



US-60/Grand Avenue COMPASS

Loop 303 to Interstate 10

Stakeholder Presentation Grand Avenue Merchants Association – Steering Committee
May 15, 2014; 5:30 – 6:30 p.m. 747 Grand Avenue, Phoenix

STAKEHOLDER ATTENDEES

Kirby Hoyt, Tim Sprague, Mark Abromovitz, Any Gordon, Nollis Sanders, Matt Tomb, Beatrice Moore, Milissa Koehler

MAG STAFF

Bob Hazlett

CONSULTANT TEAM

Audra Koester Thomas, PSA

HANDOUTS

US-60/Grand Avenue Study Brochure and fliers on Access Management and related aspects (economic development, conflict points, roadway classifications, and joint and cross access)

OVERVIEW

The project team was invited to provide a presentation of the project during the Grand Avenue Merchants Association regularly scheduled Steering Committee meeting. Bob Hazlett, MAG project manager, provided a brief overview of the study, focusing on the key framework elements of commuter rail and access management.

ACCESS MANAGEMENT CONCEPT

Mr. Hazlett reviewed a roll plot with draft access management elements presented. In particular, Mr. Hazlett discussed the idea of potentially moving commuter traffic off of US-60/Grand Avenue and onto 19th Avenue to access downtown. This concept would help to address concerns with the existing six-leg intersection at Grand Avenue/19th Avenue/McDowell Road, and could further bolster the pedestrian-friendly environment developed as part of the lower Grand Avenue improvements.

The following questions were asked by meeting attendees:

- How would you address impacts of trains to McDowell Road? *A longer-term option might be a grade-separated solution, however such a solution would also have additional access impacts.*

NOTES

- How would you envision the “pronouncement” of lower Grand Avenue at 19th Avenue? *The idea to move commuter traffic onto 19th Avenue for downtown access is still in the conceptual phase, and additional analysis—including what gateway could be developed—would need further study.*
- Is the immediate goal of this study’s recommendations to improve safety (through access management)? *Safety is a big goal. However, the infrastructure that exists for US-60/Grand Avenue today has evolved as has the land uses adjacent to the facility. While US-60/Grand Avenue remains important to connecting regional activity, redevelopment opportunities abound along the corridor. The economic development potential coupled with connecting downtowns via a high-speed transit option can assist in supporting a thriving West Valley.*
- Is there really a higher incident of traffic accidents along US-60/Grand Avenue? *Yes. In addition to the safety aspects, the continuity of the facility is a concern. US-60/Grand Avenue has a state highway “shield”, and in places, looks like an Interstate; balancing performance with urban design is key. The idea of using various streetscape designs as a way to bring continuity throughout the corridor has been discussed.*

The following comments and observations were offered by meeting attendees:

- *Regarding a concept that would move commuting traffic onto 19th Avenue:*
 - Feedback we’ve previously received from the City of Phoenix/Ray Dovalina would be that such a solution would have no direct connection with US-60/Grand Avenue, and thus, this solution—that wouldn’t totally eliminate connectivity of US-60/Grand Avenue—is more sympathetic to the “road diet” concept.
 - Feedback we’ve received from the commuting public is that they do not like the traffic calming measures implemented in lower Grand Avenue. These improvements certainly have slowed traffic, particularly at peak periods. The commuting public are not our key constituents, so a solution of moving that traffic onto 19th Avenue would be compatible with our efforts.
 - I don’t want to recreate the negative business impact, of which occurred with the building of I-10. Slower traffic has helped our businesses in lower Grand Avenue, as commuters actually have a chance to see the business outlets in this area. I don’t want to make it too easy for traffic to bypass US-60/Grand Avenue. Generally, traffic is very light between morning and afternoon rush hour.
 - “Cul-de-sacing” US-60/Grand Avenue at 19th Avenue is not an option. Historical connection into downtown is important.

NOTES

- I'd hate to see a loss of connectivity from US-60/Grand Avenue onto McDowell Road and 19th Avenue. A grade-separated traffic interchange is not an attractive option.
- *Regarding the traffic calming improvements:*
 - Congestion that does occur (from the recent improvements on lower US-60/Grand Avenue) is not that impactful; traffic generally moves through at peak periods.
 - I don't envy the job of the study team; the grade separated interchanges along the corridor does make the facility look like an Interstate. I would encourage consideration of additional traffic calming strategies.
 - US-60/Grand Avenue is not an Interstate—find a way to treat the facility differently.
 - Consider coining a new term/category for US-60/Grand Avenue that acknowledges its uniqueness in connecting multiple municipalities.
- *Regarding the potential for high-speed commuter rail:*
 - I'm happy to see the transit option.
 - Connecting communities via bicycle/pedestrian pathways or public art features seems like it would complement the concept nicely.
 - I'm supportive of the high-speed transit (commuter rail) option as well as system-supportive transit alternatives, including bus rapid transit, bicycle and pedestrian pathways, etc.

OTHER DISCUSSION

The following additional observations and comments were offered:

- The Grand Avenue Festival is scheduled for October 18, 2014.

