

**STATE TRANSPORTATION BOARD
STUDY SESSION MINUTES
10:00 a.m., Monday, December 7, 2009
Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT)
Transportation Board Room
206 S. 17th Ave.
Phoenix, AZ 85007**

BOARD ATTENDANCE

Delbert Householder, Bob Montoya, Victor Flores, Bill Feldmeier, Felipe Zubia, Bobbie Lundstrom (telephonic), Steve Christy (telephonic)

PLEDGE

[The Pledge of Allegiance is recited.]

CHAIRMAN HOUSEHOLDER: We're going to start with MAG's presentation and it will be Bob Hazlett.

ITEM 1: MAG Framework & Regional Transportation Plan Update
MAG staff will brief the Board on the status of the Framework & Regional Transportation Plan.
(For information and discussion only – MAG Staff)

BOB HAZLETT: I appreciate the opportunity to discuss with you the Framework Plan that we have completed in the MAG region and how it fits into our continued Regional Transportation Planning process. The whole impetus for the Framework Study process was just that we've had growth and we're going to continue to have growth. It's hard to talk about growth, especially now in these down economic times, but we still have a lot of development that is out there and when you have all of these developments that are entitled out there and we have the continuing need to make certain we have good gateways into the MAG region, especially with us being a fair amount of economic engine for the State, we thought it was important to start these Framework Planning processes. The first one was in the Hassayampa Valley. This is the area west of the White Tank Mountains. The expected population identified in terms of development and build-out is about 3 M people by the time this area is built out. Compared to the center of Metropolitan Phoenix and the expected population build-out is roughly 5.5 M.

We have also looked to the south to the area called Hidden Valley, and not only did we take a look at what was happening in Maricopa, but Pinal County had invited us to start to take a look at how traffic goes across county lines. They invited us to come into the Hidden Valley area and it probably has about the same population projections. The other areas we're looking at: Northern Pinal County with an expected population of about 500,000 and the Superstition Business Area of about one million people. All together, we're looking at a metropolitan area of roughly 10-12 M people by the time it's built-out. That is what prompted us to start to take a look at Framework studies outside of the general metro areas we know of today in the east, west, and central valleys. Whenever we do these Framework studies, I always give this as my "warranty" slide. It's mainly a response to growth and everything seen on these maps is subject to change. The first Framework study done in the metropolitan area was in 1960 and that launched and put together what was called a "Regional Streets and Freeway Plan." That laid out today the Regional Transportation Plan and the Regional Freeway System. Going to back to the 1960 maps are

elements of Loop 101 and Loops 202, the Superstition Freeway, the I-10/Papago and Maricopa Freeways, and SR51 (the Piastawa Freeway). All of those are in the Framework Study done back in the 1960's.

The original plan identified at the top end of Loop 101 was originally supposed to go down Bell Road. As we know today, it goes down Beardsley Road. There are a number of other studies that had to be done: the Regional Transportation Plan, the Municipal Plan - what some of the cities continue to do, Corridor Location Studies, Design Concept Reports, environmental assessments, EIS, categories of exclusions, and part of the NEPA process. All those things get figured into that. As we present all this, the actions seen are not funded at all, but are laying out a roadmap, trying to look in the future, and try and figure out where we should see high capacity transportation corridors.

The Hassayampa Valley Study was launched by MAG in 2006. It was accepted by the MAG Regional Council in February 2008. Mainly, what launched the entire study was looking at I-10. There were so many developments identified that in looking at all the traffic interchange requests, there would end up being a traffic interchange for about every quarter mile on the Hassayampa Valley. That is a primary freight route to the Ports in Long Beach and Los Angeles. It was extremely important to try to bring some "order to chaos" and start launching the traffic interchange locations. A strong stance was taken on new freeways and new high capacity corridors identified for two mile spacing. The Arizona Parkway was introduced. Everything was accepted in the MAG Regional Transportation Plan as what was called the "corridors of the future," which federal regulations allow as an MPO. As the cities are affected by this, as they move forward with their planning, they will incorporate this into their general plans. That has already been done in Hassayampa Valley in the Town of Buckeye, which took the Hassayampa Study and made it a part of their general plan and the backbone of their transportation system. It became the backbone of their Land Use Planning as well.

With all of the studies launched and with the Framework Studies an environmental scan was done. This was unique to any kind of long range planning capabilities. The idea behind doing the environmental scan was to help jumpstart the NEPA or environmental process, mapping out all the different NEPA factors that would allow in moving forward with studies and processes, to go back and look at the maps and be able to use those to help guide their planning processes. Air quality was looked at, as well as economic standards, utility corridors, wildlife corridors, and drainage. At the framework process, there is a very high level, the 100,000 foot level, making it difficult to pinpoint where the corridor will be; however, through this type of mapping and the information available via a number of different sources, the corridors can be identified down enabling an "avoidance" - mapping them out and figuring out where the corridors would avoid certain situations. As planning moves forward, i.e., ADOT with high capacity transportation and freeway corridors, they can go back to the mapping and look at the studies done and get a jumpstart on the NEPA process.

Throughout the environmental scan process, there have been a number of meetings with key stakeholders to do an early clearance process. For this particular project in Hassayampa Valley, there were close to 200 meetings on the project itself, meeting with all the different affected interests, not just the property owners or development interests, including residents, Arizona Game & Fish, the Bureau of Land Management, and all other resource agencies, to try and make certain there was as much environmental information as possible for the Framework process.

An air change spacing recommendation was made as part of this particular project. With all the different developments, there were over 160 Master Plan communities and it seemed that everyone wanted their traffic interchange along I 10. Some of those developments had roadways that in one development was an 8-lane super-street, another development had a 2-lane roadway, and then it comes back out to a 6-lane roadway. There was no one who figured out how to do that and also affecting this were the traffic interchange requests along I-10. It became important to map that out, give order, and ultimately roughly two mile spacing was identified. A couple of spots had to go back to one mile spacing because a traffic

interchange had already been approved / identified in a previous study. Two mile spacing was identified to preserve the I-10 corridor and also to make certain traffic flow could be maximized and maximize the freight connection going off to the Ports in Long Beach and Los Angeles. We took great care in looking where the system traffic interchanges are: Estrella Freeway, Loop 303, SR 85, and the Hassayampa Freeway - to identify where those were and to provide as much clearance as possible for those to not have issues with graded ramps and could take care of run-outs, etc., for the system interchanges.

This was adopted by the MAG Regional Council and is our recommendation. This was presented to Director Mendez at the time, so this is what MAG would like to see along I-10 out in this part of the Hassayampa Valley. The other thing we also introduced was called the Arizona Parkway. This corridor has been around in a lot of other places in the United States, most significantly in the State of Michigan. We didn't want to start calling it the Michigan Boulevard Arterial which is what they call it, so we stole the idea and called it the "Arizona Parkway." What we found as we have done even more study on this, and my hat's off to Tim Oliver and the Maricopa County DOT for advancing the studies on his Arizona Parkway. The benefits we get from these types of facilities is phenomenal. The best point, is the information on conflict points. The accident crash rates we see on these facilities is far less than what you would see on a conventional arterial. They relegate all left turn movements to what is called indirect lefts or directional crossovers or U-turn ramps. A left cannot be made at the intersection; instead you would proceed forward and U-turn around back to the right. A lot of people say this is a whole host of extra movements and confusing the situation, but not really because what ends up happening is that the traffic signals get rid of the left turn arrows, taking out those conflicts from the intersection, and as a result take out the potential for T-bones and get a much smoother flow down the facility. In fact, the crash rate in Oakland County, Michigan, where the majority of their arterials are constructed this way, is roughly about .45 crashes for every million miles of travel. Here in Maricopa County, our crash rate is 2.5 and so this is something that's almost a quarter of the crash rate. What's also amazing is they're almost near freeway volumes. An 8-lane Arizona Parkway would carry up to 120K cars a day, whereas, the top volume on our conventional 8-lane arterials is not much more than about 75K a day, so you can see the bump in capacity you get, the improved safety, and it's also extremely contact sensitive. We feel this is a very good addition and we also recognize that we needed to have another type of facility in the Hassayampa Valley because we couldn't have freeways everywhere.

