



## US-60/Grand Avenue COMPASS

Loop 303 to Interstate 10

City Managers Meeting  
December 3, 2013

Peoria City Hall  
8401 W. Monroe Street

### ATTENDEES

Spencer Isom – City of El Mirage  
Amber Wakeman – City of El Mirage  
Jenna Goad – City of Glendale  
Brent Stoddard – City of Glendale  
Carl Swenson – City of Peoria

Lisa Estrada – City of Peoria  
Rick Naimark – City of Phoenix (phone)  
Thomas Remes – City of Phoenix (phone)  
Jeanne Blackman – Town of Youngtown

### MAG STAFF

Dennis Smith – MAG  
Eric Anderson – MAG

Bob Hazlett – MAG

### CONSULTANT TEAM

Jason Pagnard – B&N

Bob Hazlett noted that the purpose of the meeting was to serve as a briefing and discussion of key issues prior to the Grand Avenue Coalition meeting with the mayors on Thursday.

### REVIEW ALTERNATIVES

Bob Hazlett reviewed the four project concepts approved by the mayors for further study. The concepts are:

- Red Alternative – Continue with planned improvements from the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) with no further action;
- Purple Alternative – Implement the US-60/Grand Avenue expressway option;
- Blue Alternative – Institute commuter rail and implement roadway improvements to a lesser scale than the Expressway; and
- Green Alternative – Focus on the mobility of people and goods through establishing a HCT envelope within the current ADOT right-of-way in conjunction with strategic, targeted roadway improvements at key locations.

Eric Anderson and Dennis Smith provided an overview of why the study was undertaken, highlighting the need for a unified vision along US-60/Grand Avenue. This vision was spurred by ADOT's potential interest to turn US-60/Grand Avenue over to the municipalities for ownership

# NOTES

and maintenance. Eric and Dennis noted that the US-60/Grand Avenue COMPASS charter indicated the municipalities' commitment to work together.

Carl Swenson and Eric Anderson mentioned that commuter rail is being considered as part of the US-60/Grand Avenue COMPASS and builds on benchmark studies already completed.

Brent Stoddard commented that the Red Alternative still represents a significant investment and commitment for the cities along US-60/Grand Avenue.

## INITIAL TRAVEL DEMAND ANALYSIS

Bob Hazlett discussed demographics, growth and travel demand.

Dennis Smith described growth projections for the region. He noted that growth projections were assigned by the State. He added that a growth is limited by the reasonable market share, regardless of plans and zoning.

Carl Swenson commented that Transportation can drive land use and density. He stated he has the hope and expectation that commuter rail would create transit oriented development around commuter rail stations. He added that the West Valley is seeing improvements and developments that will enhance economic advantage for competitive market share. He asked whether a premium for growth was given to downtown areas.

Eric Anderson and Bob Hazlett explained that growth is defined for the region at the state level. Different areas and cities are competing with each other for a share of that growth from around the region. This includes areas within one city competing for growth and development with other areas in the same city, such as SR-303L vs downtown. Land use models allocate different types of employment in each area.

Rick Naimark noted that, from the City of Phoenix's perspective, the Red Alternative should be continued focus. He suggested the next step should be to improve upon the existing RTP plan rather than pursuing very ambitious, unrealistic alternatives that are twelve steps ahead. His suggestion is to temper the approach to US-60/Grand Avenue to taking smaller steps forward. He noted that bus funding is currently a challenge and asked who would pay for and maintain the Green Alternative. He added that if Light Rail Transit (LRT) was expanded, he did not think US-60/Grand Avenue would be a priority line.

Carl Swenson stated that while he agrees with Rick Naimark regarding LRT, he does not agree on transit, such as commuter rail, in general. He does not think commuter rail represents too much ambition or dreaming. He added that we need to look beyond current circumstance to bring different modes of transportation to the corridor.

# NOTES

Spencer Isom said that he agrees with Carl Swenson that planning occurs twelve steps ahead and that the group should not be short sighted. He questioned whether the Red Alternative precluded commuter rail.

