flexible Funding.
All terms	Ensure complementary ADA service is provided for any new fixed-route service	ADA compliance	Will depend on future fixed-route service plan	TBD	

Community meeting participants from the City of Surprise (which includes the community of Sun City Grand) identified local shopping and medical destinations as locations most in need of transit service. While community survey respondents from Surprise also identified local amenities as the main reason for travel, they also expressed a desire for access to other areas of the region. Within the community survey, respondents from Surprise and Sun City Grand also had among the lowest average trip lengths.

In the near term, the City of Surprise would implement two circulator routes, both shown in Exhibit 4.2.2, with one serving the southern parts of Surprise and a second serving the Sun City Grand area. Between the two circulator routes, Surprise would have three buses operating, with two buses running on the Surprise route and one bus operating on the Sun City Grand route.

The Surprise circulator route, shown in Exhibit 4.2.2, would connect major trip generators within Surprise, including the Surprise Stadium, Valley Vista High School, and Surprise City Hall. It would also stop at the Surprise Park and Ride, where it would be scheduled to allow timed transfers with the proposed Grand Avenue Express and the Sun City West circulator. Additionally, the Surprise circulator would allow transfers (though not necessarily timed transfers) to the El Mirage circulator. Two buses would operate on the Surprise circulator route, allowing service at each stop every 30 minutes if both buses traveled in the same direction. Alternatively, the buses could travel in opposite directions, with each stop receiving service every 60 minutes in each direction.

The Sun City Grand circulator would serve residents in the Sun City Grand portion of Surprise. While only approximately four miles long, the route proposed in Exhibit 4.2.2 travels through more densely populated sections of Sun City Grand, providing it with greater potential ridership for each route mile. In addition, the route provides direct service to the Banner Del Webb Medical Center, Surprise Towne Center, and the Surprise Park and Ride, where riders can make a timed transfer to the Grand Avenue Express to downtown Phoenix. One bus would operate on the Sun City Grand route with approximately 60-minute headways.

The Sun City Grand circulator would operate as a “deviated fixed-route” service, allowing the driver to deviate up to a quarter of a mile from the regular route in order to pick up riders who call ahead. These route deviations enable cheaper service provision by waiving the ADA requirement to provide complementary paratransit service along traditional fixed transit routes. Route deviations, however, will affect total travel times and schedule reliability, so to allow the reasonably timed transfers with the Grand Avenue Express as described above, the route length was calculated so as to allow approximately 13 minutes of “buffer” time to allow deviations. In other words, if the circulator does not deviate at all during a run, it will show up to the timed transfer point approximately 13 minutes early and wait until the connecting bus arrives, then depart again. This arrangement does not create perfectly timed transfers as the bus can arrive up to 13 minutes early, but will reduce the likelihood that a rider “just misses” a connection and has to wait for a long period of time for their connecting bus to arrive.

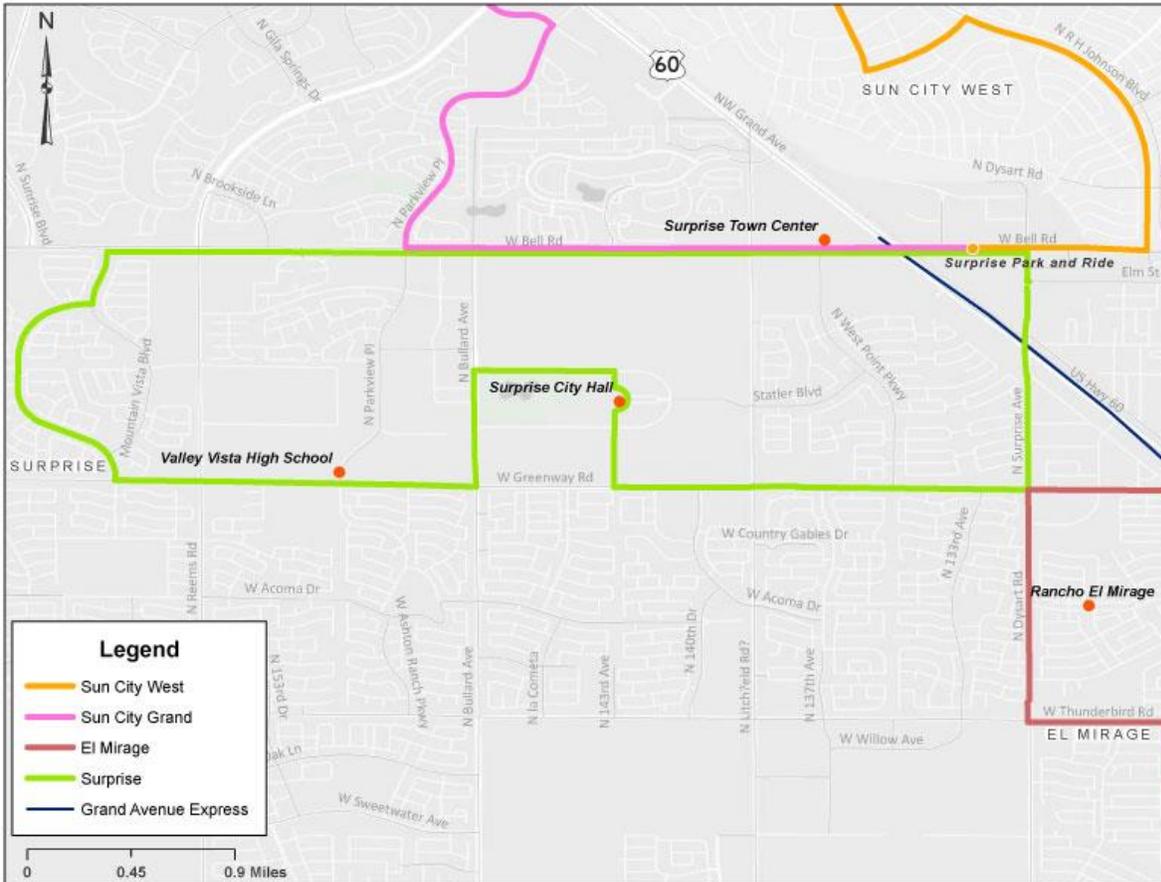
In the mid-term, Valley Metro would extend Routes 138 and 170 to the Surprise Towne Center. These extensions would ideally link up with the Surprise and Sun City Grand circulators, providing a direct connection to the Arrowhead Mall and other regional destinations. If ridership on either the Surprise or Sun City Grand circulator is high enough, their routes could be extended or their frequency increased. Additionally, the future Prasada commercial may generate sufficient transit demand to warrant circulator service.

In the long-term, a high-capacity transit line terminating in Surprise would provide residents with increased transit availability. Frequencies would increase and travel times to Downtown Phoenix would likely decrease, though additional stops may alter travel times. A high-capacity transit line would likely result in the construction of a larger transit facility at the current Surprise Park-and-Ride.

The City of Surprise does not presently have a dedicated funding source for transit service. However, we recommend that the members of the Cooperative Agreement form a special tax district to finance Northwest Valley transit service. If the Northwest Valley communities, including Surprise, join under this Agreement, then Surprise will be able raise funding through being in the tax district as formed under the Agreement.

Exhibit 4.2.2 below shows the Surprise circulator route, while Exhibit 4.2.4 shows the Sun City Grand route along with the Sun City West circulator.