This is the recommendation we have for the Framework. This is what was accepted by MAG Regional Council. I-10 and the traffic interchanges are identified: Route 303, SR 801, the I-10 reliever freeway and the extension onto that, a new freeway corridor called the White Tank Freeway Corridor around the White Tank Mountains; and the new corridor called the Hassayampa Freeway, sometimes referred to as the I-11 corridor, as the freeway eventually ties its way up to Las Vegas being able to provide not only a freeway connection to Las Vegas, but also giving it some definition as it comes into the metropolitan area instead of bring it straight down Grand Avenue.

The green lines represent the actual parkways. We also identified the potential showing consideration of a tunnel through the White Tank on the map, although it's not known if that will ever be constructed. There are curve linear streets the development community has been identifying in the center parts of the Hassayampa Valley. We did our best to try to provide some order to what was identified there so we could have the true framework for Hassayampa. We also identified the transit framework for this area, recognizing a transit or commuter rail corridor down to 60, as well as a commuter rail corridor along the UP line, the Wellton branch going under the city. The red lines represent high capacity shuttle transit. We don't know what mode that is. We don't want to prejudice this right now, but it could be a potential light rail facility that might be able to tie in there, and bus rapid transit on the freeway corridors as well as on Grand Avenue.

One last thing also introduced here was a rail connection corridor to tie the two branches of railways. Even though this has been closed off, this Wellton branch has been slated that it could be activated again,

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but one of the issues is in trying to get goods coming in on one or the other of the branches, has to be done via the State Capitol and then come back out again. There has never been any planning, although on Route 303 at one time there had been a suggestion about this, but we went ahead and identified this in the Hassayampa Valley. The development community has been getting on board with this because they see the economic benefits for providing this rail connection.

South to I-8 and 10, Hidden Valley Study, this was accepted by MAG Regional Council in September 2009; again, the two mile spacing and everything was identified as a corridor of the future. All the affected jurisdictions were recommended to incorporate this into their general plans. We also recommended there be concurrence with both the Gila River Indian communities as they move forward with their planning. As with Hassayampa and Hidden, even though MAG led these studies, they are all efforts that were funded for by a number of different organizations. ADOT participated on both projects. Maricopa County DOT participated on both projects. In Hassayampa, the City of Surprise contributed to the project. In Hidden Valley and Hassayampa, both the Town of Buckeye and the City of Goodyear participated. Pinal County, the Pinal County Public Works, and the City of Maricopa also contributed. So, even though have MAG logos on this, this was a joint effort that was done by all these entities to move forward with the planning for these communities. Environmental scans were done for Hidden Valley as well. This mapping is available on the bqAZ.org website. As we've done this and we presented this, a lot of developers have been very excited about this because it helps their planning capabilities.

This is the recommendation we have for the Hidden Valley area. You see here the network of Arizona parkways that have been identified and then some definition to the Hassayampa Freeway as it comes down into this area where it makes a bend and becomes an east/west corridor. In Maricopa and Casa Grande, both of those when built-out are supposed to have a population of about 1.8M. The City of Phoenix today is 1.5M. We had the twin freeway concept up here with I-17 and SR 51. You will see that twin concept here with I-8 as well as the Hassayampa Freeway. You will also see our major arterial network laid out. In Pinal County, what was very important to us was to match that with what is called the RSRAM Study, they are regionally significant roads for safety and mobility. We matched that up completely in this area with the Hassayampa Freeway as well as the spur freeway right here for the Town of Maricopa along SR238. Realizing that SR347 was not going to carry all the load, we made it a priority to find a way to help Maricopa have another way into the metropolitan area by using Loop 303 and the Hassayampa Freeway.

One of things important about this Framework Study was that we were requested to try and not introduce any new transportation corridors across the Indian Community lands and we feel like we have accomplished that by having corridors go around the Gila River Indian Community as well as the AK-Chin Community allowing them to maintain their way of life and their sovereignty. We do identify some improvements here along SR347 turning that into an Arizona Parkway; I-10, its eventual widening; and then at the request of the Gila River Indian Community, safety and operational improvement corridors along SRs 587 and 87 on their lands that we incorporated.

This map incorporates a commuter rail loop around the community connecting between the commuter rail lines out to UP on both sides here in Phoenix as well as areas for transiting opportunities and high capacity transit corridors along 347 and in the slot between the Sierra Estrellas and the Maricopa Mountains. We only illustrate two corridors going between here mainly because of facilitating wildlife movements between the Estrellas and the Maricopas at the request of Fish & Game as well as the Bureau of Land Management.

I'd like to go through and brief what is happening on the Regional Transit Framework Studies because we're starting to see now that these Framework Studies are not necessarily just helping us with a lot of the vacant land that we have in Maricopa and also Pinal County. We are also realizing that these Framework

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Studies are allowing us to help identify and shape where we think the vision should go for other important mobile opportunities in the Maricopa County region. We are in the process of finishing up this Regional Transit Framework Study which has given us good information and scenarios to consider as we move forward in Transit Framework Planning and in next fiscal year we are okayed to do a Freight Mobility Framework Study to look at freight movements in and out of the Maricopa County area. We just received proposals on the Central Phoenix Framework Study which will look inside Loop 101 and a build-out scenario to figure out what type of transportation system we need to move us to that next horizon as that area of the Phoenix metropolitan area approaches build-out. We have had requests for doing a Framework Study for the East Valley and North Phoenix and will try to get those in when staff time permits.

The Transit Framework Study is a presentation that Kevin Wallace, our Transit Program Manager, does and give you ideas of why we're doing this particular study. It's different than doing some of the other Transportation Framework Studies where we're looking at wide open land, but it is doing a technical evaluation and giving guidance to our future Regional Transportation Plan Updates and funding initiatives as we move forward for transit. We have to do our best to keep pace with the increasing transit demand. There is a lot of information behind the deficiencies and the needs behind the study. The technical studies were all completed. One of the most important things to identify here is that, even though Proposition 400 allowed us to make a bold step in transit planning and transit operation in the Valley, what we're finding is that it doesn't meet everything that needs to be done to provide transit for a metropolitan area that could grow to 12M people.

As we moved forward, there was a major outreach to the public. A survey showed comments such as "old," "slow," and "prehistoric." People were asked "Have you been to other parts of the world or other parts of the United States and what are some of the things you like about those transit systems?" and responses would be "seamless" and "painless." Another thing was trying to look at what peer cities are doing - Atlanta, Dallas, Denver, Salt Lake City, San Diego, and Seattle - looking at how they compare. What we found is that our transit spending is way lower, about \$71 per capita, versus other cities.

There were three scenarios created. We are asking the MAG Regional Council to do, going through the different policy committees, is to accept the study based on those three scenarios and that we move forward with an additional study to hone in on which scenario creates the "biggest bang for our buck." There is another Framework Study underway in Central Phoenix that will have a great influence on the transit framework scenario. 1) Basic mobility - going through and extending what we have for our existing resources and moving that out for another 50 years and see what that does. 2) Moving our enhanced mobility, in other words, comparable to the peer levels - going from \$71 to \$129 per capita. 3) Transit choice, which is moving up from \$71 to \$295 per capita which is the Seattle comparison to see what that does for our different scenarios.

