



AGENDA

Commuter Rail Strategic Plan Commuter Rail Stakeholders Group #3

Date: September 12, 2007

From: 8:30-11:30 am

Location: Glendale Civic Center
5750 West Glenn Drive
Crown/Topaz/Onyx Room

1. Welcome
2. Summary of Project Purpose and Need
 - a. Presentation of Outcomes from CRSG Workshop #2
3. Proposed Goals for Commuter Rail Strategic Plan
4. Development of Draft Action Items
 - a. Break-out into Small Groups
 - b. Reconvene to debrief
5. Discussion of Next Steps and CRSG Workshop #4 scheduled October 30, 2007
6. Adjournment



Meeting Notes
Commuter Rail Strategic Plan
Commuter Rail Stakeholder Group
June 28, 2007
9:00-11:30 a.m.

Attendees:

The workshop was held in Mesa at the Mesa Convention Center on June 28, 2007. There were approximately 128-135 stakeholders that attended the second Commuter Rail Stakeholder Group meeting. Refer to the attached sign in sheets for a list of attendees.

The purposes of the second CRSG meeting were to begin to identify and analyze all Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) associated with commuter rail in Maricopa and Northern Pinal County. The CRSG members were assigned a focus group dependent on the sub area definition. The focus groups representing the five subareas of Southwest, Southeast, Northwest, central, and South corridors, analyzed SWOT for their respective subarea. These SWOT's were documented on flip charts and the participants were asked to prioritize their identified SWOT. The matrix below provides the high priority SWOT by subarea. For specific details refer to the Summary Definition Technical Memorandum.

HIGH PRIORITY STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES AND THREATS

SWOT	Subareas				
	Central Subarea	South Subarea	Southeast Subarea	Southwest Subarea	Northwest Subarea
Strengths					
<i>Regional Growth</i>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will create retail/industrial development opportunities for small towns/economic development Relieve congestion on freeways Reduces time tax – lost opportunity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce congestion Growing population along the line 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduces congestion on roadways
<i>Multimodal Opportunities</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved mobility, multimodal connectivity Expanded transit adds rush hour capacity Travel options 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Construction mitigation, build prior to I-10 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reliability in travel time connectivity Promotes regional airport alternatives (WGA) Connecting Pinal County to Maricopa County 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Connectivity of valley, regions, light rail and other transit 	
<i>Existing Land and ROW</i>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Several existing rail corridors Ahead of development curve – available land 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing track (ROW) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rail exists/economic linkages
<i>Cost and Affordability</i>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alternative form of transportation as gas prices increase 		
<i>Sustainability</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mitigates pollution and saves energy (fuel) Multi-nodal community is suited to commuter rail across valley Activity into downtown area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I-10 24-lane mitigation option 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Air quality improvement Creates greater sustainability for region Promotes nodal development: business, sports, resorts, activities; connects high density areas Cost savings (economic, environmental, etc) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental friendly Long-term transportation solution 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase quality of life – reduction in commute Reduces pollution
<i>Public and Private Cooperation</i>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Growing community support 		

SWOT	Subareas				
	Central Subarea	South Subarea	Southeast Subarea	Southwest Subarea	Northwest Subarea
Weaknesses					
<i>Regional Growth</i>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Polycentric employment centers • Speed of development - vanishing opportunities • Security screening/concerns – terrorists • Density – will Arizona densities sustain mass transit? 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initial ridership
<i>Existing Land and ROW</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Railroads indicate limited additional capacity of existing infrastructure 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Congestion on the rail lines • Need to acquire right-of-way through developed areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of signalization along line – cost and safety 	
<i>Cost</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No defined funding source yet 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Costs– no funding source • Competition for available funds by many areas of transportation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Money 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New funding source needed • Infrastructure costs
<i>Public/ Private Cooperation</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Willingness to fund and operate • No leverage or cooperation with railroads 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buy-in/cooperation by UPRR 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of multi-jurisdiction planning • Public support – some want to see benefit • Partnering with existing railroads very difficult • Legislative support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Political resistance • Competition with populous areas • Communication between railroad, region and state • Competing transportation project 	

SWOT	Subareas				
	Central Subarea	South Subarea	Southeast Subarea	Southwest Subarea	Northwest Subarea
Opportunities					
<i>Regional Growth</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intensifies economic and social activity at nodes Reduce congestion 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Economic development corridor Re-development of inner cities (i.e., Phoenix, Tempe, Mesa) Stimulate growth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New employment centers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Economic development Business investments Higher density opportunities Relocating district center to northwest valley creates redevelopment opportunities for Phoenix, Glendale, Surprise, etc Tourism
<i>Multimodal Opportunities</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Becomes spine and improves effectiveness of all connecting transit systems Ability to use commercial rail as a construction alternative (I-10 widening) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Solving regional mobility/connective challenges 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Connectivity-education, air/sea/rail – regions Multi-modal planning corridor 		
<i>Existing Land and ROW</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Large scale joint development opportunity 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Combined corridors Use of PPP with existing corridors, right-of-ways, and large landholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clean slate to create a transit corridor (freight/commuter) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ability to plan as integrated corridors
<i>Cost</i>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PM-10 preservation of funding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PM-10 preservation of funding 	
<i>Sustainability</i>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental benefit by utilizing existing freight 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transit oriented development Competitive advantage over other western states Creative transit planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creative transit planning 	
<i>Public/ Private Cooperation</i>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional planning for regional success (Sun corridor partnership) Arizona Corporation Commission/regional/state agencies to partner (ADOT, MAG, etc) opportunity to change people's paradigms 		

SWOT	Subareas				
	Central Subarea	South Subarea	Southeast Subarea	Southwest Subarea	Northwest Subarea
Threats					
<i>Regional Growth</i>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development incentives from other states and regions 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Terrorist threat
<i>Existing Land and RR ROW</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued increases in freight traffic 				
<i>Cost</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Competition for limited federal funds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cost of fare may discourage ridership Ongoing maintenance costs/ operations Lack of subsidy No funding source identified 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cost 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Federal transportation money goes away in 2009 Sustainable Funding
<i>Sustainability</i>				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sustainability 	
<i>Public/ Private Cooperation</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of political will, funding commitment, inter-regional cooperation Ineffective long-range planning Legislative may prevent, delay, or raise price 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public perception/misperception Legislative implementation/regional competition 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Politics Regional competition User apathy Old thinking on the part of rail companies; citizens and elected positions Railroads (freight) Comprehensive plan revisions Agency support and planning Anti-tax communities NIMBY opposition Organized opposition Tribal nation "Buy-in/support" Competing stakeholders groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prioritizations vs. Regions (system) Political support Public perception (Don't take money away from freeway mentality) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Political buy-in

Stakeholder Participants

Central Subarea

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Proposed Process for CRSG #3

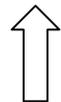
Key Issues (SWOT Matrix)

S	_____

W	_____

O	_____

T	_____

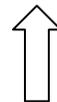


CRSG Review/Provide Input

Display the SWOT matrix within the Power Point and provide handouts for CRSG to review and comment

Draft Goals and Objectives

Goal 1	_____
	Objective _____
	Objective _____
	Objective _____
Goal 2	_____
	Objective _____
	Objective _____
	Objective _____
Goal 3	_____
	Objective _____
	Objective _____
	Objective _____

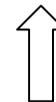


CRSG Provide Feedback

Share the drafted goals and objectives with the CRSG. If the CRSG does not agree with the draft goals and objectives they will have the opportunity to revise them when we move into developing action items.

