

STUDY OVERVIEW

Fact Sheet #1
June 2008

MAG Regional Transit Framework Study



BACKGROUND & PURPOSE

Nearly 700,000 new residents were added to Maricopa County between 2000 and 2006. The U.S. Census Bureau estimates the total county population to be approximately 3.8 million people today. Regional forecasts for growth indicate that Maricopa County may be home to 6.1 million residents by 2030. Despite a funded Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and efforts by local communities, additional dedicated public transit funding will be required to keep up with growth as significant development is predicted on the edge of the urban area and beyond, where limited or no transit services are currently planned. An approach with consideration to all modes of transportation, including public transit, is essential to address the region's growing transportation demand.

The Maricopa Association of Government's Regional Transit Framework Study (RTFS) will identify and prioritize future transit needs for the entire region. The same concerns for meeting future travel demand are shared by communities throughout the state. To address the issue on a statewide level, a number of other framework studies are currently being undertaken in other areas of the state. All of the regional framework studies will serve as input into a comprehensive statewide multi-modal transportation planning framework. This coordinated planning framework process is known as Building a Quality Arizona.

REGIONAL TRANSIT PLANNING

The MAG Regional Transit Framework Study will provide a needs-based planning process for identifying and prioritizing regional transit improvements that will supplement the existing RTP through year 2030, with consideration for even longer-range transportation needs through year 2050. The planning process will include a technical approach to identifying future travel demand and travel markets through an analysis of future growth patterns. Specific markets will be identified through a technical evaluation of high-demand travel markets and through an understanding of customer (traveler) preference and behavior.

The technical analyses of land use, socioeconomic conditions, existing and planned transit service, and infrastructure, along with the stated customer preference attributes will identify public transit needs, deficiencies, opportunities and constraints within the region. Following the completion of the technical analysis, transit service and transit capital/infrastructure recommendations will be developed to address the travel demand needs identified through the analysis process.

PROJECT DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

A three-phase process lasting approximately one year is being undertaken to complete the MAG Regional Transit Framework Study in a schedule consistent with the statewide framework planning effort. The phases include:

Phase I: *Discovery & Problem Definition*

Current and future regional travel patterns, travel markets, population growth and employment growth will be analyzed, while research will be completed to identify what other regions, similar to the Maricopa County region, have done or are doing to address their regional transit challenges. At the end of Phase I, the most significant regional transit issues facing the study area will be defined.

Phase II: *Alternatives Development & Analysis*

Alternative transit scenarios that address the regional transit deficiencies, constraints and opportunities defined in Phase I will be developed and tested during Phase II. Cost projections for the alternative scenarios will be prepared for purposes of comparing each scenario and prioritizing the transit service and capital infrastructure elements included in each scenario.

Phase III: *Study Recommendations*

The characteristics and financial element of each alternative transit scenario will be refined during the final phase of the planning process to develop a final study recommendation.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PROCESS

Providing opportunities for meaningful public input from a broad range of citizenry and developing a public understanding of the Regional Transit Framework Study are the primary goals of the public involvement process. Citizens will be engaged in the planning process through multiple activities including focus groups, telephone surveys, open house meetings and targeted events.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

About the study or how to get involved, visit bqaz.org and select “MAG Regional Transit Framework Study”

or

Contact Kevin Wallace of Maricopa Association of Governments

phone: 602-254-6300

e-mail: kwallace@mag.maricopa.gov

PROJECT DEVELOPMENT PROCESS CHART