This is the current Transit Plan that is incorporated into the Regional Transportation Plan showing the light rail system in place and the two extensions onto those lines to the north and the east, lines showing various stages of study, and the super grid bus systems that have been identified. We are trying to build upon that and move forward with more transiting ideas. The first scenario is if we took this out to 2030 or 2050, what would be some of the other transiting ideas we would have. There are identification of other high capacity corridors along 59th Ave. in the West Valley along Scottsdale Road, moving down along Baseline Road - other potential opportunities. Moving forward is scenario 2, looking at trying to provide more peak level service along commuter rail routes. Scenario 3, if we want to make everything work to where we were spending the same as what we had in Seattle, there would be more transit corridors identified. Looking at this, we're finding out that we're not really meeting all the needs, but are doing our best to meet as much as we can.

The other important factor in all of the scenarios was looking at regional intermodal facilities, where there

is a lot of transfer between modes as well as being able to provide connections to a number of the transportation corridors, and then also an aggressive look at corridors that are needed beyond 2030, most of which are out in the Hassayampa Valley area, to provide transit opportunities out there and not just providing surface transportation. The expenditure amount for scenario 1 was not too much greater - another \$2B. Scenario 3 looks at roughly \$18B expenditure over the next few years, which is not funded.

This is what we have been requested from our Transportation Policy Committee as well as the Regional Council on acceptance of the Study. These are some of the future planning actions that we see going forward and moving forward with a number of initiatives to make some of these things a reality. The Regional Transit Foundation is important because there is a lot of discussion about bringing more regional transit planning capabilities into MAG giving them more of a regional flavor so we can make certain our investments are done across the board regionally. Right now, they're handled by individual modes such as Metro and RPG. As they were moving forward, they looked to see how much more transit boardings we would have in terms of increase in ridership. Up to almost 30% was identified in scenario 3. All scenarios are trying to address transiting opportunity and capacity for the area.

In the end, you will see rail transit and extension corridors -- trying to blend everything together, building upon the transiting scenarios identified in both Hassayampa and Hidden Valley, but also trying to build everything to the central area and moving forward with the frameworks in order to have a more cohesive transit operation for the metropolitan area. Kevin Wallace is the Transit Program Manager and he can provide more information or give a Board presentation to see where we're going with the transiting opportunities in the MAG region.

FELIPE ZUBIA: You hit on a couple questions I had towards the end dealing with the ridership in scenario 3 that you talked about increasing ridership to 30.2%. I know this is preliminary and general, but if we're talking about extending rail out 20-30 miles beyond where it is now - rail transit, bus rapid transit, whatever the case may be where transit is concerned - we're not going to be able to fund that without any significant increase in ridership. It seems to me that we're spreading the whole system thin without a lot of capital to build it on and 2) without any ridership, we're not going to have any money to operate and maintain that. So, are we looking at how do we increase that ridership, not only from a public information standpoint, but how do you start integrating land use and transportation decisions more seamlessly at the MAG level?

BOB HAZLETT: The thing about transit and it was always important to recognize that transit does have a very important land use component. It has been proven case and case again that you need the densities to support the transit and those densities have to be along the transit lines themselves. As it stands right now in the Phoenix metropolitan area, we are not as dense as some other parts of the world in terms of being able to provide that. I think what is extremely important here is to start mapping these things out and start identifying these as potentials and working with our land use planning partners, that is, the cities and towns. MAG does not do land use planning. We mainly respond to land use planning that has been identified by the cities and towns and so, what I think we've done is we've tried to lay out a scenario for transit and hopefully we can work with our cities that they can work to get those densities in place and make these transit operations more successful. We are never going to be in a situation where transit is going to fully pay for itself. It's a utility and something that we have to put out there. I think we can start getting the groundwork laid here and if we start to look at this and start to take at being able to maybe spend more dollars, we might be able to find more transit opportunities. The one thing that's very important to note is that with the \$295 per person, Seattle has taken a very aggressive approach to transit and they've done that because they are kind of mandated through their Growth Management Act to control land use and transportation at the same time. We don't have that here in Arizona. If we start putting the lines on the maps and we start talking about it, we can work with our other planning partners to get some of these things moved forward.

FELIPE ZUBIA: I understand that each jurisdiction is going to be touchy about any kind of regional oversight with regard to land use decisions, but is there an opportunity where maybe MAG can come up with a best practices document that really doesn't have to be adopted by the cities or MAG, but at least something that the cities can have if they do want to start planning for alternatives to just building roadways?

BOB HAZLETT: To that end, yes, MAG can certainly start to show that if we start to take these approaches and we don't really have to go much beyond the value of the sum here to start showing some of the benefits to doing some good, integrated transit-oriented development in the metropolitan area. Some of the things starting to occur in downtown Tempe are remarkable and a lot of that wouldn't be in place if we didn't have the focus on transit that we have in that area. We can't put all our eggs in the transit basket and I've seen some cities do that to the extent of not doing anything with their service streets, because then you have a lot of congestion and with the congestion comes air quality concerns. Here in the Phoenix metropolitan area, we're doing everything we can to mitigate our air quality and that means we have to keep people moving.

FELIPE ZUBIA: How do you think it would be received at MAG, at the jurisdictional level, if there is discussion like that to take place?

BOB HAZLETT: As you know, there are different cities that have different philosophies on how they do their land use planning. We have cities that are fairly young and are trying to get as much of a land use database as they possibly can have so they can have as aggressive a sales tax revenue they can do. Then you have the tourist cities wanting to slow it down to work it out. In the MAG system, we have a one vote per member agency rule and it will be interesting to see where that will take us.

FELIPE ZUBIA: You raised the issue of funding and I've raised the same issue or question to ADOT staff. Is there going to be any discussion as to the funding -- I'm not talking about politics about whether or not a sales tax will go forward or not, but what is the best way for future funding of the improvements? Is there going to be any of that discussion at the MAG level before the US DOT acts on something? Where do see that going?

BOB HAZLETT: We just saw this through our recertification when the Federal Highway was in and they were looking at the different things we were doing, and they applauded our whole framework planning process as being something that let us go beyond that mythical 20 year horizon. We did the 20 year horizon because that's where we could see our available revenues with some certainty and say that's what we think we can work with, but when the original framework was laid out for the Regional Freeway Program that was done in 1960 and it took us 48 years to complete it. Both the Federal Highway Administration and FTA were complimentary on our process. What we were able to do was we were able to say we're moving towards a framework of something - we have something identified in Hidden Valley, we have transit framework that's been identified and it's from that that we can help to figure out what are our long range needs. A lot of the corridors are 50/60 year corridors and it's going to take US DOT surface transportation policy funding acts to work through this. We've been able to say don't just look at the next five years, let's look all the way out to the future and start to get an idea of what it is that we need to do to take care of transportation because transportation drives our economy.

FELIPE ZUBIA: You mentioned earlier contact sensitive solutions for street design. Is there any formal policy MAG has on that or are they developing any sort of adoption of the ITE standard in that regard?

BOB HAZLETT: MAG doesn't have a formal policy on that, but we are pushing for it wherever we possibly can. We think CSS is a remarkable way of looking at things. You are a part of the Freeway Balancing Program we just completed here and we worked with some of those CSS principles on South Mountain, for example, by going to the narrower footprint and trying to figure out ways we can provide

more ideas in the corridor that might work with the residents in Awatukee and Levine, instead of just saying we're going to do the standard 10-lane cross-section. We went ahead and narrowed it down adding a bike path. We've done a lot of things to push towards CSS. I know MAG is going to do whatever it can to try and push towards that because it makes a lot of sense and gives you a roadway that interacts well with the community and at the same time you don't spend as much money as you think you would. SR179 in Sedona is an example of that. There isn't a formal policy on it. Let's get the kind of corridors that are almost freeway type volumes, but safer and can blend into the environment better.

FELIPE ZUBIA: One of the things we can be doing better as a transportation planning community is planning. MAG has been on the forefront in the State as pressing the planning issue, but we could be doing even more. We've been trying to keep up with designating corridors and now we're at a point where we can start looking at long term issues.