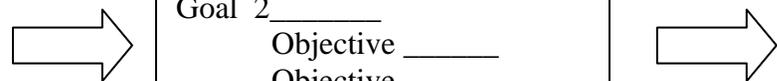
Action Items

Goal 1	_____
	Objective _____
	Objective _____
	Objective _____
Action Items:	
<i>To be filled in by CRSG</i>	



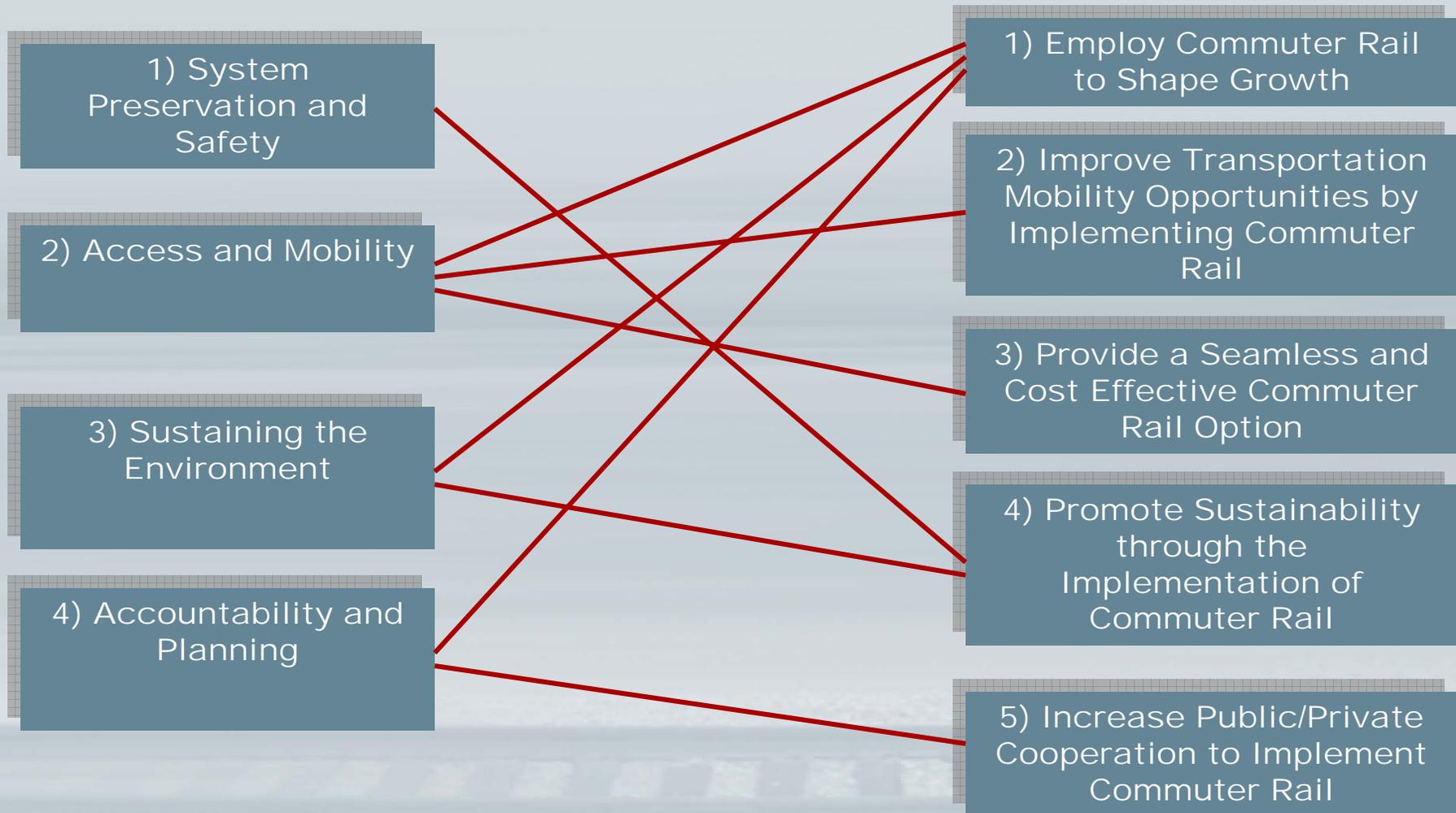
CRSG to Develop Action Items

Provide board size sheets of paper for each table. The sheets will include each goal and objective and space for the CRSG to provide input for the action plan.



RTP Goals

CRSG Goals





Maricopa Association of Governments Commuter Rail Strategic Plan

Technical Memorandum:
Summary of Project Definition

Final
August 2007



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INTRODUCTION

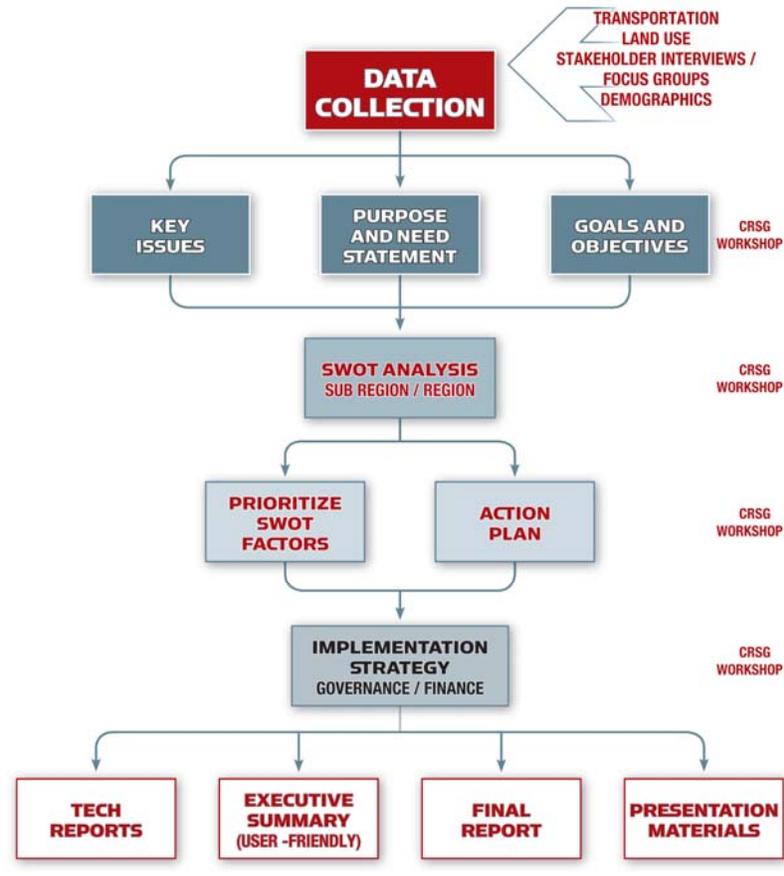
The purpose of this technical memorandum is to provide a summary of the project definition for the Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG) Commuter Rail Strategic Plan. The MAG Commuter Rail Strategic Plan will identify priorities and develop an implementation strategy and plan for commuter rail service in Maricopa County and northern Pinal County.

Continued urban growth in the outlying areas of Maricopa County and nearby Pinal County will dramatically increase traffic on the street and highway systems serving the region. Recent increases in fuel prices, which show no signs of returning to pre-2003 levels, have resulted in substantial increases in transit ridership. With high fuel prices and rapid growth, interest in providing alternatives to the automobile has also grown. The continued development of a balanced transportation system is key in sustaining the economic vitality and high quality of life in the region.

OVERVIEW OF PROCESS

The planning process for the MAG Commuter Rail Strategic Plan began in February 2007 and will be completed by January 2008.

