

Purpose and Overview

The Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG) commissioned the Northwest Valley Local Transit System Study to assess mobility needs within and around the Northwest Valley. The study area included the communities of El Mirage, Glendale, Peoria, Sun City (Maricopa County), Sun City Festival (in the Town of Buckeye), Sun City Grand (in the City of Surprise), Sun City West (Maricopa County), Surprise, and Youngtown. Collectively, these communities have experienced significant population growth across the past decade and are now home to more than 600,000 residents. The communities worked with MAG to identify transit needs in the Northwest Valley and develop practical, sustainable solutions.



KEY NEEDS IDENTIFIED

Input from current and potential transit riders was a fundamental ingredient in assessing mobility needs along with the development of practical recommendations. This input was gathered through surveys and community workshops by which residents and stakeholders could share their thoughts and perspectives on possible future transit service in the Northwest Valley.

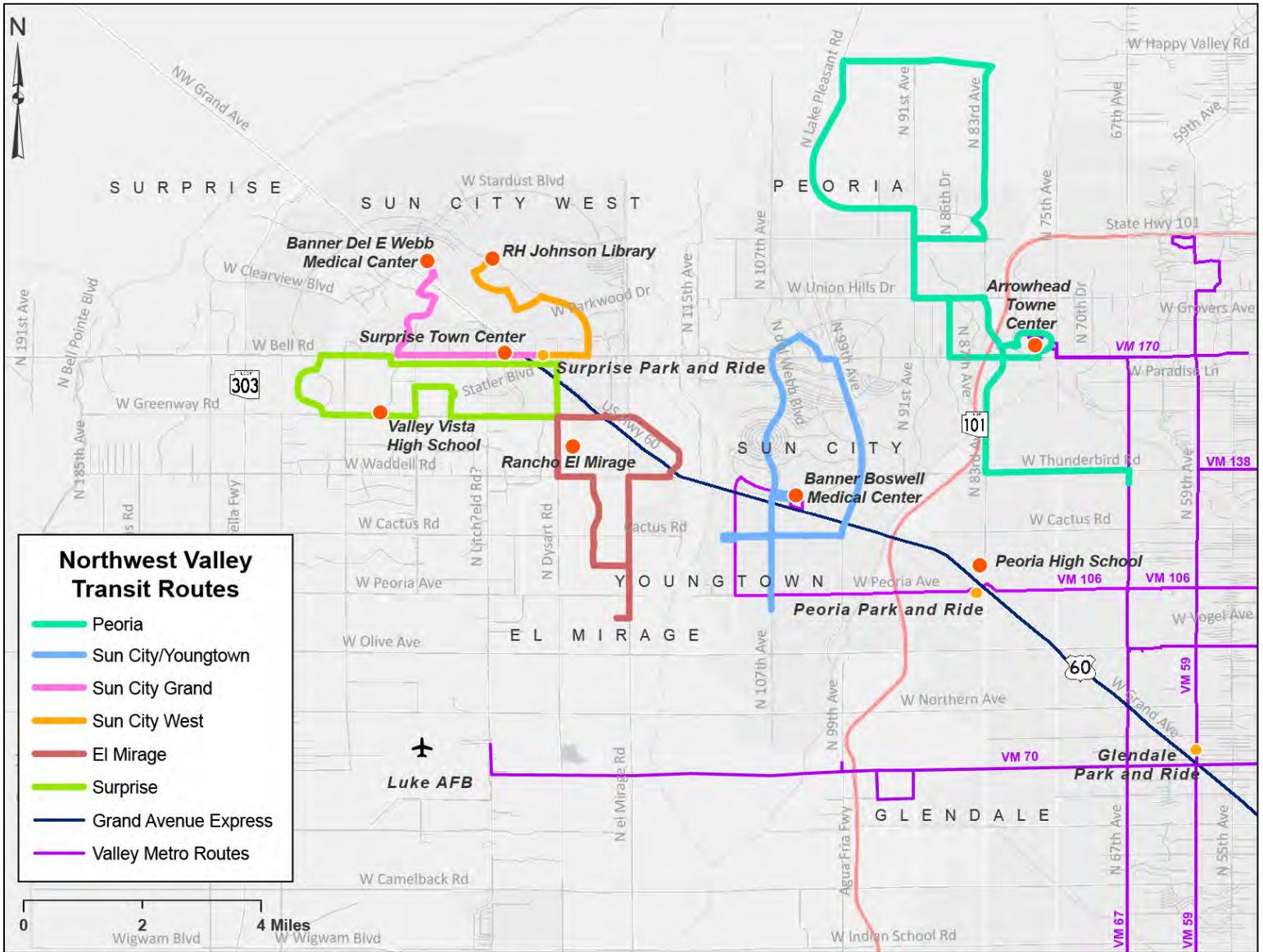
Between September 2012 and February 2013, more than 2,600 online and mail-in surveys were collected from residents across the study area. Supplementing these surveys were 25 community meetings held throughout the Northwest Valley that allowed MAG and its partners to provide project details to attendees as well as record feedback. Through these extensive outreach and collaboration efforts, some of the preferred transit priorities and solutions included:

- ▶ Improved access local retail centers and healthcare centers via public transit,
- ▶ Local circulators as a means of addressing intra-community mobility needs, and
- ▶ Improved transit service to destinations beyond the Northwest Valley, especially downtown Phoenix and Sky Harbor Airport.

