

LONG-TERM RECOMMENDATIONS – Service to future growth areas

The Long-term planning timeframe includes project recommendations to extend transit services within the Southeast Valley to areas of future projected growth. Implementation would focus on expanding service to potential growth areas and providing connections to communities that are not immediately adjacent to the existing transit service areas. Concepts defined in this timeframe may include recommendations that have been identified as part of the MAG Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) or other local planning efforts.

Key Elements of Long-term Concepts

- Fill in the grid to maximize connectivity
- Expand service to the east and southeast as population, employment, and transit demand grow
- New express and other commuter services to meet demand

Possible Funding for Expanded Transit Services

- An extension of the half-cent regional sales tax would provide continued transit support
- Local sales tax could be used to generate additional funding at the individual jurisdictional level
- Special districts and other local funding mechanisms could be developed to generate support for transit services

Implementing expanded transit services in the Southeast Valley will require a funding commitment in excess of what is being dedicated to transit services currently in operation.

SOUTHEAST VALLEY TRANSIT SYSTEM STUDY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



The Southeast Valley Transit System Study (SEVTSS) analyzed transit services and ridership demand in transit-established and transit-aspiring communities within the southeast subarea of the Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG) region. The study area encompasses the full extents of the City of Tempe, City of Mesa, Town of Guadalupe, City of Chandler, Town of Gilbert, City of Apache Junction, Town of Queen Creek, City of Maricopa, and Town of Florence as well as parts of the City of Phoenix, Maricopa County, Pinal County and the Gila River Indian Community. This study is a joint effort between MAG and Valley Metro. Through a process that was both data-driven and collaborative, this study resulted in the identification of recommendations for optimizing the existing transit system, and mid-term and long-term improvements to enhance a performance-based transit system throughout the Southeast Valley.

Study Goals and Objectives

Continue to develop an effective market-driven transit system by:

- Connecting major residential areas, employment, and other destinations within the Southeast Valley
- Providing a well-integrated multimodal transit system
- Prioritizing transit-dependent and transit-oriented travel markets
- Adapting to changing conditions

Continue to develop an efficient performance-driven, affordable, cost-effective network by:

- Providing a system that meets regional targets for productivity and a base level of service in accordance with the adopted Transit Standards and Performance Measures
- Applying the most appropriate transit service types to the various travel markets
- Applying the appropriate mix between service performance and service coverage
- Maintaining an ongoing dialogue among community and agency stakeholders