Figure 1: Planning Process





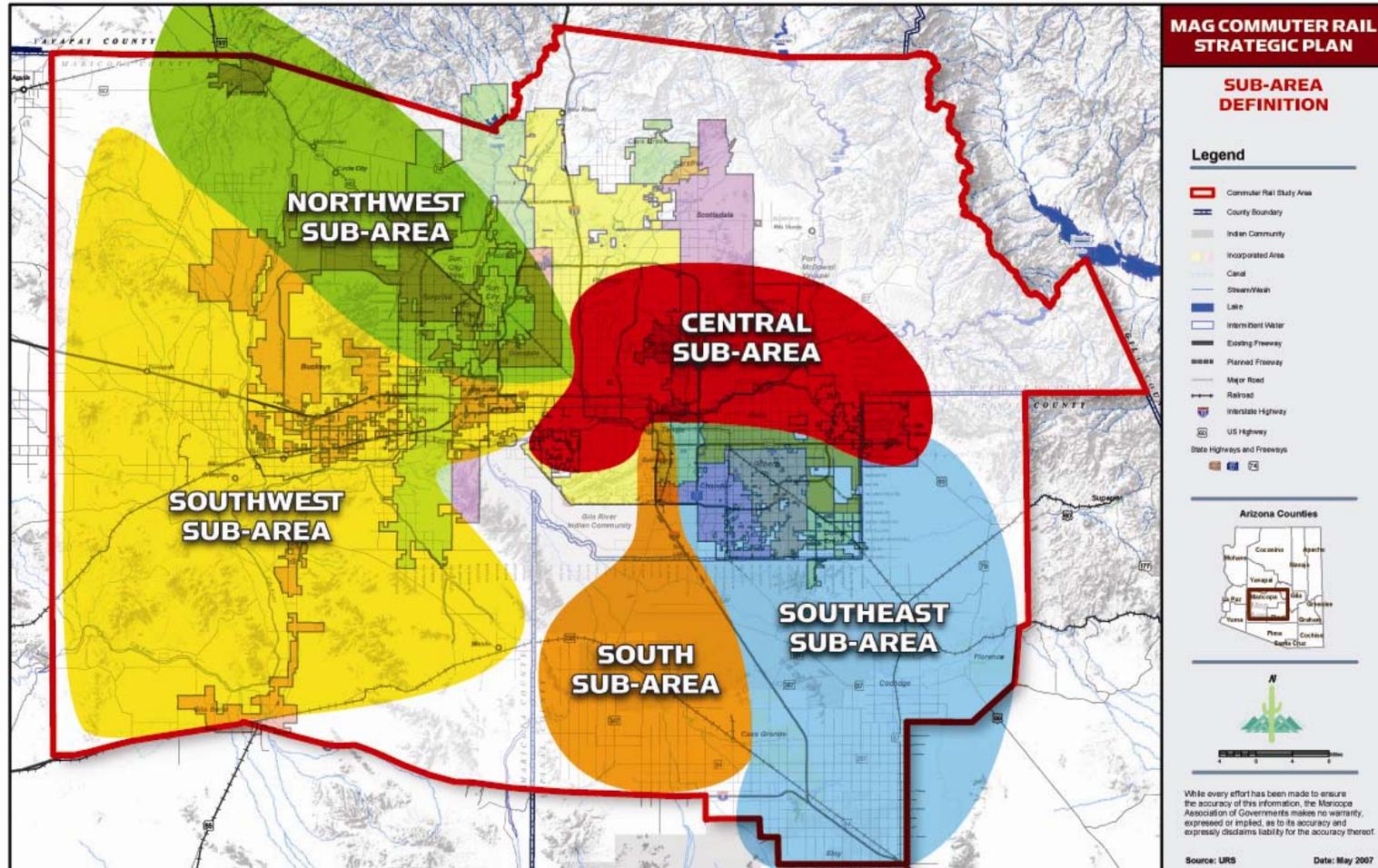
DATA COLLECTION- To initiate the process, a summary of previous work was conducted to summarize the findings relative to Commuter Rail. Studies and plans that were summarized include:

- The results of the **Proposition 400** vote that dedicated approximately one-third of half-cent sales tax at the regional level to mass transit.
- The current **MAG Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)** that reflects this significant increase in transportation funding, with expanded transit plans and programs. The Commuter Rail Strategic Plan will be a resource for possible adjustment and expansion of the RTP, as part of future updates.
- The **MAG 2003 High-Capacity Transit Study** findings that demonstrated sufficient travel need to justify additional light rail/bus rapid transit and commuter rail corridors. Note that this Commuter Rail Strategic Plan will update and expand the commuter rail portion of this Study.
- The **ADOT High Speed Rail Strategic Plan** that concluded that high speed rail was a possibility for the Phoenix-Tucson Corridor.
- The **ADOT State of Arizona Railroad Inventory Assessment** that reflects a baseline assessment of the entire states current rail infrastructure.

COMMUTER RAIL STAKEHOLDERS GROUP- A Commuter Rail Stakeholders Group (CRSG) was established, which is an expansion of the previous Commuter Rail Stakeholders Group. This council consists of public and private agencies and entities involved in past studies and those that should be involved in future.

The CRSG will meet a total of four times throughout the course of the project to review progress and comment on-and help shape major recommendations. A total of two Commuter Rail Stakeholder Group workshops have been held thus far, CRSG #1 and CRSG #2. Summaries of both meetings are provided in the subsequent paragraphs. The CRSG helped define smaller geographic study areas that will focus stakeholder involvement and create a sense of community building and linkages. These sub-areas include the Southwest, Southeast, Northwest, Central, and South corridors. Figure 2 below depicts the location of all five sub-areas.

Figure 2: Subarea Definition



COMMUTER RAIL STAKEHOLDERS GROUP WORKSHOP #1

The purposes of the CRSG workshop was to provide an overview on the Commuter Rail Strategic Plan Project, MAG plans for commuter rail, discussion of project issues and purpose statement, discussion of commuter rail operating requirements and coordination, and a description of the sub-area planning for SWOT analysis. There were approximately 55-60 stakeholders that attended the Commuter Rail Stakeholder Group (CRSG) workshop. The meeting was held at the MAG offices on May 1, 2007.

Key comments from stakeholders included:

- Freight traffic on the UP Railroad mainline between Tucson and California is at maximum capacity and it will only increase.
- Need to analyze air quality, noise pollution and grade separation
- The plan needs to relate to environmental benefits, such as reduction in pollutants, less usage of natural resources etc.
- The EPA designation of Maricopa County as a non-attainment area is a real problem
- Consider making the rail lines attractive for use by both freight railroads and commuter rail.
- Convenience is important for commuters.
- The cost of both capital improvements and commuter rail operations will be a challenge.
- Downtown Phoenix, ASU campus will provide multiple possibilities for mobility.
- Look into private and public funding.
- Look into unique funding sources such as value capture.
- Use an established cost benefit analysis to assess cost effectiveness.
- Commuter rail can help mold future centralized land use and therefore dispersed development can be positively guided by commuter rail.
- Look into purchasing existing rail road branch lines
- Investigate the alternatives of public vs. private ownership (railroad ownership) of the rail lines for commuter rail use.
- Determine a methodology to address possible reverse commutes
- Commuter rail has the potential for sustainable economic and social benefits.
- ADOT is the central point of contact for the Railroads.

COMMUTER RAIL STAKEHOLDERS GROUP WORKSHOP #2

The second CRSG workshop began to analyze all Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threat (SWOT) issues by subarea, allowing stakeholders from every part of the area to begin examining connectivity, land use, capacity requirements, and other commuter rail related issues from a corridor or localized stand point. There were over 130 participants at the second CRSG workshop. The workshop was held in Mesa at the Mesa Convention Center on June 28, 2007. The CRSG members were assigned a focus group dependent on the sub area definition. The focus groups representing the five subareas of Southwest, Southeast, Northwest, Central, and South corridors, analyzed SWOT for their respective subarea. These SWOT's were documented on flip charts and the participants were asked to prioritize their identified SWOT. The table below provides the top priorities SWOT's associated with commuter rail in Maricopa County and northern Pinal County and is separated by subarea. In addition, Appendix A includes the complete list of SWOT for all five subareas and the high priority SWOT's are identified in bold text. .

Table 1: HIGH PRIORITY STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES AND THREATS

SWOT	Subareas				
	Central Subarea	South Subarea	Southeast Subarea	Southwest Subarea	Northwest Subarea
Strengths					
<i>Regional Growth</i>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will create retail/industrial development opportunities for small towns/economic development • Relieve congestion on freeways • Reduces time tax – lost opportunity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce congestion • Growing population along the line 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduces congestion on roadways
<i>Multimodal Opportunities</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved mobility, multimodal connectivity • Expanded transit adds rush hour capacity • Travel options 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construction mitigation, build prior to I-10 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reliability in travel time connectivity • Promotes regional airport alternatives (WGA) • Connecting Pinal County to Maricopa County 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connectivity of valley, regions, light rail and other transit 	
<i>Existing Land and ROW</i>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Several existing rail corridors • Ahead of development curve – available land 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existing track (ROW) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rail exists/economic linkages
<i>Cost and Affordability</i>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alternative form of transportation as gas prices increase 		
<i>Sustainability</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mitigates pollution and saves energy (fuel) • Multi-nodal community is suited to commuter rail across valley • Activity into downtown area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I-10 24-lane mitigation option 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Air quality improvement • Creates greater sustainability for region • Promotes nodal development: business, sports, resorts, activities; connects high density areas • Cost savings (economic, environmental, etc) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental friendly • Long-term transportation solution 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase quality of life – reduction in commute • Reduces pollution
<i>Public and Private Cooperation</i>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growing community support 		