Exhibit 4.2.2 Proposed Surprise Circulator Route



SUN CITY WEST

Exhibit 4.2.3 Sun City West Recommendations

Term	Recommendation	Source	Project Cost (total)	Share	Funding
Near-term	Establish a Cooperative Agreement with other study area communities	Community meetings	Potential increase in administrative expenses.	TBD	TBD
Near-term	Establish a deviated fixed-route circulator connecting key destinations in Sun City West and Sun City	Community survey	\$2,199,450 for first five years	All	Prop 400, FTA Section 5307, STP Flexible Funding
Mid-term	Extend Valley Metro Route 170 along Bell Rd. to Surprise Towne Center		TBD by Valley Metro		
Mid-term and long-term	Expand coverage area of Sun City circulator and convert it to fixed-route service	Community survey	TBD depending on demand and funding	TBD	Prop 400, FTA Section 5307, STP Flexible Funding

Survey data and community meeting feedback from Sun City West indicate that most vehicular trips are relatively local, with most respondents doing the bulk of their traveling for either shopping or recreation. In addition, many residents indicated that they lived on or near R.H. Johnson Boulevard.

In response to the desires expressed in surveys and community meetings, a circulator serving Sun City West would connect residents with the RH Johnson Recreation Center and the Surprise Park and Ride. While connecting these two destinations, the route shown in Exhibit 4.2.4 also passes through some of Sun City West’s commercial corridors along Meeker Boulevard and Camino Del Sol. One potential drawback to the route as proposed is that it does not connect to the Banner Del Webb medical center. The circulator could be rerouted to serve Banner Del Webb without affecting operations, but doing so would require eliminating the connection to the R.H. Johnson Recreation Center.

Like the Sun City Grand Circulator, the Sun City West circulator would be a deviated fixed-route service, allowing it to deviate from its normal route by up to a quarter of a mile to pick up passengers. Deviated fixed-route service reduce costs by waiving the ADA DAR service requirements that apply to normal fixed-route service, but can affect reliability and the ability to make timed transfers. To better enable timed transfers to the Grand Avenue Express and Surprise circulator routes, the recommended route shown in Exhibit 4.2.5 gives approximately 15 minutes of “buffer” time to each circulator run to allow for route deviations. This means that if a bus has no deviations during a run, it will show up to the transfer point about 15 minutes early, then depart once the connecting bus has arrived. Such an

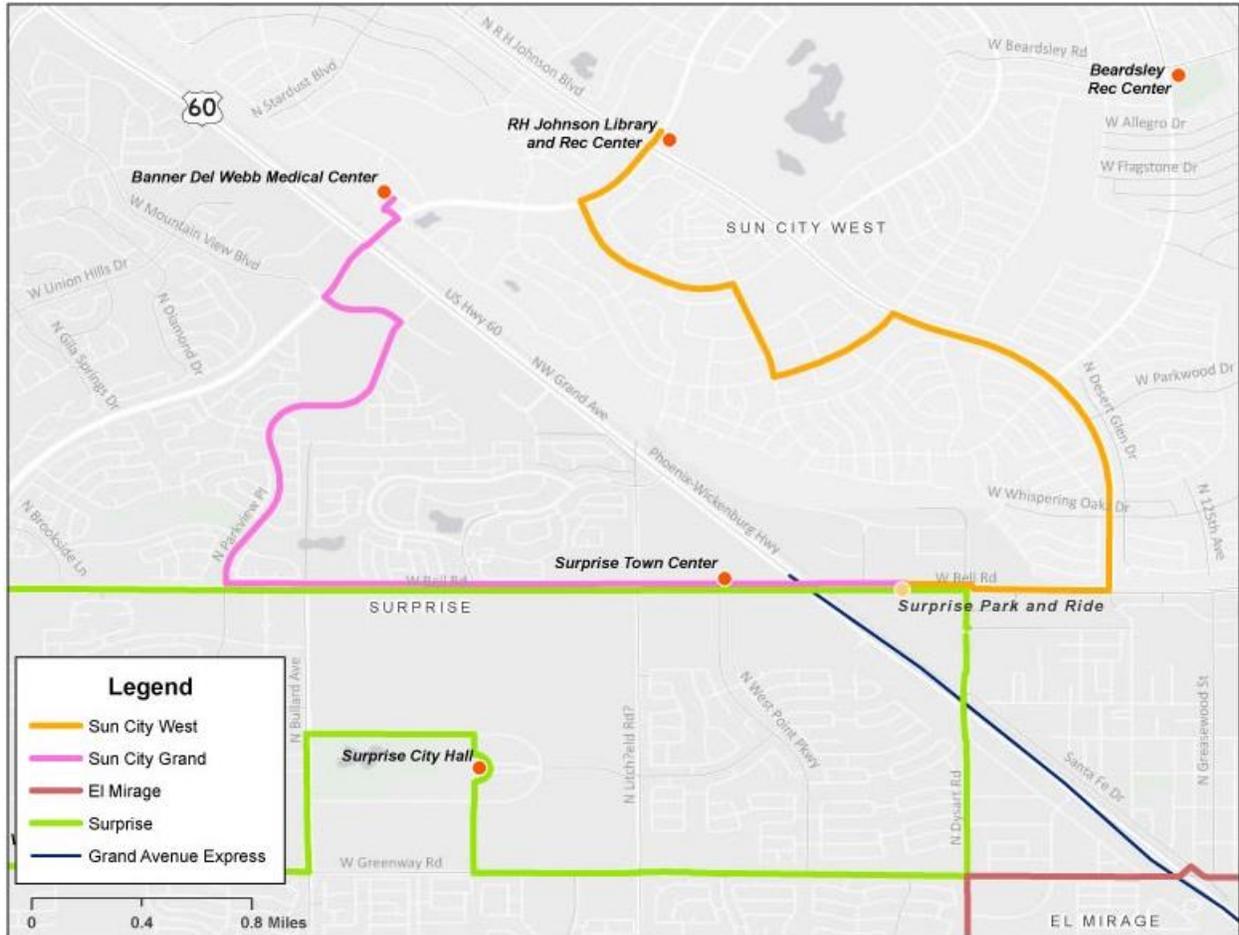
arrangement would not allow perfect, wait-free timed transfers, but would better ensure that transferring passengers would not “just miss” their connection.

In the mid-term, Valley Metro should extend Valley Metro Route 170 to the Surprise Park and Ride. This extension would allow circulator users to transfer to Route 170, providing them greater transit access to the Phoenix region. If this extension or other factors such as population growth increase demand for circulator service, increases in circulator frequency or service area may be appropriate in the mid-term or long term.

Given Sun City West is an unincorporated community within Maricopa County, the effect of establishing a transport-oriented cooperative agreement on Sun City West residents is yet to be determined. At a minimum, being a part of the cooperative agreement would allow Sun City West to share its circulator-related insurance and administrative costs with the other communities that the Agreement covers.

Sun City West’s unincorporated status also means that it has no existing dedicated funding source for transit service. In order to ensure that its circulator service has a reliable revenue source, Sun City West will need to establish a community-specific funding mechanism.