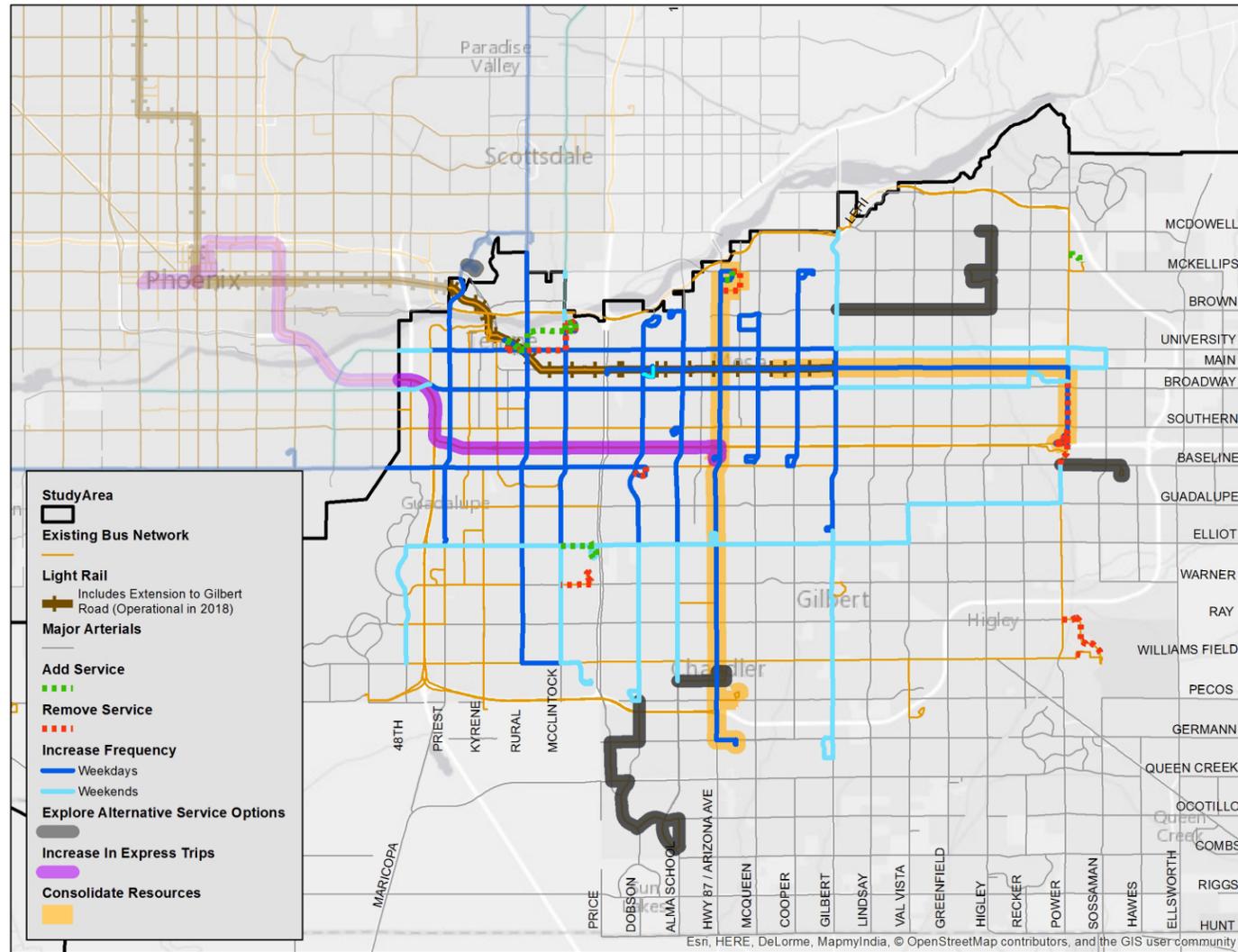
The result of this study is a menu of concepts for (1) optimizing existing transit services, (2) mid-term improvements within the next 10 years, and (3) long-term improvements that would be anticipated in more than 10 years. Overall, important considerations for the evolution of the transit system in the Southeast Valley include:

- Promoting higher frequency service in core areas and greater network connectivity that will make transit a more robust and convenient option for more customers
- Expand the transit service area as population and employment densities grow
- Monitor network performance and actual changes in population and land use over time to adjust service to meet needs
- Coordinate transit service expansion priorities with local land use planning policies and decisionmaking

The development of study recommendations were based on:

- A Transit Optimization Analysis, which provided a data-driven analysis of how to optimize the use of resources in the existing transit system
- A Needs Assessment, which provided analysis of longer-term transportation needs based on projected demographics and land use
- Input from a Project Advisory Committee (PAC), which included representatives of all the jurisdictions within the study area
- Public input, primarily through an online survey conducted in 2014