SWOT	Subareas				
	Central Subarea	South Subarea	Southeast Subarea	Southwest Subarea	Northwest Subarea
Weaknesses					
<i>Regional Growth</i>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Polycentric employment centers • Speed of development - vanishing opportunities • Security screening/concerns - terrorists • Density - will Arizona densities sustain mass transit? 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initial ridership
<i>Existing Land and ROW</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Railroads indicate limited additional capacity of existing infrastructure 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Congestion on the rail lines • Need to acquire right-of-way through developed areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of signalization along line - cost and safety 	
<i>Cost</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No defined funding source yet 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Costs- no funding source • Competition for available funds by many areas of transportation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Money 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New funding source needed • Infrastructure costs
<i>Public/ Private Cooperation</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Willingness to fund and operate • No leverage or cooperation with railroads 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buy-in/cooperation by UPRR 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of multi-jurisdiction planning • Public support - some want to see benefit • Partnering with existing railroads very difficult • Legislative support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Political resistance • Competition with populous areas • Communication between railroad, region and state • Competing transportation project 	

SWOT	Subareas				
	Central Subarea	South Subarea	Southeast Subarea	Southwest Subarea	Northwest Subarea
Opportunities					
<i>Regional Growth</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intensifies economic and social activity at nodes Reduce congestion 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Economic development corridor Re-development of inner cities (i.e., Phoenix, Tempe, Mesa) Stimulate growth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New employment centers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Economic development Business investments Higher density opportunities Relocating district center to northwest valley creates redevelopment opportunities for Phoenix, Glendale, Surprise, etc Tourism
<i>Multimodal Opportunities</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Becomes spine and improves effectiveness of all connecting transit systems Ability to use commercial rail as a construction alternative (I-10 widening) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Solving regional mobility/connective challenges 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Connectivity-education, air/sea/rail – regions Multi-modal planning corridor 		
<i>Existing Land and ROW</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Large scale joint development opportunity 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Combined corridors Use of PPP with existing corridors, right-of-ways, and large landholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clean slate to create a transit corridor (freight/commuter) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ability to plan as integrated corridors
<i>Cost</i>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PM-10 preservation of funding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PM-10 preservation of funding 	
<i>Sustainability</i>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental benefit by utilizing existing freight 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transit oriented development Competitive advantage over other western states Creative transit planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creative transit planning 	
<i>Public/ Private Cooperation</i>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional planning for regional success (Sun corridor partnership) Arizona Corporation Commission/regional/state agencies to partner (ADOT, MAG, etc) opportunity to change people's paradigms 		

SWOT	Subareas				
	Central Subarea	South Subarea	Southeast Subarea	Southwest Subarea	Northwest Subarea
Threats					
<i>Regional Growth</i>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development incentives from other states and regions 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Terrorist threat
<i>Existing Land and RR ROW</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued increases in freight traffic 				
<i>Cost</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competition for limited federal funds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost of fare may discourage ridership • Ongoing maintenance costs/ operations • Lack of subsidy • No funding source identified 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Federal transportation money goes away in 2009 • Sustainable Funding
<i>Sustainability</i>				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainability 	
<i>Public/ Private Cooperation</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of political will, funding commitment, inter-regional cooperation • Ineffective long-range planning • Legislative may prevent, delay, or raise price 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public perception/misperception • Legislative implementation/regional competition 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Politics • Regional competition • User apathy • Old thinking on the part of rail companies; citizens and elected positions • Railroads (freight) • Comprehensive plan revisions • Agency support and planning • Anti-tax communities • NIMBY opposition • Organized opposition • Tribal nation "Buy-in/support" • Competing stakeholders groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritizations vs. Regions (system) • Political support • Public perception (Don't take money away from freeway mentality) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Political buy-in



Commuter Rail Stakeholder Group Observations

There were several key issues identified in CRSG #1 and they were further developed in CRSG #2. These key issues include:

- Continued regional growth of population and employment throughout the metropolitan area.
- Availability of existing railroad alignments in the primary travel corridors
- Increase in the cost of fuel and travel.
- Promote sustainability by reducing air pollutants and usage of natural resources.
- Promote cooperation between public and private entities.

In addition, critical challenges were also identified and included:

- Possible conflicts with current and planned freight railroad operations.
- Rapid development of land uses foreclosing opportunities for alignments and stations.
- Physical and geographic constraints limit locations for new alignments.
- Coordination with jurisdictional interests and policies.
- Availability and competition for regional, state and federal funding and resources.
- Cost of building and operating a commuter rail system.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES:

Based on the input received from the first two CRSG workshops, proposed goals and objectives were drafted for the MAG Commuter Rail Strategic Plan and include:

Goal 1: Employ Commuter Rail to Shape Regional Growth

- Objective 1: Create multi-nodal development
- Objective 2: Stimulate economic development
- Objective 3: Spur development in Urban Centers

Goal 2: Improve Transportation Mobility Opportunities by Implementing Commuter Rail

- Objective 1: Provide multimodal travel options
- Objective 2: Minimize future vehicular congestion
- Objective 3: Serve regional trips, as well as trips between and within major activity centers
- Objective 4: Maintain or improve travel times within existing and planned activity centers

Goal 3: Provide a Seamless and Cost Effective Commuter Rail Option

- Objective 1: Utilize Existing Land and Railroad ROW
- Objective 2: Utilize available funding sources
- Objective 3: Minimize capital and operating costs
- Objective 4: Plan integrated corridors

Goal 4: Promote Sustainability through the Implementation of Commuter Rail

- Objective 1: Maintain or improve regional air quality
- Objective 2: Develop transportation projects that help focus developments near activity centers.
- Objective 3: Provide a long-term transportation solution

Goal 5: Increase Public/Private Cooperation to Implement Commuter Rail



- Objective 1: Create public/private partnerships
- Objective 2: Educate or inform the public
- Objective 3: Provide funding options
- Objective 4: Develop local and regional support for commuter rail

Two additional CRSG workshops will be held, CRSG #3 and CRSG #4. The third workshop will re-examine the SWOT factors identified at the second CRSG workshop with the aim to prioritize the key issues and translate the identified SWOT into an action plan, with specific goals and objectives. The final CRSG workshop will focus on developing an implementation strategy that can be translated into an action plan. The workshop participants will come to consensus on the issues and general options for Administration, Governance, and Funding within the framework of the Concept System Plan.

STRATEGIC PLAN DEVELOPMENT- The results from all four CRSG workshops will be synthesized, as well as the working papers prepared throughout the process into a comprehensive plan document. These products will consist of:

- Final Commuter Rail Strategic Plan Document
- Commuter Rail Plan Executive Summary
- CD of all working papers
- Presentation to MAG Council for adoption



APPENDIX A

The bullets below provide a list of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) associated with commuter rail in Maricopa County and northern Pinal County. These opportunities and constraints were identified by the Commuter Rail Stakeholders Group (CRSG) at the second CRSG meeting held on June 28th. The CRSG comments are organized by sub-area and the high priority comments are identified in bolded text. Over 130 people were in attendance at the second CRSG meeting.