Exhibit 4.2.4 Proposed Sun City West and Sun City Grand Circulator Routes



SUN CITY

Exhibit 4.2.5 Sun City Specific Recommendations

Term	Recommendation	Source	Expected Cost (total)	Share	Funding
Near-term	Establish a Cooperative Agreement with other study area communities	Community meetings	Potential increase in administrative expenses	TBD	TBD
Near-term	Establish a local circulator connecting to the Sun City West circulator and key points within Sun City and Youngtown	Community survey	\$2,199,450 for first five years	TBD	Prop 400, FTA Section 5307, STP Flexible Funding
Mid-term	Increase frequency on Route 106.	Community Survey	TBD by Valley Metro	3 of 42 miles	Prop 400, FTA Section 5307, STP Flexible Funding
Mid-term	Extend Route 170 into Sun City	Community meetings	TBD by Valley Metro	4 of 24 miles	Prop 400, FTA Section 5307, STP Flexible Funding.
Mid-term	Increase circulator service as necessary	Community survey meetings	TBD	TBD	Prop 400, FTA Section 5307, STP Flexible Funding
All terms	Ensure complementary ADA service is provided for any new fixed-route service	ADA requirements	Will depend on future fixed-route service plan	TBD	

The community survey indicated a large demand for access to healthcare and shopping options. To respond to this demand, a local circulator in Sun City and Youngtown would provide service to Banner-Boswell Medical Center and shopping centers along Del Webb Blvd. The community meetings also indicated a demand for access to Downtown Phoenix and Arrowhead Towne Center, as well as the shopping opportunities in Surprise.

To meet the demand for access to both Surprise and Phoenix, Sun City should implement a circulator linking Banner-Boswell Medical Center, shopping centers along Del Webb Blvd., Youngtown Town Hall, Valley Metro Route 106, and the proposed Grand Avenue Express line. The proposed Sun City circulator route would also serve the southern areas of Sun City, connecting to some of the oldest parts of the community south of Peoria Avenue. The Sun City Circulator should set its schedule so as to facilitate timed transfers with the Grand Avenue Express, allowing for convenient travel between Sun City and Downtown Phoenix.

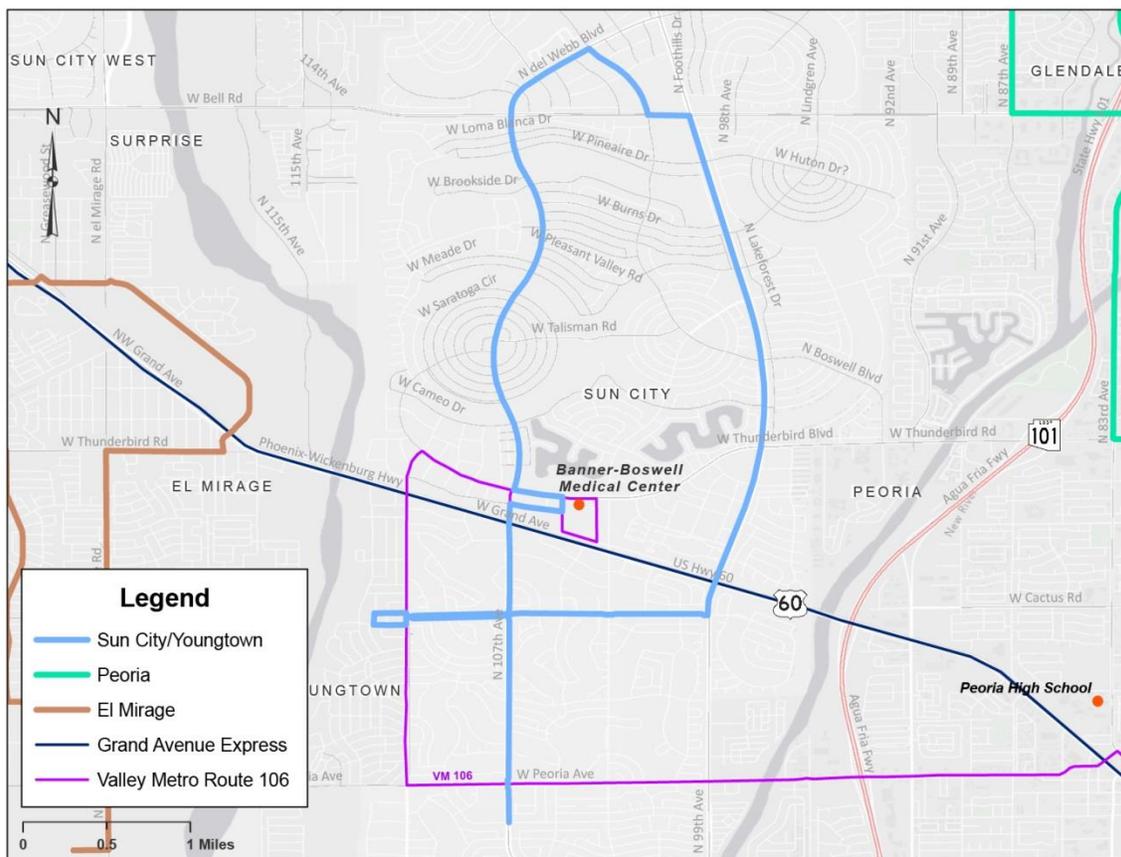
As stated in Section 4.1, participants from almost every community expressed a desire to have transit access to the Arrowhead Towne Center. While financial restrictions make a direct connection to the

Arrowhead Towne Center infeasible in the near term, as a mid-term recommendation Valley Metro should extend Valley Metro Route 170 to the Surprise Towne Center. This extension would provide a connection between Surprise, Sun City, Youngtown, and the Arrowhead Towne Center.

Because Sun City is an unincorporated community in Maricopa County, it does not currently have a dedicated source of public transit funding. In order to ensure that its circulator service has a sustainable revenue source, Sun City would need to establish a community-specific funding mechanism.

Exhibit 4.2.6 illustrates where the Sun City/Youngtown circulator would operate, as well as its key connections. Important to emphasize is that the route configuration recommended below is only one potential option, based on the study's demand analyses, which could be modified to meet changing transportation needs in the future.

Exhibit 4.2.6 Proposed Sun City/Youngtown Circulator Route



EL MIRAGE

Exhibit 4.2.7 El Mirage Specific Recommendations

Term	Recommendation	Source	Expected Cost (total)	Share	Funding
Near-term	Establish a Cooperative Agreement with other study area communities	Community meetings	Potential increase in administrative expenses.	TBD	TBD
Near-term	Establish a local circulator connecting key destinations within El Mirage	Community survey	\$2,199,450 for first five years	All	Prop 400, FTA Section 5307, STP Flexible Funding
Near-term	Convert Express Route 571 and Grand Avenue Limited into one Express Route.	N/A	\$500,000 additional operating costs for first five years	N/A	Prop 400, LTAF, FTA Section 5307, STP Flexible Funding.
Mid-term or long-term	Expand circulator frequency and/or coverage as demand warrants	Community meetings, Community Survey	TBD	TBD	Prop 400, FTA Section 5307, STP Flexible Funding
Long-term	Transform regional Express Route into a high-capacity transit line	Community Survey	TBD	TBD	FTA Section 5309, FTA Section 5307, CMAQ, STP Flexible Funding.