BOB HAZLETT: If you go back to Hassayampa and Hidden Valley, if we stuck with our regular arterial and freeway combination, we would have more capacity freeway corridor mileage identified. All the models we ran told us we needed more freeways, but these are areas of the Valley that are still fairly pristine and it doesn't make sense to build freeways everywhere and so that's how the parkway concept came up. We think it has a lot of potential for the State on the whole.

ITEM 2: PAG Rural Transportation Plan Update
PAG staff will brief the Board on the status of the Rural Transportation Plan.
(For information and discussion only – PAG Staff)

CHERIE CAMPBELL: I'm going to talk about our 2040 Regional Transportation Plan, which is fiscally-constrained. We're only taking a look at what we think we can build for the revenues that we expect to have available during that time period. Although I'm presenting information about that Plan, we're still in the midst of that process. We have a 2030 Plan that was adopted in 2006 at about the same time the Regional Transportation Authority election was passed in Pima County. Now we're looking beyond 2030 and doing a Plan for what we think we can actually afford during that time frame. The draft will be taken to our Regional Council in January and then it will be to okay it to go out for further public review. Our schedule is to adopt the Plan by June of next year.

We're essentially in the 3rd phase where we're finalizing alternatives and taking information to the public before we finalize the Plan itself. Plan development was guided by a broad-based task force of 34 members, many of whom were from the jurisdictions themselves, but also included interest groups such as bicycle and pedestrian, environmental, business and economic development, freight, elderly and disabled, schools, transit, low income, and minority. During the process, we've had regular updates presented to the Transportation Planning Committee and Regional Council.

Activities we've completed to date: Established a task force, gone through an initial phase of public involvement; met with stakeholders, interest groups, jurisdictions; completed regional growth and traffic projections, developed a range of fact sheets and other public materials [booklet handed out]; 20 "think tank" sessions for open houses to develop vision, goals, and revenues; developed candidate lists of projects, developed various multiple split alternates for the Plan.

Our next steps including taking the Plan to the public and getting Regional Council approval. We're also involved in traffic and air quality modeling and environmental Title VI analysis. The fact sheets have been supplemented with the "think tank" sessions, web page information, surveys, online comment forms, and open houses throughout the region.

We found it necessary to explain the similarities between this effort and other ongoing planning activities. First is the RTA which was approved in 2006. At the same time, we do a Transportation Improvement

Program. The Arizona bqAZ study is ongoing. High capacity transit study, bicycle plan, congestion management process, and university needs study have been done. This is the simplest way we could explain it to the public where the long range plan looks at everything. The Transportation Improvement Program shows the first five years; the RTA plan is tied to a tax and goes through 2026.

Trends identified were increases in population, employment, and travel. We're look at a population today of 1M and will close to double by 2040 to about 1.8M. The vehicle miles traveled will more than double from 28M vehicle miles traveled a day to in excess of 75M a day. We're looking at a huge growth in travel throughout the region.

Information presented to the public included the Sun Corridor, population employment today and in the future, regional mapping today and 2040, population density, and employment density. Congestion maps showed red (high congestion) throughout a lot of the region, more so in peak hours. We also looked at changes in travel time with an example presented to the public. The darker line is the longer time it takes to travel with the example looking at the distance driving from downtown to the University of Arizona today and in 2040, as well as driving downtown to the University Tech Park out east. Changes in our type of need not only show a huge population growth, but large increases in population of 65 and older meaning we will have different types of needs that will have to be addressed in the future.

"Think tank" is a computer based interactive program and included in your packet is a workbook generated to lead participants through those "Think tank" sessions. They involve questions, answers, information; individuals are free through the use of a computer to insert their opinions and brainstorm. The value of the session is that it be done instantaneously with immediate results and reports, which can rank, categorize, and sort information quickly. We had a capacity to do 21 individuals at a session and we did 20 sessions reaching over 300 participants including various interest groups, homeowner associations and whoever showed an interest. We have over 7,000 different comments we used as we moved forward with plan development.

An example of immediate results showed the highest ranked response was to build an inner city passenger rail between Tucson and Phoenix, followed by widening I-10 and I-19, widening other interstates outside of Tucson, widening State Routes, building new freeway segments in Tucson or on the perimeter, building a new freeway through Tucson, and then a level freeway which had the lowest response. Through a series of questions we were able to generate instantaneous reports.

Our group moved forward with the development of a Vision and Goals Statement for the 2040 RTP. The RTP envisions a premier, energy efficient, and environmentally responsible regional transportation system that is interconnected, multi-modal, technologically advanced, and integrated with sustainable land use patterns. Within that Vision Statement there are a variety of more specific goals including expanding multi-modal choices, promoting a sustainable land use, maintaining a viable economy, enhancing safety, environmental stewardship, increase accessibility, optimize system performance, and identifying how we would get there via the public, advanced technologies, ensuring funding, ensuring on time project delivery, and accountability.

The group settled on a mode split that was similar to what was approved by the voters with the RTA wherein 57% of the money would go to roadways, 28.5% to transit, 11.5% to programs, and 3% to bike pads. These are different from our previous 2040 plan which had 1% to a bike pad, 15% to transit, and the balance between programs and roadways. In this scenario, for every dollar spent on transit, we're spending two on roadways. From a funding perspective, we didn't have a lot of money to work with and the money we're talking about assumes extension of our RTA tax beyond 2026. Without that, we'll be in dire straits. The projected revenues were roughly \$18B. Committed funds was a huge number and the reason for that is, in many respects, the RTA itself. We decided we needed to ensure that all the RTA projects are built. That's our commitment to the voters, so we had to look at that plan and allocate a large amount of funding to make up any shortfalls we anticipated would not be available in order to complete

those RTA projects. We committed a lot of funds to operations and maintenance and to finishing the projects included in our Five-Year Transportation Improvement Program. That left over \$5.2B through 2040 to build new projects. It's not much money.

From a regional roadway perspective, the group ultimately focused on eight major new roadway projects. Those include improvements to I-10, both east and west out of Tucson, improvements to I-19, to SRs 86 and 77, extension of Barraza-Aviation Corridor (SR 210) linking with I-10, to Valencia and South Sahuarita Road. Both of those were key because they are on the southeast side of town which is the area that most of the growth we anticipate will occur. The jurisdictions have projects where they have funding coming into their areas and they identified about 80 different local projects that would be on the roadway list. On the draft list, the red is committed projects and the blue is new projects. The Regional Council has not yet taken action on this.

We have major local transit projects we are incorporating into the Plan and because of the shift we're seeing in more money spent on transit, the bulk of the RTA extension would go towards new transit projects. The Plan right now shows a regional component of an inner city rail from Tucson to Phoenix including the right-of-way acquisition as part of our funded component. It will be showing expansion to the current regional system, bus rapid transit on six corridors including Broadway, Oracle, and Grant; and the extension to El Con Mall and the Laos Transit Center of the modern streetcar under development going from the University to downtown. We are also looking at bus rapid transit and express buses on these other corridors. The ultimate goal for I-10 and I-19 would be to move from express bus to bus rapid transit then to commuter rail. We have a major expansion of the bicycle and pedestrian program looking at the need to provide alternate modes. Projects include an urban loop, new bicycle boulevards more neighborhood-oriented providing safe connections for bicyclists to get across town without crossing major arterials, pedestrian signal crossings, and safe routes to school.

Regional programs include safety, intelligent transportation systems, travel and land management to reduce the number of automobile trips throughout the region, alternative energy programs, aerial mapping, emergency management, and other alternate modes. Another example is a fiberoptic communications ring throughout the region so we can take advantage of enhanced communications and technologies.