Strengths

Central Subarea

Facilitator: Maria Hyatt

- Primary employment base
- Strong economy
- Political interest and community interest
- **Improved mobility, multimodal connectivity**
- Reduced pollution
- Corridor activity centers (Williams gateway, Scotts. Airpark Capitol Complex, sports, arts)
- Sky Harbor accessibility (reduction in package needs)
- Land available for rail corridors
- Currently ahead of the need
- Creates economic opportunities
- Population growth creates strong need and alternatives discussion
- **Mitigates pollution and saves energy (fuel)**
- Promotes tourism
- Easy 'designated driver'
- I-10 East/West are effective corridors
- Identify north corridor for existing need
- Freeways can't keep up with growth
- Safer than autos

Facilitator: Brian Kearney

- As population grows to 4 million – need for rail grows – we will have sufficient density
- Geographic size – so large that we need alternatives beyond light rail for longer distances
- Environment – quality of life – can promote better urban design
- There is some existing infrastructure
- Economic benefits – stations have benefits like highway interchanges?
- More cost effective than highway expansion – better social benefits
- **Expanded transit adds rush hour capacity**
- Commuter rail lines have priority of right-of-way at grade crossings
- Creates a government authority to promote improvement of metro freight and passenger rail facilities and infrastructure – creates a channel through which to accomplish multiplier impact
- Railroads will respond to available money flow
- **Multi-nodal community is suited to commuter rail across valley**
- Concentrates development at nodal points
- Increases range of travel for tourists – more places, more attractive
- Helps create regional identity
- Major investment defines future transportation systems and creates economic development
- Reduce autos per family requirement

Facilitator: Peggy Rubach

- **Activity into downtown area**
- **Travel options**
- Less stress (traveling)
- More time for individuals
- Economic opportunities/expanded labor force to draw from
- Promotes community
- Travel capacity during peak hours
- Connect cities/promote regionalism
- Promotes tourism
- Reduce traffic accidents – safety
- Utilization of existing assets (railroad tracks)
- Efficient implementation

South Subarea

Facilitator: Charlea Huellmantel

- Speed, efficiency, safety, maintenance
- Congestion relief
- Environmental
- **I-10 24-lane mitigation option**
- **Construction mitigation, build prior to I-10**
- NEPA requirements for mitigation
- Reduce stress, fatigue for driver
- Convenient alternative to driving
- Travel safety, reduction in auto accidents
- Technology safe, limited interfaces with autos
- Corridor strengths – Tempe Kyrene
- I-10 capacity limited to handle future growth
- Residential connections – connect to improvement centers
- Make population growth in south
- Past line (ROW) exists today
- Native American (Gila) opportunities
- Regional cooperation
- Station opportunity at casino/connection to existing transit
- Chandler Branch
- Addresses future growth
- Improved productivity (personal)
- Can utilize travel time (time tax)
- Social benefit

Southeast Subarea

Facilitator: Craig Ringer

- **Several existing rail corridors**
- **Ahead of development curve – available land**
- Lots of people work in the Central Valley
- Corridor studies underway (freeway and electrical)
- Conceptual support for rail – like the idea
- Already impacted by freight rail traffic
- Demographic changes – aging population
- The higher the gas prices, the better rail looks



- Health benefits of reduced pollution. Breathing is easier in a rail car

Facilitator: Claudia Walters

- Strong immigration of individuals
- Job center corridors
- Relieves highway system
- **Air quality improvement**
- Legislative interest
- **Creates greater sustainability for region**
- Cost effective once in place
- Economic development
- Connecting two areas – Phoenix to Tucson
- Connects urban activities
- Helps clustering of business in areas
- Helps spread out residential
- Multi-modal
- Commuter rail removes stigma of bus rapid transit
- Critical infrastructure addition
- Effective in Southeast Valley
- Commuter rail to Tempe to Apache Junction
- West Valley important as well
- Freeway corridors and along existing tracks
- Productivity increases
- Reduction of “timetax”
- Grade separations for faster ease of congestion
- Great nodes of development

Facilitator: Mike Normand

- Moving large groups of people
- Bedroom communities (i.e. Johnson Ranch) moving those people to employment areas
- Access for Gilbert residents on existing rail corridor
- Right service to provide “longer distance” service
- Corridor as a potential route for utilities (SRP)/common resources (all utilities – gas, water, phone)
- Relieve freeway congestion
- Alternate choice for transportation
- Directed toward employment centers
- Relieves parking
- Air quality/energy issues putting pressure on our society to look for solutions
- Legislative interest is much higher now
- **Will create retail/industrial development opportunities for small towns/economic development**
- Successful models to follow in west
- No more “room” or “space” left (i.e. ground spare)
- Many existing rail corridors available
- Small town growth will be encouraged
- **Growing community support**

Facilitator: Maria Deeb

- **Manage traffic – less car travel**
- **Relieve congestion on freeways**
- **Less pollution**
- Other travel options



- Save time – can do other activities: email, read, etc.
- Save money
- Less road rage
- Better access to employment – competitive advantage for area
- Provides link to various means of transportation
- Future growth areas – early planning for station locations
- **Alternative form of transportation as gas prices increase**
- Population and density to manage commuter rail
- Creates transportation to affordable housing

Facilitator: Mack Lake

- Relieve congestion on alternative modes of transportation
- Speed
- Less congestion at destinations
- **Reliability in travel time connectivity**
- **Reduces time tax – lost opportunity**
- **Promotes regional airport alternatives (WGA)**
- **Promotes nodal development: business, sports, resorts, activities; connects high density areas**
- Air quality benefits
- Lower business costs
- Lowers individual travel costs
- Lessens investment in other forms of transportation

Facilitator: Dan Shreeve

- **Minimizing roadway congestion**
- Connecting economic centers
- Connecting education centers
- **Connecting Pinal County to Maricopa County**
- Potentially less environmental impacts
- Minimizing conflict with “GRIC”
- Increase property value (potentially)
- Could facilitate growth
- Potentially less dependent on fossil fuels
- Connectivity with future super-station vistas

Facilitator: Vic Linoff

- **Reducing congestion**
- Existing Infrastructure in southeast
- Defined geographic business areas
- Less freeways = less ROW purchase
- Access to regional airpark/Employment centers
- Moving tourist traffic
- Connecting to other transit needs
- **Cost savings (economic, environmental, etc)**
- Growing community support
- Mutual benefits

Southwest Subarea

Facilitator: Marie Lopez Rogers

- Reduce congestion



- Existing infrastructure in Southeast
- Is there enough ROW?
- Less pollutants, environmental impacts
- Define geographic business areas
- Less freeways = less ROW purchase
- Access to regional airport
- Moving tourist traffic
- Connectivity to other transit needs
- Land use planning connectivity
- Backbone
- **Existing track (ROW)**
- Ability to reduce traffic on I-10 to Palo Verde
- **Reduce congestion**
- Enhance employment centers
- Airports

Facilitator: Mario Sandamando

- **Environmental friendly**
- Removes strain on existing infrastructure
- Reduce congestion on freeways/arterials
- Improves public safety/quality of life
- Provides more options for commuters
- **Long-term transportation solution**
- Promotes economic development/commerce
- Tourism
- Computer rail is a regional partnership
- Compliments existing transit plans

Facilitator: Kathy Rice

- Cliff Elkin's experience
- Demographics of existing freight usage is compatible to commuter rail
- Will connect old and new developed areas
- Raw land along the line
- Planned grade separation railroad crossings on Grand
- **Growing population along the line**
- Gas prices
- Present road congestion
- Another way in and out – very limited currently
- Favorable community climate
- BNSF owns 900 acres along line – Ops center, rail served business
- Will create competitive education opportunities
- Volume on current line is light
- Highway safety – less freight, less congestion on freeways
- Qualifies for Federal Small Starts Program
- Public yearning for public transportation – transplants
- Modernize Arizona's image --> Welcome to the 21st Century
- **Connectivity of valley, regions, light rail and other transit**
- Grand Avenue land use planning
- Connects workforce to jobs
- Air quality will improve
- Congressional leaders well placed for federal support money



- Create transportation centers
- Westmarc – leverage
- Connectivity to national system – Amtrak

Northwest Subarea

Facilitator: Scott Chesney

- **Rail exists/economic linkages**
- Moving large amounts of people
- Creation of ED centers
- Transit-oriented development
- Linking economic nodes
- Improve air quality
- Serving underserved populations
- Reduce need for highway construction
- Preserve the desert
- Reduce heat island
- Streets/highways are safer
- Creates more spend-able income
- Higher level of service on existing roadways
- Increase home values in the corridor
- Overall reduction in gasoline consumption – possibility for alternate diesel fuel
- Access to airport
- Interconnectivity
- **Increase quality of life – reduction in commute**

Facilitator: Carl Swenson

- Enhances mobility
- More economical
- **Reduces pollution**
- Provides transportation choices
- **Reduces congestion on roadways**
- Improves travel safety
- Serves transit dependent community
- Ties communities together
- Increases densities along transit corridors
- Conserves resources
- Reduces commute times
- Opportunities for social interactions
- Important part of transportation and transit mix
- Can use existing corridors

Notes provided by attendee:

- Rail lines and ROW in place.
- Signal Pre-emption in place
- In many locations, grade separations are in place (especially Grand Avenue)
- Both lines (UP and BNSF) serve CBD destinations
- Other western states are doing major rail projects (UT, NM)
- Several major segments parallel regional highways and may reduce some peak hour congestion on:
 - I-10
 - US 60 Grand Avenue



- SR 101 Agua Fria Freeway
- SR 303L Estrella Freeway
- US 60 Superstition Freeway
- SR 202L San Tan Freeway
- This can directly connect the West Valley with ASU and ASU East.
- Rail line is adjacent to Sky Harbor Airport
- Extension of regional service to Tucson and Pinal County high growth areas is a possibility.
- Service can help revitalize and redevelop declining areas along older rail yards.
- Major rail segments are in areas underserved by regional bus system.