ADDRESSING IDENTIFIED NEEDS

The recommendations described on the following pages were developed to most effectively address the needs identified during the public involvement process while working within the framework of existing and/or proposed funding. With an eye toward practicality, the recommended improvements are proposed to occur in phased near-, mid-, and long-term time frames.

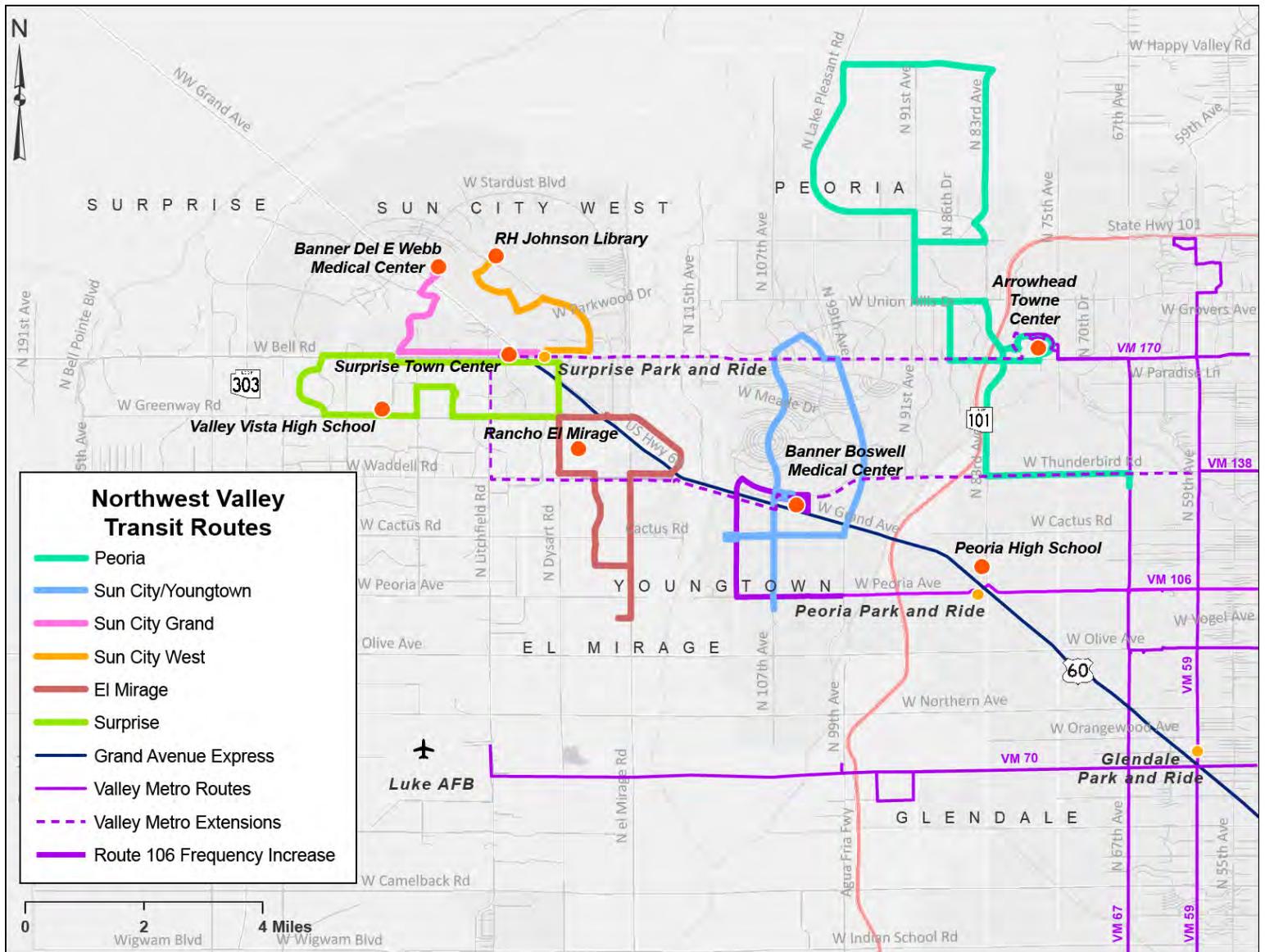




NEAR-TERM RECOMMENDATIONS

Our near-term recommendations provide relatively inexpensive and easily-implementable tactics to enhance transit service within the Northwest Valley across the next five years. These recommendations include:

- Create six local circulators that serve existing trip generators within the Northwest Valley.
- 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 address administrative and funding activities for enhancing local transit service throughout the Northwest Valley.
- Combine Express Routes 571 and Grand Avenue Limited into a single route, while also increasing its span-of-service to include mid-day hours.
- Continue the Northwest Valley Dial-A-Ride (DAR) program and adjust specific services where needed.



MID-TERM RECOMMENDATIONS

The mid-term recommendations listed below are intended to build upon the near-term service improvements, and would be implemented within the next five to ten years. In addition to possible demand-based increases in circulator service, mid-term recommendations include extensions of key Valley Metro routes into the Northwest Valley to increase transit connectivity Metro Phoenix area. Specific mid-term recommendations include:

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