We have provided some recommendations to the bqAZ study. Those recommendations are not fiscally constrained. Our task force put a lot of work into identifying projects we would like even though we perhaps cannot afford them. Again, there is a heavy emphasis on transit. We have about 944 miles of roadway projects in that scenario and about 650 in-transit miles. These have not been adopted yet by our Regional Council. They are seeing the recommendations this Thursday and should they make a change, we will convey that information to ADOT for the bqAZ.

On a map of the roadway showing major new corridors, you will see a lot of those new roadway corridors are in the northwest and southeast. The southeast shows a new population increase of 600K -- it's close to another Tucson city in this area. In the northwest, there was a freeway coming into the area from Pinal County that at one point was shown going through the Valley and swinging back to I-10. Pima County itself has issued a resolution against that extension going through, so it is not shown on the map. Alternately, the roadway is shown coming in, swinging along Tangerine, and then back over to Oracle Road. The Regional Council will be looking at this on Thursday and should there be any change situation, the information will be made available to you.

From a transit perspective, there are a lot of new transit facilities: rails throughout the I-10 corridor, express bus, BRT throughout the region. There is a major disconnect as far as traffic is concerned between what we're showing in our bqAZ scenario and how it accommodates projected traffic. On the average -- and there are a couple of different scenarios that the ADOT consultants looked at -- there are

840K trips per day between Pinal and Pima Counties. With the roadway, rail, and transit capacity increases we show on our Plan and ADOT has incorporated, they could accommodate perhaps 600K of those trips, meaning that 240K trips or more per day cannot be accommodated. It's actually the worst location in the State in that regard. The problem cannot be solved by a local plan or a regional plan and, to that end, our task force has recommended looking at new policies and additional planning between ADOT, Pinal, Maricopa, and Pima Counties so we can better address and deal with the tremendous growth and congestion we are going to see in the Sun Corridor.

STEVE CHRISTY: Cherie, can you touch briefly on the economic downturn impact on the RTA as far as the tax increase and revenues thereof?

CHERIE CAMPBELL: We've seen declines in revenues over what we had anticipated. It started about February of 2008 and has been sharply increased this year in 2009. The highest decrease we saw was probably in the range of 18% over what we had anticipated, but that seems to have slowed and I don't think the decreases were as bad as you saw in Maricopa County.

STEVE CHRISTY: Do you anticipate seeing any slowing or backing up of RTA projects as a result?

CHERIE CAMPBELL: Definitely, our legislation with the RTA is a little bit different than it was in Maricopa County. We had to commit to a start date for every project and to spend a certain amount of money on those projects, so we can't push the start dates off. To make sure that's happening, we are committing a lot of our regional money from other areas, both Federal, Regional, and Local HURF and impact fees from the jurisdictions to get the projects done. We're seeing a greater draw on our regional money than we had hoped would occur. We are committed to get those projects done and meet the schedules that were included in the ballot information to the voters. One of the good things happening now is even though revenues are down, we are seeing cost savings in the bids coming in, so we're hopeful that will help alleviate some of the concerns we have.

BOB MONTOYA: Did I hear correctly that your plan is at odds with the bqAZ plan?

CHERIE CAMPBELL: The bqAZ information we provided to the State does not accommodate the amount of traffic you're going to see between Pima and Pinal Counties. It's a difficult question to resolve. Perhaps the discrepancy is exacerbated by the fact that we don't have that one roadway in the Avra Valley area that could potentially help some of the traffic coming in from Pinal County. Even with that, we still have a huge problem and very little opportunity to solve it. There's only on this scenario three connection points between Pima and Pinal Counties. There's Oracle Road, I-10, and the new roadway if that does occur, and yet we have a need for another 10-lane freeway there to accommodate the deficiency in traffic. In our plan, we're showing a light rail transit on Oracle as well as widening to 8-lanes and hopefully that will help. The information the State has matches our plan at this point. What I don't know is whether our Regional Council will make any changes to this map that would change what ADOT has right now.

BOB MONTOYA: How does bqAZ and Pima, if they're not agreeing, how are we going to get that agreement to make the plan valid?

CHERIE CAMPBELL: The plans agree. There's just a traffic issue regardless.

BOB MONTOYA: If there's a traffic issue, then the plans don't work.

CHERIE CAMPBELL: Right now our plans agree and we can't accommodate the traffic. If we both change both of our plans, we still couldn't accommodate the traffic.

FELIPE ZUBIA: What would solve that problem? A new facility?

CHERIE CAMPBELL: We need to study it to determine what the solution is.

FELIPE ZUBIA: Have you heard of the Arizona Parkway?

CHERIE CAMPBELL: Yes, and we're looking at that for some roadways in our region.

BOB MONTOYA: When we adopt this plan, if we have these two that don't address the issue, why would we adopt a plan that has that shortfall?

FELIPE ZUBIA: I'm going to jump in and answer. We're not adopting this Plan. There's no provision that has us adopting or accepting the bqAZ 40-year Plan. To the extent that we address it, we'll address it in the Statewide Plan which just got kicked off so that question will be hanging out there. At some point, we need to address that and how that happens, I couldn't tell you right now.

JOHN MCNAMARA: When the time comes in January, we'll be accepting the Statewide Framework Program and the State Long Range Plan which is actually a 20-year horizon as opposed to the 40-year horizon. What we have is an unmet need. Part of the 2050 need is being met, but not all. Would additional facilities provide some of that unmet need? The answer is yes. It could be transit, it could be roadways, or some combination, and even land use policy.

BOB MONTOYA: I would hope that you would continue to address that issue so we're not waiting until 20-30 years down the road.

CHERIE CAMPBELL: In front of our Board Thursday is a resolution to participate with Maricopa and Pinal Counties in planning for the Sun Corridor. I'm sure that will be adopted. We want ADOT in that partnership as well.

BILL FELDMEIERS: You mentioned a couple of times Pinal County traffic. You're talking about I-10 traffic?

CHERIE CAMPBELL: Traffic between Pinal and Pima Counties. The bulk probably is on I-10, but there's a lot of traffic on Oracle Road.

BILL FELDMEIERS: It seems we're talking around this question. Are folks concerned about not wanting to validate this I-10 bypass?

CHERIE CAMPBELL: The bypass isn't going to solve the problem, but the task force working on this plan felt it could not recommend that bypass because Pima County has a resolution in place against it. Our Regional Council may endorse the recommendations of the task force, but there is a possibility they could decide to include that bypass. But it's not going to solve the problem even if it's included.

STEVE CHRISTY: Predominately the purpose behind the bypass either on the north side of the Catalinas or West Valley there is to divert truck traffic; am I right?

CHERIE CAMPBELL: It's another option to accommodate truck traffic. Some truck traffic would not take it because it is a longer route, but if it's a faster route, they might. Right now, with the volume of truck traffic on I-10, it's wise to present any options that we can.

STEVE CHRISTY: But it's not an alternative mass traffic diversion as much as it is for trucks. That was my understanding.

CHERIE CAMPBELL: It's both. There's going to be growth in Pinal County to the north and in portions of Pima County as well as areas to the south. It would serve commuter as well as truck traffic.

VICTOR FLORES: There is very little information and perhaps the I-19 has been dismissed as having potential problems if they do invest in the infrastructure they're talking about in Guaymas and south of the border. There isn't anything addressing -- bqAZ doesn't seem to have anything. Going up to 2050, it seems like there ought to be at least an asterisk that suggests they'll have a port in Guaymas but there's a lot of talk about investing and with the fact that the new Governor is of the same party as the President who has committed to send dollars, there ought to be some consideration aside from -- I think there was improvements up to the border.

CHERIE CAMPBELL: We were looking at an 8-lane facility. We're also recommending a third rail line for freight that would go south to the Nogales area. I think there was a recommendation of bqAZ that showed that going through Organ Pipe and we're not keen on that. One, for the environmental aspects of going through there, as well as it would bypass the Tucson area, so we'd like to see that third rail line somewhere in our area.