Weaknesses

Central Subarea

Facilitator: Maria Hyatt

- Can't go everywhere; won't serve entire valley
- Haven't really proven it's a solution
- **Willingness to fund and operate**
- Must be a regional solution with regional funding
- "NIMBY" – Historical problem (political will → land use)
- Grade crossing safety issues
- Train noise (PR issue)
- Lack of legislative support – must be long-term
- Political patience
- Valley growing faster than we can plan
- Constitutional limits on state trust land
- Lack of multiregional cooperation
- Take land off the tax roles
- **No leverage or cooperation with railroads**
- Freight corridors over capacity
- More community support than political? No high-profile champions
- No clear support from governor
- Perceived lack of interest from ADOT
- Doesn't provide greatest benefit to Central Subarea
- In slow economic times, transportation subsidy availability in question; can't really privatize
- Lack of private infrastructure opportunities

Facilitator: Brian Kearney

- **Railroads indicate limited additional capacity of existing infrastructure**
- Land use patterns may not fit perfectly
- Continued growth making more difficult to place stations
- Will people use it?
- Line locations and station locations – present uncertainty and possible sustainability for communities not directly served
- Limited number of existing rail corridors and cost to improve existing
- Possible economic impact of displacement when improved
- Environmental justice concerns may complicate issue
- User acceptance unknown
- Political acceptance unknown
- Environmental justice concerns may complicate issue
- Impact on traffic safety



- Requirement to add more grade separations
- Cost to build and operate – requires public subsidy
- **No defined funding source yet**
- May require lengthy negotiations with freight railroads

Facilitator: Peggy Rubach

- Who would run operation?
- **Where is money coming from?**
- Public support
- Who assumes liability
- Limited right-of-way
- **Railroad organizations not interested**
- Residents opposition to tracks near homes
- Current location of tracks
- Developing connectivity
- Crossings at grade
- Phasing of construction
- Potential perception problem
- Encourages sprawl
- Cost effective solution to current lack of infrastructure (transportation)
- Constructability
- Speed limitations/restrictions
- Cooperation of other agencies
- Use of existing rail that is at full capacity (freight)

South Subarea

Facilitator: Charles Huellmantel

- **Buy-in/cooperation by UPRR**
- Train frequency
- **Cost**
- ROW availability
- Encourages urban sprawl
- Noise/vibration/traffic impacts

Southeast Subarea

Facilitator: Craig Ringer

- Densities too low to support rail
- Need for subsidies
- **Polycentric employment centers**
- “Rugged Individualism”, I love my truck!
- To and from station logistics
- Difficulty of partnering with existing rail companies
- Availability/cost for additional ROW/stations
- **Speed of development. Vanishing opportunities**
- Lack of comprehensive multi-modal planning
- Do we have employers who will support
- Funding!!!

Facilitator: Claudia Walters



- Think it will solve all problems
- Overselling
- **Costs!! – no funding source**
- Access to right-of-way
- Pulls money
- Encourage sprawl
- Divide communities
- Creates winners/losers – those you have it/don't have it
- Divided community support
- Enough community support
- Legislative support
- May need to see before believing
- Ability to get rail/PPL to employment centers
- **Lack of multi-jurisdiction planning**
- No existing funding source
- Bringing Phoenix to Tucson and Florence/Pinal County to same table

Facilitator: Mike Normand

- Availability of space, (i.e. park-n-ride stations in congested areas)
- Must be convenient
- Mis-match between modes of transit
- Does not go to heart of congestion
- **Congestion on the rail lines**
- Convert/combine restaurants to railroad stations
- Integrating many different interests/cities/towns to agree
- Government of a regional rail
- No one organization championing the cause
- **Competition for available funds by many areas of transportation**
- What is the fastest way to solve the congestion we have now?
- Lack of planned growth (developers are in control)
- No process to follow
- Upgrading infrastructure to support high-speed commuter rail
- Energy needed for commuter rail
- EPA funding threatened
- Right-of-way issues
- Buy-in from rail companies

Facilitator: Maria Deeb

- Cost – who is going to pay? Where will money come from?
- Set alignments – not exactly natural
- Only stops 2-4 miles
- ROW and new alignment cost and time
- Business impact
- Mechanical failures – System shutdown – DELAYS
- **Security screening/concerns – terrorists**
- Automobile delays/congestion
- Noise distractions
- Cost/benefit compared to other modes of transportation
- **Public support – some want to see benefit**
- Negative image of public transportation
- Negative issues of light rail



- Agency Coordination

Facilitator: Mack Lake

- **Need to acquire right-of-way through developed areas**
- **Railroad crossings very expensive**
- **Partnering with existing railroads very difficult**
- **Railroad construction is very expensive**
- Noisy
- Headway times, reliability of schedules
- **Inflexibility**
- Increased transportation planning
- Perceptions re: personal safety – terrorism, gangs, etc
- Number of passengers – economic viability
- Parochialism
- Time from idea to opening day

Facilitator: Dan Shreeve

- **Unknown funding**
- Uncertainty of availability with “right-of-way” through tribal lands
- Uncertainty of use of railroad “right-of-way”
- Are existing ROW located where they are needed
- Availability or use of existing railroad lines
- Environmental impact
- Uncertainty of ridership – “Can it support itself?”
- Spread out economic base – “Difficult to connect”
- Grade crossings
- Who manages? – state, county, new?
- **Density – will Arizona densities sustain mass transit?**
- People love their cars – will they use it?
- Public subsidies?

Facilitator: Vic Linoff

- Existing rail does not meet passenger standards
- ROW issues
- Safety issues
- Density issues
- NIMBY
- **Who is going to pay?**
- **Legislative support**
- Leadership

Southwest Subarea

Facilitator: Marie Lopez Rogers

- Existing rail may not be up to passenger standards
- Potential for ROW issues
- Safety issues
- Density issues
- NIMBY
- Who is going to pay?
- Legislative support?



- Leadership
- Sprawl
- Low baseline population
- **Political resistance**
- LOS issues
- **Competition with populous areas**
- Traffic congesting at crossings

Facilitator Mario Sandamando

- **Money**
 - None identified
 - Competition for Federal money
 - Cost-effectiveness
 - Total costs = capital vs. operations
 - Who pays?
- Unknowns
 - Will people use it?
 - Must change behavior and public perception
- Interconnectivity infrastructure is not in place
- **Communication between railroad, region and state**
- Disruptions
 - Local businesses
 - Homes
 - Freeway/arterial traffic
 - Freight
- Promotes sprawl
- New legislation needed
- Public noise
- Land
 - ROW, general plan compatibility

No commuter rail master plan in municipalities

Facilitator: Kathy Rice

- Funding uncertainty
- Arizona love our cars – mindset shift necessary
- Noise concerns
- Public perception
- **Competing transportation project**
- **Lack of signalization along line – cost and safety**
- Homeland security issues
- BNSF has full veto authority over line use
- Operations uncertainties – who owns and operates what?
- Timing – cannot build soon enough
- Second track needed
- ROW availability unknown along entire line
- Emergency vehicles delayed?
- Perceived value for/to northwest valley
- Competing communities for money, implementation
- Limited Vision → Arizona only
- Amtrak failures → perception
- How do I get my stuff there? Connected transit-wise on the other end?