The community survey reveals El Mirage residents have the highest percentage of work-related trips in the Northwest Valley. The survey also indicates El Mirage residents use transit service more often than residents from other many of the other communities, even though local service is presently limited. The participants of the community meetings in El Mirage made a specific point to request access to local amenities, such as stores, medical offices, and local schools.

In addition to performing our own outreach, we consulted the 2012 El Mirage Transportation Needs Assessment. Its findings largely corroborated with our own and also revealed that approximately 70 percent of El Mirage residents would use bus service if it were available to them, and nearly two thirds indicated that they would like more transit routes to be available. Coupled with a nearly 400 percent increase in population since 2000, the Transportation Needs Assessment indicated that El Mirage currently provides a strong potential market for new transit service.

Addressing the findings of both our public outreach efforts and those of the 2012 Transportation Needs Assessment, in the near term we recommend a local circulator operating within El Mirage to connect residents with two elementary schools, the El Mirage Walmart, Gateway Park and the El Mirage Municipal Courthouse. The El Mirage circulator would also provide connections to other transit services, including the proposed Grand Avenue Express line to Phoenix and the Surprise Circulator. Two buses would operate on the circulator route, serving each stop every 30 minutes if they traveled in the same direction. As an alternative, the two buses could travel in opposite directions and serve each stop in

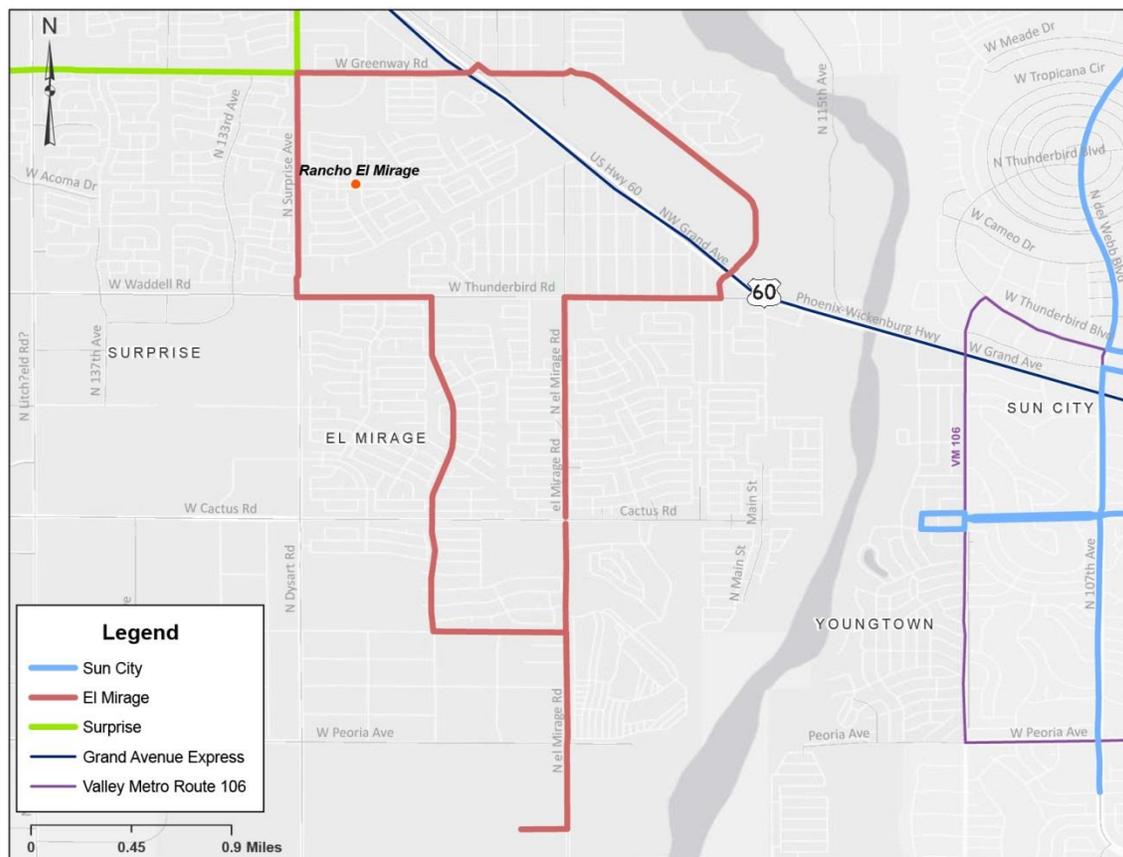
each direction every 60 minutes. In addition, El Mirage circulator buses should run on a schedule that allows timed transfers with the Grand Avenue Express.

If demand for circulator service is sufficient in the mid-term, service could be increased in order to cover a larger service area, increase frequency, or both.

Transforming the proposed Grand Avenue Express Route along Grand Avenue to a high-capacity transit line may or may not include a stop directly within El Mirage. If El Mirage is included in this, residents will have frequent direct access to the rest of the region. If El Mirage is not included, service to Phoenix will still be more frequent, yet would require a transfer.

Exhibit 4.2.9 illustrates the proposed El Mirage circulator route, as well as key connections.

Exhibit 4.2.8 Proposed El Mirage Circulator Route



SUN CITY FESTIVAL

Exhibit 4.2.9 Sun City Festival Recommendations

Term	Recommendation	Source	Expected Cost (total)	Share	Funding
Near-term	Create a localized vanpool/rideshare program	Community meetings	Funded by member (resident) fees	All	N/A
Long-term	Operate limited express service between Sun City Festival and Surprise	Community meetings	\$944,000 for first five years	All	Prop 400, FTA Section 5307, STP Flexible Funding

Though Sun City Festival residents are geographically separate from much of the Metro Phoenix area, participants at the community meetings indicated a desire to have service to the many areas within the region, including Downtown Phoenix, Arrowhead Town Center, various hospitals, Sky Harbor Airport, and Scottsdale. However, given the distance between Sun City Festival to these locations and the community's current modest population, fixed-route service to any of these locations is not economically viable at this time.

As a mobility alternative for Sun City Festival residents, this study recommends the creation of a localized vanpool/rideshare program. This program, which may be administered by Valley Metro, would operate by leasing vehicles to drivers so long as they agree to make trips with resident passengers to defined locations at defined times. Typically, rideshare programs recover operating costs through member fees, though some programs also have small subsidies. For Sun City Festival, the membership fees would be determined upon further analysis for likely demand.

While many rideshare programs focus on longer commutes, a vanpool/rideshare program in Sun City Festival should incorporate short trips as well. Respondents from the community survey indicated that most of their trips are less than five miles, or generally to destinations within Sun City Festival. This statistic highlights a demand for access to local amenities, such as the stores within Sun City Festival.

In the long-term, if the local population and transit demand increase over time, MAG could consider the implementation of a limited express service between Sun City Festival and Surprise. This expenditure should be attributed solely to Sun City Festival, as Surprise residents did not identify Sun City Festival as a necessary transit destination. To connect Sun City Festival to the rest of the Phoenix area, this service may have only one stop in Surprise: the Surprise Park-and-Ride. In order to ensure ADA compliance, this route would have scheduled intervals in which it would deviate from its fixed route to pick up and drop off ADA-eligible passengers. If such a service were implemented, Sun City Festival could potentially enter into the Cooperative Agreement in order to share in insurance and administrative benefits.