OPTIMIZATION OF EXISTING SERVICES

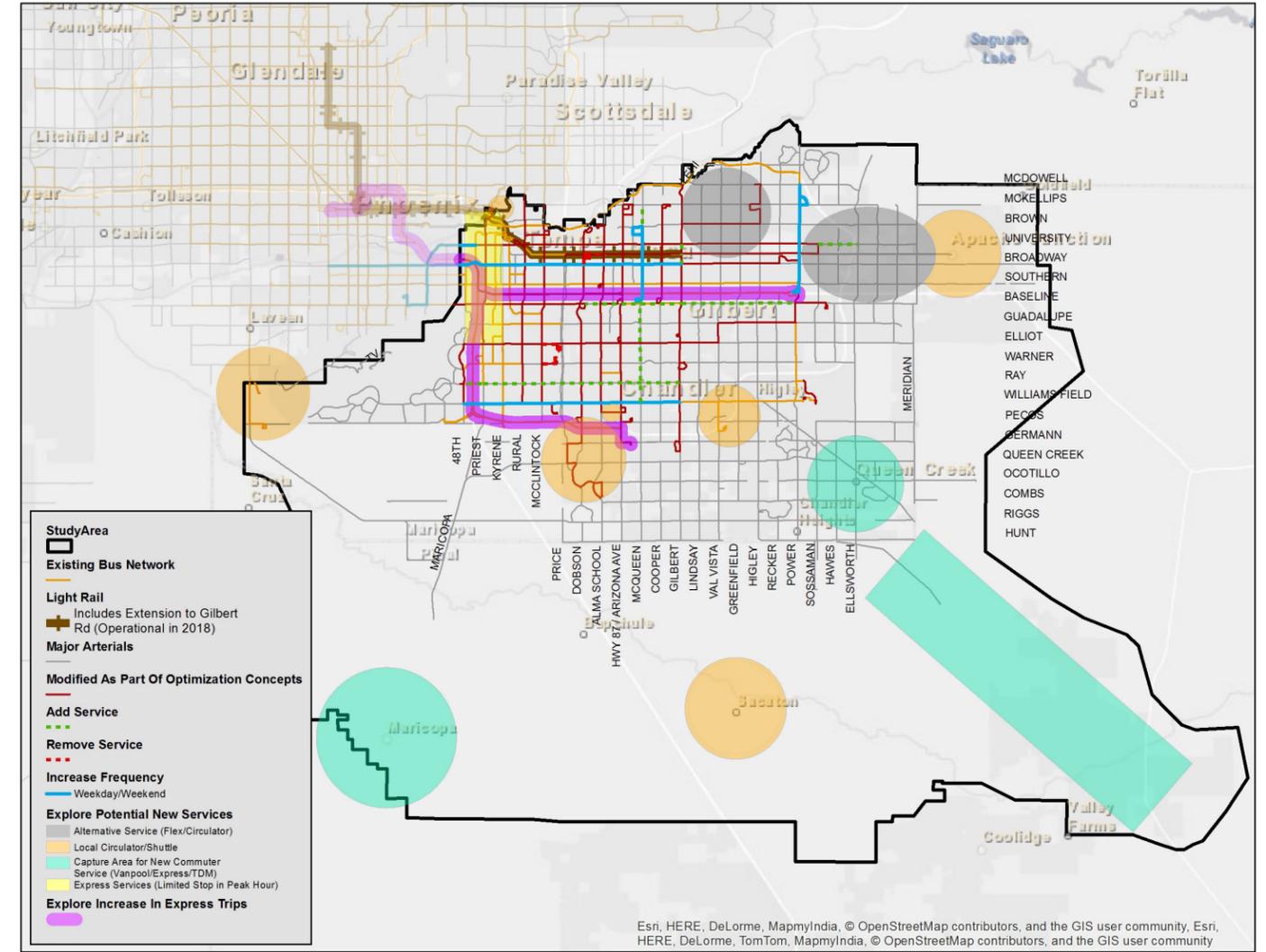
The concepts for Optimization are intended to be implementable in the near-term. The concepts are a menu of options that provide a mix of efficiencies that “save” revenue miles, as well as recommendations for the beneficial investment of additional revenue miles where it would benefit the most productive parts of the system. Concepts include increasing frequency of service, eliminating route deviations that reduce network efficiency, and modifying route structures that create overlap and duplication with other routes in the same area.

Key Elements of the Optimization Concepts

- Consolidate the resources invested in the Arizona Avenue and Main Street corridors to provide a robust, high frequency service
- Explore alternative service types to more efficiently serve some deviations or lower-productivity route segments
- Obtain a minimum of 30-minute frequency service
- As possible, improve frequencies on high ridership routes

Public Input from 2014 Online Survey

- Over 80% stated that current public transportation does not meet their needs
- Respondents identified the following needs: more service (59%), more frequent service (27%), service to new areas (51%), lower fares (12%)
- 50% of respondents would support a tax to fund more transit service



MID-TERM RECOMMENDATIONS – Expanding Service by 2025

The Mid-term planning timeframe includes project recommendations that expand or fill in the gaps within the existing transit service network in the Southeast Valley. Service expansion would reach potential growth areas that are located on the fringe of the existing transit network.

Key Elements of Mid-term Concepts

- Increase service frequency on productive routes
- Explore new service types as a way to more efficiently provide service in low-ridership areas, or as a lower cost way to expand service to new areas
- Expand service to the east and the south as population, employment, and transit demand grow

Key Implementation Steps

- Advance the understanding of cost-effective and productive service types throughout the Southeast Valley, such as flexible services, circulators, vanpool, and TDM strategies
- Develop detailed transit implementation plans at the jurisdictional level
- Collaborate with local planning staff to develop policies that support transit within the Southeast Valley

Implementation of the Optimization period, Mid-term, and Long-term concepts would occur through the prioritization and coordination that accompany programming projects. Timing and sequence of implementation may be determined by available funding.