- Safety issues – derailments
- Lack of community demand/support

Northwest Subarea

Facilitator: Scott Chesney

- Rail line may currently be at capacity
- Potential for increased crossing conflicts
- Increased noise to adjacent residents
- Need to construct stations and other facilities
- **New funding source needed**
- Lack of Board support
- Regional system gaps
- Lack of education
- Lack of operational resources
- More delays to vehicular traffic at crossings
- Feeder bus service may be lacking
- Undetermined potential for ridership

Facilitator: Carl Swenson

- **Initial ridership**
- Community acceptance
- Parking at stations
- Traffic congestion at grade crossings
- **Infrastructure costs**
- Right-of-way acquisition
- Equipment cost
- Noise Pollution
- Scheduling
- Added vehicular delay at at-grade crossings
- Funding
- Limited stations
- Partnership challenges with railroad companies

Notes provided by attendee:

- Resurgence of rail freight demand is competing for track time.
- Probably will require double tracking to support demand in the corridors.
- Cost of stations, crossing upgrades and other improvements will be high.
- No rail corridors exist in the Northeast Valley, leaving a system “gap” and the potential that residents of that area may not support funding for a system which will not directly benefit them.
- Currently known regional funding is committed through 2025.
- Regional bus system is inadequate to feed the rail stations in suburban locations.
- High number of at-grade crossings system wide. *

* Number of at-grade public crossings:

Buckeye to Phoenix (southwest corridor)	81
Phoenix to Wickenburg (northwest corridor)	132
Phoenix to Picacho (southeast and Pinal Co. corridor)	125



Picacho to Tucson Corridor
Total Phoenix to Tucson

31
156

Opportunities

Central Subarea

Facilitator: Maria Hyatt

- **Ability to use commercial rail as a construction alternative (I-10 widening)**
- Connectivity to central area bus and rail
- Connects people to affordable homes and jobs
- Economic development around stations/transit-oriented development
- Connects to Sky Harbor and Williams Gateway
- Positive environmental impacts
- Connections allow growth to arts/culture visitors
- Enhance role as "destination"
- **Large scale joint development opportunity**
- Congestion mitigation
- Justifies additional circulators
- Reuse/redevelop Union Station
- Innovative funding mechanisms
- We have opportunity to plan ahead
- Enhance viability of opportunity corridor
- Urban revitalization
- Can create a truly integrated regional system (ADOT/MAG/RPTA, etc)
- Aids in business locates (ED)
- Create a "big city" image

Facilitator: Brian Kearney

- **Intensifies economic and social activity at nodes**
- Wealth generating for served communities
- Improves Valley's competitive position for national and international position
- **Becomes spine and improves effectiveness of all connecting transit systems**
- Can serve corridors BRT cannot
- Increased opportunities to attract workers from whole region and for employees to have more work options
- Can increase population and economic density
- Opportunity for public-private partnership at station locations
- Better land use
- Improves urban design and pedestrian access – improved personal health
- Opportunity for increased social interaction

Facilitator: Peggy Rubach

- **Connectivity**
- **Reduce congestion**
- Use new leg to bring railroads on board (AP 220?)
- Develop/increase infill projects and stationeries
- Create partnership with freight

South Subarea

Facilitator: Charles Huellmantel



- Low utilization of existing freight
- Local state/federal political support
- Metro area
- Local expertise on commuter rail
- Urban lifestyle in demand
- Multi-nodal culture expansion
- Environmental mindset
- Job creation/economic impacts of system development
- Creation of destinations
- Transit oriented development
- Opportunity for connections in/out of Maricopa in extreme conditions
- Maricopa support of alternatives
- Track option for freight capacity
- Future connection SE/Tucson
- Encourage economic development
- Undeveloped land offers no business/residential impact/displacement
- Opportunity
- **Solving regional mobility/connective challenges**
- **Environmental benefit by utilizing existing freight**

Southeast Subarea

Facilitator: Craig Ringer

- **Economic development corridor**
- Improve air quality
- Educating public as to rail option
- **Combined corridors**
- Tourism opportunities
- Improved traffic flows
- Work with Native American opportunities
- Evacuation civil defense option

Facilitator: Claudia Walters

- Rail and highways together as state-wide tax
- Multi-modal capacity – all
- Multi-jurisdiction
- Get rid of “great state of Maricopa” concept and make “great State of Arizona”
- Link education corridors (universities)
- Greater group lobbying for funds (federal)
- Work on air quality issues as a state
- Enhance tourism
- Bring economic development and Jobs and housing to not fully developed areas along corridor
- Encourage infill
- Program/better planned growth
- Globally competitive
- Increase/enhance freight rail
- Improve cargo/freight rail/air transportation
- Connection for Sky Harbor to Williams Gateway
- Connect to port
- Allow for greater security



- PPP financing
- Use other financing options
- Incentive for business to encourage employers
- **Connectivity!! Education, transportation air/sea/rail – regions**
- **Regional planning for regional success (Sun corridor partnership)**

Facilitator: Mike Normand

- Locating in new planned corridors
- Any rail in corridors
- A plan developed for the open spaces we do have
- Establish corridor even if construction is decades away (line Santan freeway)
- Involve Indian communities and developers
- Improve grade separations
- Railroad crossing noise improvements especially in residential areas
- Use air space
- **Arizona Corporation Commission/regional/state agencies to partner up (ADOT, MAG, etc)**
- So many corridors available
- Public support through legislative officials
- Economic development groups to learn/get up to speed
- Business community tie in
- **Multi-modal planning corridor**

Facilitator: Maria Deeb

- **Transit oriented development**
- **Re-development of inner cities (i.e., Phoenix, Tempe, Mesa)**
- Bring life back into distressed areas (i.e., Phoenix, Tempe, Mesa)
- **Link college campuses, airports (future passenger service) – connectivity**
- Expansion of medical centers
- Minimize pollution
- Increase potential for Williams Gateway area
- New technology – implement other commuter rail systems
- To change transportation negative image
- Utilize existing infrastructure
- Apply for federal grants/state revenue
- Added mode of evacuation in event of an emergency
- Connectivity between sub-regions
- More options
- Less stress for riders
- Eliminate future planned freeway corridors

Facilitator: Mack Lake

- Existing corridors and right-of-ways
- Start with existing rail, irrigation, transportation, drainage corridors
- Partner with state land trust and other large landholders; re: corridors and alignments
- **Public and private interests – opportunity to change people's paradigms**
- Area can-do attitude – University development, etc
- **Use of PPP with existing corridors, right-of-ways, and large landholders**
- Increase trade and business growth
- Consider using “transit” district taxes to retire transit investment
- Create high tech – WIFI, etc
- Effective use of commute time

- Safety – text message, grooming etc, -- less accidents
- Cluster development and preserve open space

Facilitator: Dan Shreeve

- Plan early
- **Stimulate growth**
- Improving connectivity to Williams Gateway Airport
- Connectivity to the “light rail”
- Linking ASU’s campus to Gateway
- **Competitive advantage over other western states**
- Opportunities for public and private ventures

Facilitator: Vic Linoff

- Rail to communities for planned growth
- Rail partnerships (Railroad companies, communities)
- Increased quality of life = economic
- Improved safety
- Utility corridors
- **Public/private Opportunities (business)**
- Alternate revenue for railroad

Southwest Subarea

Facilitator: Marie Lopez Rogers

- Get rail in early to design communities around rail
- Rail partnership (business, government, planning agency)
- Quality of life = economic competitiveness
- Improved safety
- Utility corridors
- Public/private partnership
- Alternate revenue opportunity for freight rail companies
- **Clean slate to create a transit corridor (freight/commute)**
- Extend study to Palo Verde area
- Yuma Port of Entry
- **PM-10 preservation of funding**
- Economic development
- Promote sustainability

Facilitator: Mario Sandamando

- Economic development
 - New events
 - **New employment centers**
 - Improve mobility = global competitor
- Public/private partnerships
- **Creative transit planning**
 - Incorporate rail into existing plans
 - Combine park and rides with commuter rail stations
 - Preserve historical, cultural, and environmental areas
- Revitalize neighborhoods
- Become designated federal transportation recipient