YOUNGTOWN

Exhibit 4.2.10 Youngtown Recommendations

Term	Recommendation	Source	Expected Cost (total)	Share	Funding
Near-term	Establish a Cooperative Agreement with other study area communities	N/A	Potential increase in administrative expenses	TBD	TBD
Near-term	Establish a local circulator connecting to the Sun City West circulator and key points within Sun City and Youngtown	Community survey	\$2,199,450 for first five years	TBD	Prop 400, FTA Section 5307, STP Flexible Funding
Mid-term	Increase frequency on Route 106	Community survey	TBD by Valley Metro	2 of 42 miles	Prop 400, FTA Section 5307, STP Flexible Funding

Community survey respondents in Youngtown expressed a desire for more frequent transit service, which is not surprising considering that much of Youngtown is served only hourly by Valley Metro Route 106 along 111th Avenue. While increasing direct service to Youngtown may not be economically feasible in the near term given its relatively low population, this plan recommends increasing Valley Metro Route 106’s frequency in the mid-term phase to provide service every 30 minutes. This increase would respond to potential increases in population and transit demand. Valley Metro may accomplish this increase by increasing frequency on Route 106, or maintaining current frequencies while having all bus runs travel until Banner-Boswell Medical Center. Increasing frequency along Valley Metro Route 106 would provide Youngtown residents with greater access to Banner-Boswell Medical Center and the proposed Grand Avenue Express.

In addition to receiving 30-minute service on Valley Metro Route 106, under this plan Youngtown would also be connected to Sun City via the Sun City/Youngtown circulator as shown above in Exhibit 4.2.6.

PEORIA

Exhibit 4.2.11 Peoria Specific Recommendations

Term	Recommendation	Source	Expected Cost (total)	Share	Funding
Near-term	Establish a Cooperative Agreement with other study area communities	N/A	Potential increase in administrative expenses	TBD	TBD
Near-term	Convert Express Route 571 and Grand Avenue Limited into one Express Route	Community Survey	\$500,000 additional operating costs for first five years	N/A	Prop 400, LTAF, FTA Section 5307, STP Flexible Funding.
Near-term	Adjust the Peoria-based bus routes to align with the new Express Route.	N/A	No additional operational or capital expense.	N/A	N/A
Near-term	Establish a local circulator connecting Arrowhead Towne Center with key points in northern areas of Peoria	2011 Peoria Multimodal Transportation Plan	\$3,750,000 for first five years	All	Prop 400, FTA Section 5307, STP Flexible Funding
Mid-term	Increase frequency on Route 106 to Banner-Boswell Medical Center	Community meetings	TBD	4 of 42 miles	Prop 400, FTA Section 5307, STP Flexible Funding
Long-term	Transform Grand Avenue Express Route into a high-capacity transit line. VM Route 83 on 83 rd Ave.	Community Survey	TBD	TBD	FTA Section 5309, FTA Section 5307, CMAQ, STP Flexible Funding

Community meeting participants from the City of Peoria were particularly concerned with the availability of Dial-A-Ride service. Peoria’s community survey respondents indicated a desire for service to new areas, though the response rate for this option was less pronounced than in other communities. Instead, survey respondents displayed a higher percentage of responses for greater frequency and better connections to areas outside of the Northwest Valley. The City of Peoria already has existing transit service running throughout each day (Valley Metro Route 106, as well as Valley Metro Route 67 at the western edge of Peoria), and will also receive future service along 83rd Avenue, Thunderbird Boulevard, and Olive Avenue.

In the near term, we recommend Peoria implement a circulator as described in the 2011 Peoria Multimodal Transportation Plan and shown in Exhibit 4.2.12. This route would connect the popular Arrowhead Towne Center with currently populated and developing areas in northern Peoria. Per the specifications in the 2011 Plan, the Peoria circulator could operate on 60-minute headways.

In addition to adding the circulator as proposed in the 2011 Multimodal Transportation Plan, we recommend the proposed Grand Avenue Express Route between Surprise and Downtown Phoenix stop

GLENDALE

Exhibit 4.2.13 Glendale Specific Recommendations

Term	Recommendation	Source	Expected Cost (total)	Share	Funding
Near-term	Convert Express Route 571 and Grand Avenue Limited into one Express Route.	Community Survey	\$500,000 additional operating costs for first five years	N/A	Prop 400, LTAF, FTA Section 5307, STP Flexible Funding.
Near-term	Adjust the Glendale-based bus schedules to facilitate timed transfers with the new Express Route	N/A	No additional operational or capital expense	N/A	N/A
Long-term	Transition Grand Avenue Express Route into a high-capacity transit line	Community Survey	TBD	TBD	FTA Section 5309, FTA Section 5307, CMAQ, STP Flexible Funding.

Community survey respondents from Glendale had the lowest percentage of requests for service to new areas (approximately 10 percent). Given this input, it can be concluded Glendale residents either are content with the existing coverage of Valley Metro routes, or, at the very least, lack a significant desire to have greater connectivity to the Northwest Valley. Instead, Glendale residents indicated a desire for greater span-of-service and increased frequency. Due to the fact that only a portion of Glendale is considered part of the Northwest Valley, the feasibility of an overall increase in frequency for each Glendale route is beyond the scope of this study.

If the recommended Grand Avenue Express Route is implemented, one of its five stops would be in the City of Glendale (at 59th Avenue and Myrtle Avenue) in the near-term. This route would provide Downtown Glendale with more frequent, direct service to Downtown Phoenix. The route would also provide a link between Glendale, Peoria, and Surprise. The only other near-term recommendation is that applicable Glendale-based bus routes adjust their schedules to facilitate timed transfers to the proposed Grand Avenue Express line.

In out years, MAG and Valley Metro are studying alternatives to connect Glendale to Downtown Phoenix by extending the 19th Avenue light rail line to Glendale via Glendale Avenue. Glendale therefore has less of an incentive to finance high-capacity transit along Grand Avenue as a means to increase its residents' access to Downtown Phoenix. However, as high-capacity transit along Grand Avenue will greatly benefit the other Northwest Valley communities beyond Glendale, this would need to be a Northwest Valley-wide initiative.

This page intentionally blank.

5

FINANCIAL
PLAN

This page intentionally blank.

CHAPTER 5 – FINANCIAL PLAN

This section provides cost estimates, in 2012 dollars unless otherwise noted, for implementing the recommendations that Chapter Four describes. The primary costs involved are capital costs, operations and maintenance, marketing, as well as administrative costs. The first section of this chapter will present estimated near-term, mid-term, and long-term implementation costs. ‘Near term’ refers to projects within the next five years, ‘mid-term’ projects would likely happen within five to ten years, and long-term projects would occur thereafter.

In addition to presenting gross operating costs for each implementation phase, this chapter will also present net implementation costs, or gross costs minus expected farebox revenue. This report estimates farebox revenues to be approximately 15 percent of gross operating costs for the circulator services, and five percent for Dial-A-Ride services. These farebox recovery ratios were taken from MAG’s 2013 Southwest Valley Local Transit System Study.

After presenting the implementation costs for each phase, Section 5.2 will describe several federal, state, and local funding options that are available to provide financing for implementation.