JOHN MCNAMARA: The bqAZ study does assume Guaymas will be improved. There is a multitude of facilities that will handle that and decrease traffic out of Guaymas. Widening I-19, enhancing capacity on the existing Union Pacific Nogales subdivision with a bypass around Nogales for freight is very important because it's a bottleneck right now through Nogales, Mexico as well as Nogales, Arizona. And then, eventual widening of State Road 85 -- we have downgraded the rail corridor on 85 and said that's something to study, not necessarily something we're recommending needs to happen. If there was a freight corridor there, it has to be in the ADOT right-of-way and not take additional lands. We're satisfied that our travel demand model in 2050 more than accommodates that traffic.

FELIPE ZUBIA: You answered the questions I asked Bob with regard to best practices on design of roadways, as well as land use transportation, has PAG picked up those conversations or have any interest in picking those up?

CHERIE CAMPBELL: What we're doing with our 2040 is developing "implementation strategies." They're not policies; we can't impose them on any of the jurisdictions because they control their own land use, but we are developing these strategies and they will address promoting transit-oriented development, high densities along the transit corridors, building complete streets when building a roadway to accommodate different modes, using intelligent transportation systems to relieve capacity wherever possible - that type of thing. We are working on that aspect of the Plan and those will be presented to our Regional Council before June of next year. The jurisdictions will be encouraged to incorporate them to the extent that they can into their own administrative policies or codes.

FELIPE ZUBIA: The Regional Council itself will act on those strategies or accept them?

CHERIE CAMPBELL: Yes, and Pima County already has an environmentally sensitive design for roadway standards. Environment is a key interest in our region.

ITEM 3: ADOT bqAZ Update and Recommendations
ADOT staff will brief the Board on the status of the bqAZ.
(For information and discussion only -- James Zumpf and John McNamara)

JAMES ZUMPF: We have an update on the Framework Studies we've been doing since mid- to late 2007. We've got a draft final report for your review. A packet of information is in front of you, which

includes the Framework Study final report in draft form, the Statewide Rail Framework final report in draft, both company executive summaries, today's PowerPoint presentation, and a map of the recommended scenarios. This presentation is a continuation of the presentation we gave to the Board in Cottonwood last summer. Up to that point, we showed you the three scenarios and now we're moving into how we drafted the recommended scenario, what's entailed in the scenario, how we got there, some of the coordination that went into the recommended scenarios such as working with partners to the south in Sonora, Mexico and the states around us.

When we met with folks who did the coordination, they always asked why we were doing the visioning process. Right now, we're in an economic downturn, but when the population and economy start to pick back up, we'll need to provide a strategic vision for transportation. We put together a flow chart showing where we're at with the visioning process. We're looking out 2050 and did this visioning process also at the request of the MPO and COG Associations. When they saw the success that the MAG region had, they wanted to do the same at the State level. As we developed the Statewide framework, we looked at improving mobility and accessibility, economic growth, sustainable development, land use planning, transportation planning, and natural resources, as well as improving safety and security. That's the long range vision that we've set and will work into our federally mandated long range transportation plan. It will be fiscally constrained, identify goals and objectives, set forth performance measurements, and will look at revenue streams including potential investments for getting the money to fund those projects in the 20 year plan. The priorities we set into the Long Range Plan will move projects into our 5-Year Construction Program.

JOHN MCNAMARA: We're not going to repeat any of the presentation made in Cottonwood and are going to focus on the recommendations moving forward. We have an extensive vision and series of guiding principles to set that vision for 2050. This is the first time ADOT has done a long range vision like this and one of the first times any DOT across the country has done that. Six key points form the foundation for this long range vision. Two transportation-oriented principles there in terms of improvement, multimodal mobility, and accessibility throughout the State and ensuring safety and security, all of which are typically found in an effort like this. As we moved into thinking about the future and lessons learned in the last five to ten years, as well as the direction coming out of Washington, we see a series of things coming at us:

- Improved technology and innovation in transportation, both in terms of mobility and ways to track and analyze that movement to possibly generate revenue in the future;
- supporting economic growth and connectivity;
- promoting a sustainable development pattern to link land use and transportation;
- considering the natural environment in moving forward.

All of this is in your documents and PowerPoint Presentation. We worked on a regional basis and developed three scenarios in each of the regions around the State, incorporated the MAG and PAG work, the Transit Framework Committee, recommended transit intensive scenario, and the 2040 Scenario Pima out of the PAG region -- all of which are being brought together in a "Recommended Scenario." When being put together, we made sure it all worked, and made sure that principles that are of concern Statewide were being recognized which is why we convened a series of common interest groups and asked those people from economic development, community development, natural resource, and Tribal community perspectives if we were thinking about all the key things in terms of connectivity on a Statewide basis and not just thinking regionally. In addition, we worked with the American and Sonora bordering states as well as the SCT, essentially the FHWA of Mexico. This has been a collaborative process. There has been extensive opportunity for public involvement, both at the regional and State level in terms of focus, working, and interest groups coming together; local elected official consultations, and a series of a rail advisory, regional advisory, Framework Management Committee, and Policy Committee teams to guide the overall statewide effort. In working with the bordering states, we worked with

organization within those states, i.e., COGs and MPOs and rail organizations. And in Sonora, communications on an ongoing basis with the Port of Guaymas as well as the Sonoran Transportation Department, and what is going on in the whole northern tier of Mexico relative to port improvements and new development.

Scenario A was fairly roadway heavy and emphasized maximizing personal mobility, and had a trends transit component in terms of what's being invested in transit today throughout the State. Scenario B was more of a heavy transit-oriented scenario. It still had a strong roadway network, but had a more enhanced transit investment approach in terms of rail and transit involvement. The intent was trying to capture regular trips for employment, entertainment, and educational purposes which are the kinds of trips that can be captured in terms of transit. Both A and B relied almost exclusively on the current trends in general planning in terms of land use and according to the State laws relative to smart growth. Scenario C became more of a balance scenario. It had enhanced transit (not as much as B) and the roadway network from Scenario A, but it also began to assume an increase in focused growth. We're seeing this coming out of Washington and being discussed nationally at major transportation organizations. We're going to be moving in the future and assuming the new Transportation Act will begin to integrate more of a land use approach in transportation and understanding those requirements. And through good land use planning, begin to cut down on trips creating less demand on transit and roadways. Scenario C really reflected that type of a future.

As we did the rural consultation, worked with the common interest groups and bordering states, we heard that Scenario A really is a scenario that heavily supports the out-state areas. We have to have that connectivity. Those roadways are the lifelines to our small cities and towns and the Tribal Communities. We do need to enhance transit; particularly, intercity bus service, in those areas, and we need to start small circulator services like in the northwest tri-city region in Yuma and elsewhere.

However, Scenario C with its focus on land use and transportation really become a good, solid direction that we need to move in, in the MAG and PAG regions and the Sun Corridor in-between. That's the area where 75-80% of our population and employment is going to live and work in the year 2040, and 2050 as we get out there. What we've learned through our modeling is we are going to see a new way of moving and we have to have more of a multimodal system to accommodate the travel demand. Roadways are not going to be able to support it.

We worked to combine the best elements of Scenario A with the best elements of Scenario C to create the overall Recommended Scenario which will involve:

- Relieve congestion through enhanced capacity. We are not ignoring the existing system; it needs to be maintained, improved, and widened
- Safety improvements in the rural areas from both a transit and roadway perspective
- Selective widenings and taking all the freeways to 6-lanes at a minimum in the rural areas and, in some cases, 8-lanes such as I-19 or wider
- I-10 will be 10-lanes between Phoenix and Tucson in 2050

We have tried to be careful from an environmental perspective. Environment scans were done in the Hidden and Hassayampa Valley studies where all factors were looked at from slopes to drainage to cultural resources and hazardous materials. What we heard loud and clear from the natural resource agencies and the environmental organizations is where possible, try to use existing corridors because they've already created a disturbance and the environment, to some extent, has adjusted to those disturbances. Where we need new corridors, let's figure out the least sensitive place to put them. We also looked to build a multimodal spine in the Sun Corridor between Phoenix and Tucson, eventually extending into Nogales and the Prescott areas. We began to look at integrating high speed rail which we think will be in our future. That becomes an issue of working and coordinating with adjacent states.