- Improve maintenance system/technology
- Educate public on alternative modes

Facilitator: Kathy Rice

- **Relocating district center to northwest valley creates redevelopment opportunities for Phoenix, Gila, Surprise, etc**
- **Tourism**
- Opportunity to build transit-oriented communities
- Access to educational institutions
- Classes on the cars
- BNSF is passenger-friendly; good on time performance
- Free trade zones, foreign trade zones
- Development likely to occur around stations
- Government is supportive of passenger rail
- Quality of life as valley, region, state grows
- Puts pressure on completion of other transportation projects
- Cleaner air
- Connectivity to arts, recreation, airport (Sky Harbor)
- Opportunity to develop something new – technology
- Learning from the best in world to implement best practices, technologies, marketing, etc.
- Access for elderly, disabled, youth, other non-drivers
- Urban planning versus suburban planning opportunities
- Regional planning opportunities
- Comprehensive transportation system for the state
- Military industry – connectivity among state bases, federal government, national defense tie-in
 - Use to make more bases more viable

Northwest Subarea

Facilitator: Scott Chesney

- **Ability to plan as integrated corridors**
- Need for new classification yards (may create trade opportunities)
- Use of existing rail yards for redevelopment
- Homeland security
- Rail oriented tourism excursion rail
- **Economic development**
- New employment hubs
- Educational opportunities with new elected officials
- Provides connectivity; linking cultural and recreational activities
- Reverse commute to new employment centers
- Help to create sustainability using transit oriented development; linking future and existing education campuses
- Involvement of business community; public/private partners

Facilitator: Carl Swenson

- **Business investments**
- Transit-oriented development
- Inter-governmental cooperation
- Urban renewal
- Inter-governmental opportunities
- **Higher density opportunities**
- Federal and State funding



- Inter-modal connectivity
- Improved land use planning
- Improved air quality
- Source of emergency evacuation
- Increased work productivity
- Technology opportunities for passengers
- Increased pedestrian opportunities

Notes provided by attendee:

- Railroads need land for new Classification Yards in Surprise, Tonopah, and Eloy. ASLD properties at those locations could be part of a negotiation.
- Development of shared use agreements in adjacent states (NM, UT) may help break the ice.
- Railroads need ACC approval for new spur lines to serve industrial clients in El Mirage and other communities
- Passengers may transfer to LRT system in the urban core, providing needed rider-ship to justify expansion of that system.



Threats

Central Subarea

Facilitator: Maria Hyatt

- **Lack of political will, funding commitment, inter-regional cooperation**
- Railroads' increase in freight business
- Cost of building new corridors/rising R/W costs
- Potential economic slowdown
- **Ineffective long-range planning**
- **Delay = escalating costs and more lost opportunities**
- Encourages sprawl

Facilitator: Brian Kearney

- Impact on Rail industry and future freight uses/ economic/commerce??
- Railroads may prevent, delay, or raise price of system
- **Legislative may prevent, delay, or raise price**
- Federal regulations may prevent, delay, or raise price
- Communities may protest new building or operation
- Incompatibility with existing or future land uses
- Security concerns
- **Continued increases in freight traffic**
- Funding?
- Unions

Facilitator: Peggy Rubach

- **Legislature**
- Environmental issues and clearances
- Land acquisition from existing owners
- Sustaining rider-ship
- Cost benefit analysis
- People love their cars
- Hidden agendas from interest groups
- Fight over ownership of project (joint government ventures)
- Fear of increased taxes
- Homeland security
- **Competition for limited federal funds**

South Subarea

Facilitator: Charles Huellmantel

- **Public perception/misperception**
- **Funding**
- Habits
- Turf Battle
- **Legislative implementation/regional competition**
- Governing Structure

Southeast Subarea



Facilitator: Craig Ringer

- **Politics**
- **Regional competition**
- **User apathy**
- Railroads not motivated
- Pace of entitlements threatens ROW availability
- Need for many, many at grade and grade separated crossings
- Costs!!!
- Competition for ROW between freight and passenger

Facilitator: Claudia Walters

- No need for urgency
- Not going to get the rail companies to participate
- Freeway advocates opposition
- Taking funding from other sources
- No growth folks/ unrestrained growth folks
- History of rail companies being independent
- Trying to create partnership with rail companies when none have existed
- Legislative interest/political will
- **Old thinking on the part of rail companies; citizens and elected positions**
- Water issues
- **Cost of fare may discourage rider-ship**
- **Ongoing maintenance costs/ operations**
- **Lack of subsidy**
- Overcoming 1% factor
- Lack of public/business rider-ship

Facilitator: Mike Normand

- **Railroads (freight)**
- Timing → get ahead of the curve
- **Comprehensive plan revisions**
- Developers!!
- Not part of current funded regional transportation plan
- No money
- Lack of public awareness and support
- Federal money limited (i.e. light rail vs commercial rail)
- Availability of right-of-way competing for same funding
- Long range planning
- Building a consensus – in-fighting between cities
- Arizona State land trust (land devaluation due to infrastructure)
- Coordinating multi-regions
- ADOT/state land
- ADOT policies not focused on other modes of transportation

Facilitator: Maria Deeb

- **Agency support and planning**
- Slow process
- Existing zoning and development processes
- **No funding source identified**
- Poor planning



- Existing utilities
- Public perception
- Competition with freight lines (space)
- Location and frequency of freight
- Safety issues
- Maintenance issues

Facilitator: Mack Lake

- **Anti-tax communities**
- **NIMBY opposition**
- **Organized opposition**
- Road vs rail mentality
- Railroad could resist cooperation
- Costs \$\$\$

Facilitator: Dan Shreeve

- **Development incentives from other states and regions**
- New roadway development
- Lack of roadway "ROW" where it's needed
- Funding
- Environmental concerns
- Support by the populous? – will people give up their cars?
- Telecommuting – does it reduce the need for travel?
- **Tribal nation "Buy-in/support"**
- Does development occur where anticipated?
- Security
- Market strength

Facilitator: Vic Linoff

- Maintaining rail line
- **Competing stakeholders groups**
- Safety
- **Funding**
- Jurisdictional conflicts
- Lack of cooperation from railroads

Southwest Subarea

Facilitator: Marie Lopez Rogers

- Maintains rail line
- Opposition from truckers, etc (competing stakeholder group)
- Safety
- Funding
- Jurisdictional conflicts
- Lack of cooperation from railroads
- Takings
- Proposition 207
- Speed of development
- Voters
- Funding Opportunities
- Political threats



- Public backlash over light rail
- Where do we fall in priority?
- Union Pacific
- Not promoting internal sustainability
- **Prioritizations vs Regions (system)**
- **Cost**

Facilitator: Mario Sandomando

- **Political support**
- New technology
- **Sustainability**
- Crime increase

Facilitator: Kathy Rice

- **Public perception**
- **Don't take money away from freeway mentality**
- MAG planning does not emphasize passenger rail
- "I don't want those people coming into our community"
- Too much competition for E.D. – can move people too easily
- Freight operations might be impacted
- Railroads can uncooperative
- Perception that it is subsidized and a money loser with no upside
- Not enough political wherewithal
- Phoenix – Tucson is sexier
- System isn't fully developed – self destructive set up for failure
- ROW encroachment

Northwest Subarea

Facilitator: Scott Chesney

- **Political buy-in**
- State legislature would have to be put on the ballot
- Environmental effects
- Buy-in from both railroads required
- Funding competition
- **Federal transportation money goes away in 2009**
- Lack of new money
- Adverse impacts to development community
- Public perception that density creates crime and blight
- Public trust in government

Facilitator: Carl Swenson

- **Sustainable Funding**
- Service/labor disruption
- Environmental mitigation
- **Terrorist threat**
- Expands growth area boundaries

Notes provided by attendee:

- LRT stakeholders may oppose commuter rail due to perceived competition for federal "new starts" funds and a "full funding grant agreement for the LRT system."



- Urban Core communities may perceive the service as continued suburban sprawl and loss of impetus for infill development. (They count on future suburban congestion as a tool to spur infill and redevelopment of the core.
- Need for not one, but two Class One Railways to agree for the system to work effectively.
- Parochialism throughout the region.
- Public perception that this is another expensive boondoggle, which no one will ride. (Full buses throughout the region will help dispel return of the "empty buses" argument of the Eighties)
- City of Glendale view of BNSF as a blighting influence in their city, and their uncertainty on whether they would support heavy rail.
- Competition with other transportation modes for scarce resources.
- Potential diminishment of the federal role in transportation post SAFETEA-LU (The Highway Trust Fund will be broke by 2009); and/or devolution of the role from USDOT to the state