5.1 IMPLEMENTATION COSTS FOR EACH PROJECT PHASE

Near-Term Implementation Costs (Zero to Five Years)

In the first phase, the communities of El Mirage, Glendale, Peoria, Surprise/Sun City Grand, Sun City, Sun City West, Sun City Festival, and Youngtown would need to create an Intergovernmental Cooperative Agreement or, more simply, cooperative agreement. Establishing and upholding the cooperative agreement would cost approximately \$65,000 for the first five years. This cost would include contract management, grant application costs, Request for Proposal issuance, and other activities related to the administration and planning of the Northwest Valley transit system.

Capital costs for circulators will be higher during the first phase since bus stops will be installed and bus facilities will need to be constructed. With these costs in mind, capital costs for the first five years should total approximately \$2.7M². This figure includes vehicle purchase, the first five years of financing transit facility construction, and bus stop amenity installation, which would be completed over the course of five years. The Sun City Festival volunteer driver program should not incur any costs as volunteer drivers would be fully reimbursed by users.

² This figure does not include the capital costs associated with the Peoria circulator, whose full cost (operating plus capital) was pulled directly from the 2011 Peoria Multimodal Transportation Plan and is included in the “total five-year implementation costs” column of Exhibits 5.1.1 – 5.1.3.

Implementing the first five years of Grand Avenue Express service would have a total cost of approximately \$500,000. This cost reflects the amount of money needed to provide *extra* service beyond the service already provided by the existing Valley Metro Route 571 and Grand Avenue Limited. By combining the Grand Avenue Limited, Valley Metro Route 571, and recommended extra service hours, the Grand Avenue Express would provide six round trips each weekday into Downtown Phoenix.

Total operations and maintenance (O/M) costs for the first five years would total approximately \$8.3M³. O/M costs include, among other costs, driver wages and on-going vehicle costs such as fuel, insurance, and maintenance. After discounting farebox recovery, which this report estimates to be about 15 percent, net O/M costs would be approximately \$7.1M³.

Marketing, including artwork, advertising, and information distribution would total around \$300,000 for the first five years. A particularly heavy investment in marketing is recommended during the first phase of the project since the recommended services would be new and ridership will depend on residents in the study area knowing that the service exists.

³ This figure does not include the O/M costs associated with the Peoria circulator, whose full cost (operating plus capital) was pulled directly from the 2011 Peoria Multimodal Transportation Plan and is included in the “total five-year implementation costs” column of Exhibits 5.1.1 – 5.1.3.

Exhibit 5.1.1 Near-Term Implementation Costs

Service	New Buses	Capital costs (Five-Year)			Total capital costs ⁶	five-year O/M Costs	Total five-year implementation costs	Comments		
		Vehicles	Vehicle facilities ⁴	New stops and amenities ⁵						
El Mirage circulator	2	\$144,000	\$1,250,000	\$625,000	\$519,000	\$1,742,950	\$2,261,950			
Peoria circulator								\$3,750,000 ⁷		
Sun City Grand circulator	1	\$72,000				\$447,000	\$871,475	\$1,318,475		
Sun City West circulator	2	\$144,000				\$519,000	\$1,742,950	\$2,261,950		
Sun City circulator	2	\$144,000				\$519,000	\$1,742,950	\$2,261,950		
Surprise circulator	2	\$144,000				\$519,000	\$1,742,950	\$2,261,950		
Sun City Festival Volunteer Driver Program									Paid by Users	
Surplus vehicles	2	\$144,000					\$144,000	\$0	\$144,000	Minor O/M costs
Cooperative Agreement									\$65,000	
Grand Avenue Express						\$500,000	\$500,000			
Marketing							\$300,239			
Gross Cost, Years 0-5					\$2,667,000	\$8,343,275	\$15,125,514			
Farebox revenue						\$1,813,991				
Net Cost, Years 0-5					\$2,667,000	\$6,529,284	\$13,311,522			

⁴ Assumes a \$2.5M expenditure made in payments over 10 years to construct vehicle storage and maintenance facilities.

⁵ Assumes \$625,000 total over 5 years: all information poles and signs installed Year 1, and benches and shelters installed Years 2-5.

⁶ Equal to vehicle purchase plus 1/5 of vehicle facility and amenity costs, since these two latter costs would be split evenly among the five routes.

⁷ Based on \$750,000 annual operating cost taken from 2011 Peoria Multimodal Transportation Plan.

Mid-Term Implementation Costs (Five to Ten Years)

Mid-term implementation costs will vary depending both on circulator service increases in response to demand as well as when and whether Valley Metro implements the recommendations that Chapter Four describes. If near-term circulator service levels continue during the mid-term, capital costs would total about \$2M, which includes continued debt service for a transit facility and fleet replacement⁸. Gross and net operating expenses will be similar to those in the near term, though may change somewhat due to inflation, changes in fuel prices, etc.

Although Chapter Four included extensions for Valley Metro Routes 138 and 170 as parts of the mid-term recommendations, the cost estimates for these extensions come from the MAG 2010 RTP and are based on estimates assuming these two routes continue out to Loop 303. Given termination at Loop 303 was proposed in Chapter Four as a long-term recommendation, the cost for Valley Metro Routes 138 and 170 is given in the following section describing long-term implementation costs and are excluded from this section.

Exhibit 5.1.2 provides a breakdown of mid-term implementation costs.

⁸ The 24-foot “cutaway” buses recommended for the community circulators have an expected life of five years or 150,000 miles, whichever occurs first.

Exhibit 5.1.2 Mid-Term Implementation Costs

Service	New Buses	Capital costs (Five-Year)				five-year O/M Costs	Total five-year implementation costs	Comments
		Vehicles	Vehicle facilities	New stops and amenities	Total capital costs			
Maintain Circulator Near-Term Service Levels	11	\$792,000	\$1,250,000		\$2,042,000	\$7,843,275	\$13,635,275	
Route 106 Service Increase						TBD	TBD	
Cooperative Agreement							TBD	
Grand Avenue Express							\$0	Should not have any net new costs
Marketing							\$235,298	
Gross Five-Year cost					\$2,042,000	\$7,843,275	\$13,870,573	
Farebox Revenue						\$1,738,991		
Net Mid-Term Cost					\$2,042,000	\$6,104,284	\$12,131,582	

Long-Term Implementation Costs (10-plus Years)

As would be the case with implementing mid-term circulator improvements, long-term circulator service increases would depend on demand and the then-current state of the Valley Metro network. The circulator-related costs shown in Exhibit 5.1.3 assume that near-term circulator services would be maintained during the long-term phase. However, circulator service may be increased or decreased depending on ridership and funding.

As recommended in Chapter Four, if demand is sufficient, a limited, deviated fixed-route service could go to Sun City Festival. Given the relative isolation and likely lower demand of Sun City Festival, this service would utilize only one bus providing service approximately every 90 minutes. The five-year cost for this service, including capital and operations and maintenance, would be approximately \$943,000.

The Maricopa Association of Governments' (MAG) 2010 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) forecast extending Valley Metro Routes 90, 138, and 170 (as recommended in Chapter Four) would cost approximately \$83.9M. This estimate reflects inflation-adjusted, year-of-expenditure (YOE) or 2025 dollars. In addition, if these routes are extended in phases, then the cost of each phase would be less than the \$83.9M estimate provided in the RTP. In addition to these east-west route extensions, the 2010 RTP estimates, also in 2025 dollars, that implementing north-south service along 83rd Avenue will cost approximately \$14.6M over a 20-year period from 2011 to 2031. The cost for implementing new fixed-route service between Surprise and Luke AFB via Litchfield Rd. is unknown at this time.

