

**MARICOPA ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS**  
REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN

**AHWATUKEE/GUADALUPE/TEMPE FOCUS GROUP RESULTS**

The Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG) is developing a new Regional Transportation Plan for the MAG region. As part of this effort, MAG conducted a series of focus groups to identify and document transportation issues and concerns. The focus groups were held throughout the Valley to capture ideas from geographically and ethnically diverse groups of participants. The findings will assist MAG in identifying regional values, goals, and objectives that will guide the development of the Regional Transportation Plan.

The format of the Focus Groups included an opportunity for interactive discussion among participants, as well as a voting exercise that provided insight on priorities. To help structure the process, the discussions were organized into five topics areas. The topics included:

- × Demographic and Social Change;
- × The New Economy;
- × Environmental and Resource Issues;
- × Land Use and Urban Development; and
- × Transportation and Technology.

Participants were encouraged to provide their own issues and concerns that related to each topic, both individually and in a round-table discussion. The responses received were documented in essentially a “verbatim” format so that the message intended by the participant was accurately conveyed.

The results of the **Ahwatukee/Guadalupe/Tempe Focus Group** are attached. This material has been divided into three parts as follows:



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**Part I. Key Focus Group Issues:** In Part I, the key issues identified at the Ahwatukee/Tempe/Guadalupe Focus Group are listed by topic area. These issues are those voted by the participants to be the top two concerns in each topic area. Due to ties, certain topics may have more than two issues listed.

**Part II. Comprehensive Listing of Participant Issues:** In Part II, all the issues identified by the individual participants are listed. These issues have been grouped by topic area.

**Part III. Roundtable Discussion Comments:** In Part III, the results from a roundtable discussion are listed. These comments were recorded when all the focus group attendees participated in a general discussion of issues prior to voting on the top issues in each topic area.

If you have any questions or comments on the focus group process or the attached results, please contact Roger Herzog, MAG, at 602-254-6300 or [rherzog@mag.maricopa.gov](mailto:rherzog@mag.maricopa.gov).



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## AHWATUKEE/GUADALUPE/TEMPE FOCUS GROUP RESULTS

### PART I. KEY FOCUS GROUP ISSUES

The participants of the Ahwatukee/Guadalupe/Tempe Focus Group were given the opportunity to vote on their top two issues in each of the five topic areas. The two issues receiving the most votes are listed under each topic. Due to ties, certain topics may have more than two issues listed.

#### *DEMOGRAPHIC AND SOCIAL CHANGE PRIMARY ISSUES*

- ✘ Increased need for affordable housing.
- ✘ Decrease in job market especially for the undereducated.
- ✘ Expand efforts to integrate minorities into mainstream.

#### *THE NEW ECONOMY PRIMARY ISSUES*

- ✘ Attract businesses producing products (not service related).
- ✘ Need to combine activity centers (mixed-use development).

#### *ENVIRONMENT AND RESOURCES PRIMARY ISSUES*

- ✘ Use urban space trust land for parks and open spaces.
- ✘ [Need to preserve] limited water supply.
- ✘ [Need] open space preservation.

#### *LAND USE AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT PRIMARY ISSUES*

- ✘ Regional planning body to reduce or eliminate tax incentive competition between cities.
- ✘ Need for regional sales tax sharing to encourage better land use.
- ✘ Save farm lands.
- ✘ Regional planning.



## **PART I. KEY FOCUS GROUP ISSUES (CONTINUED)**

### ***TRANSPORTATION AND TECHNOLOGY PRIMARY ISSUES***

- × We need a complete transportation system – rail – light rail – buses – taxis – bicycles – airlines.
- × Develop fast rail Phoenix – Tucson-Nogales – Flagstaff, etc.

## **PART II. COMPREHENSIVE LISTING OF PARTICIPANT ISSUES**

The following is a comprehensive listing of the issues that participants of the Ahwatukee/Guadalupe/Tempe Focus Group identified as their concerns under each topic.