Bob Hazlett indicated that the Red Alternative does not preclude commuter rail. He then reviewed the travel demand of the corridor.

Dennis Smith provided an overview of the trip reduction survey objectives, and Bob Hazlett discussed trip reduction survey results. The presentation focused on how most work trips to/from cities within the corridor are actually localized and that destinations outside the project's immediate study area are scattered throughout the metropolitan area.

Dennis Smith discussed the importance of land use.

Eric Anderson also noted that the model does not currently include a commuter rail system in place. But in making this remark, stressed that there could be little changes in the overall distribution of land uses as the US-60/Grand Avenue corridor competes with other developing and more established areas of the Valley for development.

## SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORTATION AND LAND USE INTEGRATION STUDY (ST-LUIS)

Eric Anderson discussed the ST-LUIS.

Bob Hazlett noted that growth, or market size, is finite.

Eric Anderson noted that similar and/or related types of facilities tend to conglomerate around each other. This is often the result of reallocation rather than growth. It is often a zero-sum game.

Dennis Smith and Eric Anderson noted that Phoenix is protecting its industrial interest, Glendale is protecting Northern Avenue, and that the outer cities are protecting commuter rail. They added that this positioning is unnecessary.

Eric Anderson described the redevelopment challenges of industrial segments of corridor.

Spencer Isom noted that he sees commuter rail as a redevelopment opportunity.

Carl Swanson commented that he is concerned with continuing the same investment patterns, which would continue to focus on freeways. He sees transformational challenges and does not support the Purple Alternative.

Eric Anderson commented that he saw no reason why commuter rail shouldn't be in the next regional funding package.

# NOTES

Brent Stoddard noted that Glendale's priority is the new east-west LRT through the City, which has local funding. Glendale's vision does not include commuter rail. He hesitates to memorialize a decision for commuter rail as it competes with Glendale's vision. Glendale is planning for the future, but is looking to plan two steps rather than twelve steps ahead. He expressed that Glendale is not interested in dreaming, and that they are now focused on paying for improvements.

Bob Hazlett suggested the study team eliminate the expressway option and continue to pursue the Red Alternative, as well as the Blue Alternative. He summarized that the US-60/Grand Avenue COMPASS would address the remaining bottlenecks, develop an access management plan, and then address future transit investments in the corridor.

Spencer Isom confirmed he would like to see the study team eliminate LRT as a consideration. He would like to see the Red Alternative advance; however, the cities also want to continue the Commuter Rail option, except perhaps Glendale. He added that all of the municipalities need to continue with planned improvements. He stated that the municipalities could determine funding alternatives with MAG's assistance. He also noted that the term "only" 5,000 riders creates a negative connotation for the commuter rail.

Carl Swanson agreed that the Red Alternative is a good solution and that the Purple Alternative is not. He also suggested removing LRT from the Green Alternative and to eliminate impediments to commuter rail. He noted that a regional alignment would better position US-60/Grand Avenue for potential funding, such as earmarks.

Brent Stoddard said Glendale would stay neutral, but was concerned with US-60/Grand Avenue transit competing with Glendale's east-west LRT for federal funds.

Eric Anderson pointed out the main issue is how to fund transit in the region.

Spencer Isom said the US-60/Grand Avenue COMPASS should acknowledge commuter rail in the corridor and continue moving it forward.

Brent Stoddard noted that the group needed to highlight the access management plan because no one wants ADOT to turn US-60/Grand Avenue back to the municipalities.

## NEXT STEPS

The next steps in the process are as follows:

- Participate in the Grand Avenue Coalition meeting on Thursday, December 5.
- Continue with Red Alternative and Blue Alternative.
- Eliminate the Purple Alternative.

# NOTES

- Eliminate the Green Alternative; however, include elements in the Blue Alternative.
- Address corridor bottlenecks.
- Develop Access Management Plan.
- Address future transit investments in the corridor.
- Adjust language to acknowledge commuter rail so that it continues.