Exhibit 5.1.3 provides a breakdown of long-term implementation costs.

Exhibit 5.1.3 Long-Term Implementation Costs

Service	New Buses	Capital costs (Five-Year)				five-year O/M Costs	Total five-year implementation costs	Comments
		Vehicles	Vehicle facilities	New stops and amenities	Total capital costs			
Maintain Circulator Near-Term Service Levels	11	\$792,000			\$792,000	\$7,843,275	\$12,385,275	
Route 90 Extension						\$2,100,000	\$2,100,000 ⁹	
Route 138 Extension						\$29,600,000	\$29,600,000 ⁹	
Route 170 Extension						\$52,200,000	\$52,200,000 ⁹	
Litchfield Rd. Service						N/A	N/A	
83rd Avenue service						\$14,600,000	\$14,600,000	
Sun City Festival Limited Express	1	\$72,000			\$72,000	\$871,475	\$943,475	
Grand Avenue Express							\$0	Should not have net new costs
Cooperative Agreement							TBD	
Marketing							\$3,216,443	
Gross Cost, Years 10-15					\$792,000	\$107,214,750	\$115,045,193	
Farebox revenue						\$16,644,713		
Net Cost, Years 10-15					\$792,000	\$90,570,038	\$98,400,480	

⁹ These figures represent total operations and capital costs in inflation-adjusted 2025 dollars for the years 2011-2031, in accordance with the MAG 2010 RTP.

Summary of Implementation Costs

Exhibit 5.1.4 Summary of Implementation Costs

	Near Term	Mid-Term	Long Term
Capital Costs (factors in bus facility and amenity costs)			
El Mirage circulator	\$519,000	\$414,833	\$144,000
Sun City Grand circulator	\$447,000	\$342,833	\$72,000
Sun City West circulator	\$519,000	\$414,833	\$144,000
Sun City circulator	\$519,000	\$414,833	\$144,000
Surprise circulator	\$519,000	\$414,833	\$144,000
Sun City Festival Ltd.	\$0	\$0	\$72,000
Surplus vehicles	\$144,000	\$39,833	\$144,000
Grand Avenue Express	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total Capital Costs	\$2,667,000	\$2,042,000	\$864,000
O/M Costs			
El Mirage circulator	\$1,742,950	\$1,742,950	\$1,742,950
Peoria circulator	\$3,750,000	\$3,750,000	\$3,750,000
Sun City Grand circulator	\$871,475	\$871,475	\$871,475
Sun City West circulator	\$1,742,950	\$1,742,950	\$1,742,950
Sun City circulator	\$1,742,950	\$1,742,950	\$1,742,950
Surprise circulator	\$1,742,950	\$1,742,950	\$1,742,950
Sun City Festival Ltd.	\$0	\$0	\$871,475
Surplus vehicles	\$0	\$0	\$0
Grand Avenue Express	\$500,000	\$0	\$0
Route 90 Extension			\$2,100,000 ¹⁰
Route 106 Service Increase		TBD	TBD
Route 138 Extension			\$29,600,000 ¹⁰
Route 170 Extension			\$52,200,000 ¹⁰
Litchfield Rd. Service		N/A	N/A
83rd Avenue Service			\$14,600,000 ¹⁰
Gross O/M Costs	\$12,093,275	\$11,593,275	\$110,964,750
Farebox revenue	\$1,813,991	\$1,738,991	\$16,644,713
Net O/M Costs	\$10,279,284	\$9,854,284	\$94,320,038
Admin and other costs			
Cooperative Agreement	\$65,000	TBD	TBD
Marketing	\$300,239	\$235,298	\$3,216,443
Total Costs¹¹			
Gross Implementation Costs	\$15,125,514	\$13,870,573	\$115,045,193
Net Implementation Costs	\$13,311,522	\$12,131,582	\$98,400,480

¹⁰ Figures from 2010 MAG RTP, are adjusted for inflation to year 2025, and represent an implementation period from 2011-2031.

¹¹ Do not include costs that are N/A or TBD.

5.2 FUNDING OPTIONS

Funding availability would most likely be the limiting factor in implementing the recommendations presented in this report. This section describes several programs at the federal, state, and local levels which could be available to provide funding for implementation.

In addition to being aware of these funding sources, joining together under a cooperative agreement and soliciting funding as a group will be a key strategy for Northwest Valley communities to obtain funding from these sources. By representing a population of nearly 600,000 people and a larger, coordinated, and connective transit system, Northwest Valley communities joined under a cooperative agreement would be more competitive when requesting funds than each community would be if it were requesting funds individually. Another strategic recommendation is that circulator service increases, if needed, occur after Valley Metro makes the mid- and long-term route extensions described in Chapter Four. These Valley Metro routes will connect with several of the circulator routes, making them an integral part of the Phoenix regional transit system. If Northwest Valley transit services were a part of the regional transit system, rather than more isolated and local services, Northwest Valley communities could make a stronger case for additional funding to increase service.

Potential Federal Funding Sources

As many of the program descriptions indicate below, federal funding sources usually provide a fixed amount of money each year, which is distributed to transit agencies nationwide in a competitive process. Therefore, we cannot guarantee that the Northwest Valley will be able to obtain funding from these federal sources. However, as described above, joining Northwest Valley communities under a cooperative agreement would make them better-positioned contenders for federal funding, making the following programs more likely sources of revenue.

Urbanized Area Formula Program

The Urbanized Area Formula Program (Section 5307) provides up to 80 percent matching funds to support capital costs. For urbanized areas (UZAs) with fewer than 200,000 residents or fewer than 100 buses, this program also provides up to 50 percent matching funds to support operations. This fund has a total of \$4.46 Billion available for FY 2014 that are distributed based on population (up to 200,000 residents), total route miles, operating hours, and Job Access Reverse Commute (JARC) services that the system provides. The communities in the Northwest Valley could use route miles and operating hours to leverage additional funds once they have implemented the first-phase recommendations and that phase's infrastructure has been added to the National Transit Database. However, if the FTA considers the Northwest Valley to be a part of the Phoenix UZA, then it will not be independently eligible for Section 5307 funds. Rather, it would need to compete with other patrons in the Phoenix region for these funds, which would instead go to the Phoenix UZA.

Fixed Guideway Capital Investments ("New Starts")

The New Starts program (Section 5309) provides capital funds to construct new LRT and BRT facilities or to increase capacity on existing facilities. The program has \$1.9 Billion available for FY 2014. Funding from this source would not likely go directly to the Northwest Valley communities, but could be a valuable source of funding if and when high-capacity transit service is implemented along Grand Avenue.

Bus and Bus Facilities Program

The Bus and Bus Facilities program (Section 5339) has a fund totaling \$428 Million for FY 2014. Of this \$428M, each state automatically receives \$1.25 Million, with the remainder of these funds going to UZAs based on population, vehicle service miles, and passenger miles. Funds through this program require a 20-percent match, and would be programmed through the Maricopa Association of Governments.