### **DEMOGRAPHIC AND SOCIAL CHANGE ISSUES**

- × Increased demand for public transit vs. population increase with means to use automobile. (This will cause struggle for most effective use of transportation funds. Transit vs. increased capacity for automobile.)
- × Increased need for alternatives to driving to acquire services.
- × Immigration from Latin America will likely decrease and shrink labor pool for entry level/service jobs.
- × Increased need for affordable housing.
- × Need for multiple forms of transit services.
- × More services (alternatives) to driving for senior citizens.
- × [Need to address issue of] increase in minorities and immigrants.
- × [Need to address] culturally sensitive issues.
- × [Need to provide] affordable housing.
- × [Need to address that] Latino population will increase.
- × Signage might have to be bilingual.
- × Increase demand for public transit.
- × Increased need for affordable housing.
- × Increased need for alternatives to driving door-to-door.
- × Higher birth rates may increase population faster.



- × Economic divide may further divide the “haves” and the “have nots.”
- × Increased demand for non-auto avenues of travel –bike, walk, etc.

**DEMOGRAPHIC AND SOCIAL CHANGE ISSUES (CONTINUED)**

- × Increase in transit services.
- × Provide more affordable housing.
- × Lack in community – traffic commuter service; schools, medical care for seniors.
- × Lack of affordable housing
- × Too many condos.
- × Increased demand for public transit services.
- × Higher birth rates may increase school-age population.
- × Increased need for alternatives to driving.
- × Older drivers of the future will drive more than today’s.
- × Increased need for affordable housing.
- × Immigration from Latin America will likely increase.
- × Frequent driver’s license testing for seniors.
- × Develop affordable housing around transportation hubs.
- × Increased flow of people and goods to and from Mexico.
- × [Need to account for] more seniors.
- × More discretionary income – more play.
- × Relocation of population from the Northern U.S.
- × [Need] English-only education.
- × More senior citizen facilities as people grow older.
- × Health care facilities located in outlying areas, not just inner city corridors.
- × Incorporate elements of minority cultures into whole.
- × Develop effective local mass transit systems (buses) to provide viable alternative to automobile for everyone in addition to seniors.
- × Minorities (especially Hispanics) will be falling behind further if school dropout trends continue.
- × Higher population density inevitable but sprawl will continue.



- ✘ We will have a greater need for adequate schools located close to the houses (eliminating the need for busing to areas further than a full mile radius).

### THE NEW ECONOMY ISSUES

- ✘ Must maintain our capacity to feed ourselves as a nation without over-dependence on foreign supplies.
- ✘ Our middle class is disappearing, need jobs (and training to fill those jobs) that reestablish our middle class.
- ✘ [Need to account for] tourism.
- ✘ [Need to address] retraining of the work force.
- ✘ [Need] more skill training – ex schools.
- ✘ [Need to address] independent learning etc.
- ✘ [Need to address increase of] sales online.
- ✘ [Need] training in industrial jobs.
- ✘ Wages, health and saving plans for workers.
- ✘ [Need] tax on Internet buying.
- ✘ [Need to address] impact of telecommuting.
- ✘ Economic Divide will continue to leave some out (including children).
- ✘ More people need to live closer to the workplace.
- ✘ Longer commutes need to be done by transit.
- ✘ Cost of gas and cars will increasingly reduce use by poorer citizens.
- ✘ Work centers need to have good transit access.
- ✘ Transit must run 24 – 7 to allow low-income workers access to their jobs.
- ✘ Increase resources for tourism.
- ✘ Encourage foreign markets to consider Phoenix as a viable labor alternative.
- ✘ Encourage Arizona State University graduates to stay in Phoenix with tuition incentives.
- ✘ Create regional venture capital fund to encourage local enterprises in technical industries.
- ✘ Encourage back office centralized around transportation hubs.



- × Tax incentives to lure and keep manufacturers.
- × Increased trade with Mexico.
- × Focus community colleges on training technical workers who may not need four-year degree.
- × Generate more high-tech, high-income employment.
- × In employment, increase emphasis on design and decrease emphasis on manufacturing.
- × Continue to support ASU to raise its status as a research university to the highest level possible.
- × Valley will continue trend to service business (including tourism) with little medium or heavy industry and little significance.
- × Lots of tech jobs.