In terms of maintenance and improving the existing system, we need to remember we may be enhancing transit, but the transit has to run on something, so it needs a good roadway system. We looked at creating alternative high capacity routes. There's primarily one way to go north and south right now through the center of the State and that's I-17 and expanding it to 6-lanes will be helpful and can be accomplished in a fairly environmentally sensitive way, but that isn't going to handle all the travel demands. So, creating improvements to the northeast through Basin and ultimately to I-40, doing the same thing through the Prescott Valley and up to I-40, the Hassayampa Freeway looping around the western part of the Phoenix metro area, and along the Peavine Rail Corridor and generally all the way up through the Prescott area into I-40. The idea was also touched on of US 93 in coordination with the Hassayampa Freeway possibly going to an interstate status connecting Las Vegas and Phoenix. Down to south, using I-10 to enhance capacity, the North-South Freeway which will connect the Easy Valley to I-10 in the Eloy area, a further eastern corridor from Florence Junction to I-10, and enhancing State Route 79 in Pima County.

In terms of transit, enhancement of intercity bus connections or creating new services, enhancing and expanding local transit services surrounding smaller communities, developing express bus and bus rapid transit servicing commute trips in and out of metropolitan areas. As the metropolitan begins to develop, there will be additional employment creating an intense corridor of transportation between employment and residential.

Adding onto that is rail, freight and passenger. Intercity rail is a high priority between Phoenix and Tucson, and extending it further south to Nogales, further north to Prescott, and also Flagstaff making a connection with the Grand Canyon Railway and the Amtrak services on the Burlington Northern Santa Fe. We are looking to reinstate service on the Wellton branch, the Union Pacific branch which is out of service west of Palo Verde. As we increase in population we're going to need that access from the west ports into the Phoenix metro area and not the way it currently occurs which is down to Tucson and backing up into Phoenix. That also could provide additional access back in for Amtrak.

Both MAG and PAG have been studying commuter rail opportunities. MAG is activity involved in studying three corridors as well as a system plan; PAG region recently completed their high capacity study. And, in both of those commuter rail will provide a real opportunity to run those longer distances than light rail runs -- more like 20-50 miles out with a limited stop situation particularly during peak periods. Our situation is ripe for that kind of service in the future.

The federal high speed rail initiative had a gap missing which was the intermountain west. There was no high speed rail recommended in Arizona, New Mexico, Colorado, Nevada, or Utah. That caused a firestorm of interest politically and there is now a major effort going on and a group organized (the "Western High Speed Rail Alliance") to begin thinking about a network within the west which would eventually connect to California and further eastward to the Front Range metro area of Albuquerque up through Colorado Springs into Denver.

We have identified five corridors as potentials which are simply ideas and not necessarily to be envisioned as exactly those corridors. This will occur through a process of looking at an entire network over the next couple of years as the Western High Speed Rail Alliance gets moving forward. We've identified the advantages to that and, as we look at the transportation and travel demand in the southwest when we modeled Southern California, all of Arizona, southern Nevada, Utah, New Mexico, Sonora, and Baja California, there is an anticipated 78% population increase between now and 2050.

We have a slide for each of the regions throughout the State and you do have a copy of this presentation. You will have the opportunity to purview this document and comment to us over the next couple of weeks, so we can get into this in more detail when we see you on the 18th.

- The northeast area - widening of regional roadways; one new road in the Navajo Nation; corridor improvements; widening of 89 and 160; improvement to local transit; safe improvements relative to unbridged crossing, bus stop shelters and pull-offs
- Flagstaff/Prescott - widening of I-17 and I-40; creating new corridor along the Peavine Railroad to Hassayampa extended north of Wickenburg west of Prescott and connecting with 89 up to Ash Fork; extension of Great Western Corridor to provide an eastern route around Prescott Valley; intensify transit services; improved transportation; reinstating passenger service and extension of intercity rail north of Wickenburg to Prescott and into Flagstaff
- Northwestern State tri-city area - US 93 possibly moving to interstate status or a 6-lane access controlled with 8-lane section of I-40; enhanced transit services; additional widenings; new bypass around Bullhead City; parkway type bypass around Lake Havasu; enhanced intercity bus service
- Yuma area - widening I-8 and I-10 to 6-lanes; improving 72 connection with I-10; east/west expressway; roadway improvements between San Louis and Yuma area; enhancing transit services; reinstating Wellton freight trail line
- Southeast area - widening I-10 to 6-lanes from Tucson to border; widening SR-70; improving SR-90; widening I-19 to 8-lanes; improvements to rail corridor; enhanced transit services
- East of Flagstaff and Payson - enhanced services providing alternative for north/south movement; finish widening of 260; Payson bypass; transit services; enhanced intercity bus service
- Sun Corridor - seamless coordination between regional framework planning and MAG and PAG regions along with connectivity work; Hassayampa Freeway connection; SR-79 improvements; I-10 widening to 10-lanes; commuter rail in and out of Tucson and eventually Phoenix for intercity rail; parkway system

We did not solve every problem in the State. There are still three things we'd like to lay out for future consideration that need additional attention and will probably take working with individual interest groups, particularly economic development and natural resource agencies, as well as transportation planning. In the Sun Corridor, there is probably a 30% range of unmet demand. Being presented to the PAG Regional Council on Thursday will be discussion regarding ongoing work to look at further opportunities. The other two areas are more an environmental issue as opposed to travel demand. The Big Chino area north of Prescott Valley is a unique habitat for pronghorn. There are lot of issues relative to movements back and forth there. The economic development folks in the Prescott area see this as a major opportunity -- the junction of 89 connecting with I-40 as an urban development opportunity. There has been land purchased up there by development firms and the area is a major aquifer resource for water into the Prescott Valley area. There are things converging in that location and, as a result, the environmental groups are concerned that roadway improvements on the network of major arterial roadways could be an inhibitor to the movement of wildlife. Contact sensitivity in planning and design will be necessary. Another area of sensitivity is in eastern Pinal County, a 275 square mile State land piece that's envisioned by the land department to be developed, but from 79 eastward is where there are major slopes, wildlife habitat, and unique open space opportunities. The Pinal County Comprehensive Plan identifies a number of activity centers and the Plan envisions that there will ultimately be urban development in that area. The concern on the part of various natural resource agencies and environmental groups is similar to the Big Chino area in that there could be conflict between urban development and wildlife and the corresponding transportation and other infrastructure.

It's important to remember this is a 2050 vision for transportation and the proposals are only conceptual in nature.

The Rail Study went on throughout 2009 and was a Statewide, not regional, study. A rail technical advisory team was set up which met a number of times ultimately identifying five key issues and moving into development of strategic rail concepts and the Statewide Rail Vision which was incorporated into the Statewide Program. Thirteen strategic opportunities were identified, which were organized into seven

“pursuit” areas. The rail framework is expected to provide the basis for rail elements in both the Long Range Plan and the new federally-mandated State Rail Plan. This is a new requirement from Washington; ADOT will be moving ahead in the future to develop a State Rail Plan. It is estimated that 75% of the work is already done.