State of Good Repair Funding

Intended for upkeep of fixed-guideway systems such as LRT or BRT, these funds may not be applicable to the Northwest Valley communities during the near term. However, if a high-capacity BRT or LRT line is to be implemented along Grand Avenue, this program may be a means by which to maintain that facility.

Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities

The Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Persons with Disabilities Fund (Section 5310) will contain a total of \$258.3M in its 2014 budget that will be distributed to UZAs based on the number of seniors and disabled persons it has. This fund could be a particularly important source of funding for the Northwest Valley, given the Valley's relatively large population of resident seniors.

Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ)

The fund for the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality program typically has approximately \$3.3 Billion each fiscal year which are distributed to state DOTs and MPOs based on population. Areas that receive these funds must use them on transportation projects that help the region to meet Clean Air Act air quality standards. The Northwest Valley could use CMAQ funds to help purchase both new vehicles and support new infrastructure.

Potential State Funding Sources

Local Transportation Assistance Funds (LTAF)

LTAF funds come from Arizona state lottery revenues and are designated to help pay for local transportation service within Maricopa County. In 2011 this program had \$16.2 Million available to distribute, though this amount can vary significantly from year to year depending on lottery revenues.

Potential Local Funding Sources

Local sales tax measures are among the most common means to raise funding for transit in the Phoenix metro area. In addition to Proposition 400, described below, the Cities of Phoenix, Tempe, and Glendale have local sales taxes to support transit service in their communities.

Proposition 400 Sales Tax Revenue

Proposition 400 levies a half-cent sales tax for residents of Maricopa County, one-third of which goes public transit projects, and can be used for both capital and operations expenses. The amount of money available from this source varies with the state of the economy, and this tax will expire in 2025 unless the voters decide to extend it.

Future Regional Transit Proposition- Sales Tax Revenue

A future Regional Transit Proposition could garner revenue from residents of Maricopa County, for public transit projects, and might be allocated for use for both capital and operations expenses.

This page intentionally blank.

6 IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

This page intentionally blank.

CHAPTER 6 – IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

This chapter will provide a summary of the recommendations presented in Chapter Four and recommend the order in which to carry out the recommendations. Below is a summary of when each set of recommendations would be implemented, followed by a table presenting the recommendations that would be implemented in each phase.

6.1 SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Near-Term (Zero to Five Years)

To effectively respond to the needs and priorities of community meeting participants, survey respondents, and stakeholders, the communities of El Mirage, Peoria, Sun City, Sun City West, and Surprise would implement circulator routes as described in Chapter Four. In addition to the circulator service, Valley Metro would implement the Grand Avenue Express Service to allow the circulators to act as feeders for Northwest Valley residents wishing to travel to Downtown Phoenix.

As these five communities implement circulator services, they along with the other communities in the study area would join together under a cooperative agreement. Under the cooperative agreement, Northwest Valley communities would jointly procure a contract with an operations provider, coordinate services between each of the circulator routes and Valley Metro routes, establish a common funding pool, share administrative and insurance costs, establish a tax district covering all members of the cooperative agreement, and represent the Northwest Valley in funding discussions.

Due to its distance from the rest of the study area, Sun City Festival would implement a volunteer driver program as recommended in Chapter Four to provide its residents transportation to Surprise and other areas.

Mid-Term (Five to Ten Years)

To complement the circulator service and improve the Northwest Valley's regional connectivity, Valley Metro would increase service on Route 106 and extend Routes 138 and 170 further into Surprise as outlined in Maricopa Association of Governments' 2010 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). These extensions would respond to increased population growth in the Northwest Valley and connect with the circulator routes, allowing them to act as feeder routes and be a part of the regional transportation system. If demand is sufficient, communities with circulator routes could increase circulator frequency, coverage area, or both.

Long-Term (10-15 Years)

With circulator service, increased Valley Metro service, and population growth, there would likely be demand for increased transit service in the Northwest Valley. Valley Metro would meet this demand through further route extensions along Routes 90, 138, and 170 as outlined in the 2010 MAG RTP. These

extensions will bring transit service into the growing western areas of the Northwest Valley. In addition, Valley Metro would implement service along Litchfield Road to connect the cities of Surprise and Goodyear with Luke AFB and facilitate north-south travel. Further east, Valley Metro would begin service along 83rd Avenue as outlined in the 2010 MAG RTP and the City of Peoria's 2011 Multi-modal Transportation Plan. As for Sun City Festival, should sufficient growth occur, it would implement its own circulator route to connect its residents with circulator and Valley Metro services in Surprise.

Finally, the Northwest Valley Cooperative Agreement members would support any Valley Metro plans to implement high-capacity public transit along Grand Avenue to Surprise, which would increase access to Downtown Phoenix and the region for residents in the Northwest Valley.

Exhibit 6.1.1 provides a table summarizing the recommendations as well as when they would be implemented.

Exhibit 6.1.1 Summary of Recommendation Implementation

	Current Status	Short Term (0-5 Years)	Mid-Term (5-10 Years)	Long Term (10-15 years)
Governance Actions	N/A	Eight Northwest Valley communities establish a Cooperative Agreement	No change	No change
<i>Circulators</i>				
El Mirage	No service	Two-bus circulator service	Change as demand dictates	Change as demand dictates
Peoria	No service	Two-bus circulator service	Change as demand dictates	Change as demand dictates
Sun City Grand/Surprise	No service	One-bus circulator service	Change as demand dictates	Change as demand dictates
Sun City West	No service	Two-bus circulator service	Change as demand dictates	Change as demand dictates
Sun City/Youngtown	No service	Two-bus circulator service	Change as demand dictates	Change as demand dictates
Surprise	No service	Two-bus circulator service	Change as demand dictates	Change as demand dictates
<i>Valley Metro Routes</i>				
Valley Metro Rte 90	Every 30 minutes to Olive Ave. and 67th Ave.	No change	No change	Every 30 minutes to 111th Ave. and Peoria Ave.
Valley Metro Rte 106	Every 60 minutes to Banner-Boswell Medical Center	No change	Every 30 minutes to Banner-Boswell Medical Center	No change
Valley Metro Rte 138	Every 30 minutes to Thunderbird Rd. at 59th Ave.	No change	Every 30 minutes to Surprise	Every 30 minutes to Thunderbird Rd. at Loop 303
Valley Metro Rte 170	Every 30 minutes to Arrowhead Towne Center	No change	Every 30 minutes to Surprise	Every 30 minutes to Bell Rd. and Loop 303
Grand Avenue Express	Combination of Grand Avenue Limited and Valley Metro Route 571	Create Grand Avenue Express with service to Downtown Phoenix at least every 120 mins	No change	Potential high-capacity service (BRT or LRT)
83 rd Avenue	No service	No service	No service	Begin service along 83 rd Avenue
Litchfield Rd.	No service	No service	No service	Begin service between Surprise and Goodyear via Luke AFB
<i>Dial-A-Ride Services</i>				
Northwest Valley Dial-a ride	Coverage across Northwest Valley	Maintain or expand service per ADA requirements	Maintain or expand service per ADA requirements	Maintain or expand service per ADA requirements
Peoria Dial-A-Ride	Coverage in City of Peoria	Maintain or expand service per ADA requirements	Maintain or expand service per ADA requirements	Maintain or expand service per ADA requirements

Page intentionally left blank.