In the passenger rail area, we will be looking at developing the multimodal spine for the Sun Corridor made up of intercity rail as well as commuter rail extensions, developing a dedicated funding source for rail, and working with other states in the west to plan an integrated high speed rail network. In the freight area, we’re looking to lay the groundwork for freight rail investment statewide, working with the public sector and the private railroads. Relations between the State and railroads has not always been good and needs to improve in order to enhance capacity on the interstate highway system. Moving the rail farther south to Gila Bend connecting to the UP main line may provide an opportunity to facilitate moving the yards out to the Surprise area where BNSF has acquired land. UP has acquired land next to the Buckeye Airport area for a new classification facility and is negotiating with the State Land Department to a classification facility in Red Rock. All of that will help facilitate implementing commuter rail in the two metropolitan areas. There has been discussion with UP and PAG regarding studying a bypass around Tucson to the west and south for rail as well as roadway. Other discussions included grade crossing improvements, a rail bypass in the Flagstaff area, and grade separation improvements.

Guaymas port improvements are well underway. There are opportunities for a number of other existing ports in Mexico, improving their facilities along with the potential to develop a new container port on the west coast of Baja California. If that were to occur, they would want to build a rail line north connecting to the American railroad system, notably the UP line; Yuma provides one of the best opportunities for that connectivity. Then, if the Wellton Branch was open and the Hassayampa Corridor was completed, that could connect ultimately to the BNSF corridor, opening up opportunities for inland ports in Arizona for freight classification and industrial development in the surrounding properties.

We need to think through rail organization opportunities within the State. We didn’t presuppose any particular model, but in the Rail Study, you will see some of the best practices going on around the country. Some of those best practices include DOT responsibility for all rail activities, some have a separate rail organization, and some partner with local and regional agencies. Examples of positives and negatives of each of the best practices was provided.

We just held a series of open houses across the State to roll all this out in a draft format. We presented the entire Statewide Transportation Plan and Framework in Flagstaff, Mesa, and Tucson, with good attendance. We tried to explain the context of everything in terms of the vision and guiding principles and led them into a discussion of how this transportation network relates to the environment, economic development, community development, and land use and how it achieves safety and security for the State. The effort went well. The meetings were held 11/10, 11/12, and 11/17. The open houses started with a video and we got a lot of good feedback. Everything has been compiled on the website. Comments were recorded. We tended to get very strong support for the overall framework effort, as well as a lot of recognition that we are at a turning point in terms of vehicle technology and moving to a broader based transportation system.

We will be back to see you on 12/18 to talk about your comments. Ultimately, we would like to come before you in mid-January at your Board meeting for acceptance of this effort moving forward and then we will publish the reports after that. Everything done so far has been uploaded into the Long Range Transportation Plan and they are waiting for your acceptance for this to become the foundation for 2050.

There is a Chapter 7 in your report called “Implementation.” We did not tread too deeply into implementation as that is the job of the Long Range Plan. We do have a large section there on funding and it’s not to say any one funding strategy is better, it’s best practices. There’s a survey on funding

opportunities you may want to refer to. The other section that's important in Chapter 7 is the "Policy" section. There is a section dealing with 12 different policy areas and provides discussion on topics such as access management, complete streets, contact sensitive solutions, homeland security, light pollution, safe routes to school, etc. We tried to provide a good discussion as to how each of those policies should relate to Arizona, offering that to the Long Range Plan to carry forward with recommendations to you.

CALL TO AUDIENCE (Information and discussion)

JENNIFER TOTH: Teresa Brice wanted to make you aware of the USDOT, HUD, and EPA Sustainable Communities Initiative that was launched earlier this year. In addition to that, the bqAZ process has spurred a statewide coalition called "Transportation and Livable Communities," with LISC, the Sonoran Institute, AARP -- all of those have created a grassroots effort. We wanted to make sure the Board was aware that there is this discussion happening that's kind of spawned off from the bqAZ Initiative.

MAGILL WEBBER: I am in government relations for the Nature Conservancy. I just wanted to follow up on a couple of points John made with regard to the Chino Valley. I wanted to let you know you do have a copy of a letter that Jim should have distributed to everyone that we sent to ADOT back in June and goes over some of our major points with regard to the bqAZ Framework Studies. In June, the three scenarios came out: the A, B, and C scenarios. And what we did is we took -- the Nature Conservancy spent about 15 years developing one of the most cutting-edge data layers in the country. It has been used around the country for planning and what we did in Arizona is combine 12 biological and ecological studies and put that together in a data layer and overlaid that on top of the bqAZ Scenario A Framework, and came up with some of our recommendations that were addressed in that letter. Of the hundreds of miles of roads statewide, about 5% of those were of concern because they bisected critical core habitat areas. A lot of those are in Yavapai County around the Big Chino area. We have, in the past six months, been a part of ADOT's BQ Transportation Policy Committee and that was an outgrowth of what came out of the studies in the summer. Our Government Relations Directors, Cheryl Lombard, has been sitting on that panel. As a result of some of the discussion coming out of that committee, the Nature Conservancy and the Arizona Game & Fish Department have come together to work out a plan and have been recently meeting with CYMPO. The most recent meeting was last week in Yavapai County. I would strongly encourage from the position of the Nature Conservancy and from the Game & Fish Department that we consider holding off on making any final decisions about what's going on up there. The parties are working to achieve a compromise on where we can put the roads. There's no question that the county wants roads up there and there's a general need with the population growth that's projected in that area, but we want to be really sensitive about where those roads go.

Those discussions are going to be ongoing, but it's really unlikely that anything is going to come to any kind of final conclusion before the January ADOT Board meeting. We really want to encourage you to consider holding off on that a little bit.

We've also heard the last couple of days that the county has another proposal that has likely to leave one new arterial corridor that would be necessary, as opposed to the - we were calling it a spider web network, but there were a number of roads including the Fain road connector, the Western road connector, and then a few of the others. I would again encourage us to be mindful. I haven't seen any specific proposals, but it sounds like the county's got some other plans in mind. So, with that, I really do appreciate you being receptive of our comments and I can take any questions, but I appreciate you letting me comment here today.

CHAIRMAN HOUSEHOLDER: Kurt Davis? [Mr. Davis left the meeting due to illness.]

BILL FELDMEIERS: I just want to comment on what we heard Magill say. I've been copied on the correspondence that the Nature Conservancy has had with ADOT and also conversations they have had

with Game & Fish and others as it relates to the Big Chino area. I'm in complete agreement that we ought to let them work their way through the process over the course of the next 30-60 days and allow them, in cooperation with the County, to have further conversations and hopefully come up with a designated route that everyone is comfortable with.

VICTOR FLORES: I would support that as well and I'm assuming that if it's 60 days that you're talking about, that we would adopt. Given that this is not specific, I'm assuming that if we are sensitive to their concerns that, in fact, will be considered going forward beyond the acceptance of this draft.

CHAIRMAN HOUSEHOLDER: Are you going to get with them and try to work something out by the January 15th meeting?

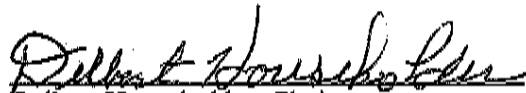
JAMES ZUMPF: We were hoping to get the Board's comments back on the information we presented to you December 15th, so that we could put together a comment summary sheet so that we could provide your comments in there and we were hoping to bring it back in front of the Board in January for acceptance. If it's the direction of the Board that they want us to wait longer to work through these issues, we can do that.


BILL FELDMEIER: I'd like to see the final report reflect the improvements that I think can be made between now and then as it relates to Big Chino and any other areas that ought to be considered. If we need to extend it beyond the 15th in order to accomplish that, then I think that's important, which means you folks have a lot of work to do between now and then and that's fine. We'll let you do it.

CHAIRMAN HOUSEHOLDER: Okay, we're going to work at that, right?

ADJOURN

[The motion was made by Victor Flores to adjourn, and seconded by Felipe Zubia. The motion carries in a voice vote and the meeting concluded at 12:30 p.m.]


Delbert Householder, Chairman
State Transportation Board


John McGee, Executive Director for Planning and Policy
Arizona Department of Transportation