#### THE NEW ECONOMY ISSUES (CONTINUED)

- × I personally feel that we should be able to somehow keep the off-shore manufacturing to a minimum therefore creating jobs etc. here at home and minimizing our vulnerability to the wiles of international interest.
- × With our abundance of sun – we should explore the use of solar energy to offset our dependence on electric.

#### ENVIRONMENT AND RESOURCES ISSUES

- × Need to maintain open space.
- × Need to maintain air quality and provide measures of testing (maximums).
- × Increased population will cause increased demand for use of open space.
- × Growth must be planned to include adequate parks and green spaces and natural desert and landscaping preferred.
- × [Need to] improve air quality.
- × [Need] growth restrictions.
- × [Need to address] groundwater contamination.
- × [Need] cleaner fuel supplies.
- × Built reservoirs for water! Another dam!
- × Electrical power?
- × [Need] better land use and control.
- × Adequate water supply in lakes. It is too heavily subsidized and not practical to continue to subsidize.
- × Open space preservation and increased recreational opportunities.
- × Growth and land use planning to consider resource constraints, water.
- × [Need] land preservation.



- x [Need] energy conservation.
- x Develop more parks according to population increase.
- x What will [be] the impact of concrete on our temperature?
- x Will our power supply be sufficient?
- x Is our flood protection sufficient?
- x Do we have enough hospital “trauma centers”?
- x Is our police protection sufficient?
- x Consider nuclear power plants and hydro plants for expansive consumption of electric power.



**ENVIRONMENT AND RESOURCES ISSUES (CONTINUED)**

- x Sewage treatment plants (especially away from homes).
- x Promotion of solar energy alternatives.
- x Relations with Mexico regarding oil refineries, then import to Phoenix.
- x Sell off Colorado River rights or trade with California for other technologies.
- x Use excess CAP water to replenish ground water.
- x [Need to] expand water reuse programs.
- x Put minor effort into reducing air pollution (buying everyone a truck is not the answer!).
- x Water is a very precious resource – we must start a concerted effort now to conserve before it’s too late. Possibly put moratorium on building all these lakes and fountains – this is the desert after all.
- x In core areas we will not get any more open space.
- x Out on edges, some large new open areas should be purchased and set aside as soon as possible.
- x Air quality in core may/will improve as the desert’s covered up and cars become cleaner.
- x Eliminate old gross, polluting vehicles.
- x Encourage LEU, ULEV, and SULEV purchases.
- x Encourage transit use – employers provide free bus passes.
- x Urban development limits need to be set to preserve deserts and open space.
- x Creative architecture needs to be used to provide affordable housing with open space and access to transit.
- x More people need to leave their cars at home.
- x Water will become more and more scarce.
- x Restrictions need to be placed on commutes by auto.
- x Desert preserves need to be protected; trails, no guns, rangers, facilities, transit access.
- x Open space preservation.
- x Develop better alternative fuel program.



- ✘ Encourage hybrid vehicle use through tax incentives.

#### LAND USE AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT ISSUES

- ✘ Increase transit-oriented development.
  - ✘ Land use that supports local neighborhoods and decreases the need to drive long distances.
  - ✘ Affordable housing located near transit stops.
  - ✘ Encourage infill and redevelopment in urban cores.
  - ✘ Transit oriented development around LRT stations.
  - ✘ New residential development must be transit -friendly.
  - ✘ Preserve historic neighborhoods.
  - ✘ Neighborhood preservation – decrease crime, cut -through traffic, encourage better appearance.
  - ✘ Build up – not out/set urban development boundaries.
  - ✘ Develop quality infrastructure (limit golf courses) for everyone’s use – parks, schools, libraries, museums.
  - ✘ Develop light rail system throughout central population area and connecting buses that run 24 – 7.
  - ✘ Develop green belts with bike/pedestrian trails to access destinations. Use canals/RR rights-of-ways etc.
  - ✘ Use transit/light rail to develop small nodes of business and community.
  - ✘ Transit-oriented development is needed.
  - ✘ [Need] stronger regional planning authority.
  - ✘ Land use and transportation options must be integrated.
  - ✘ Design future growth with mixed-use development so that transportation becomes more of a luxury than a necessity.
  - ✘ Eliminate future slums. No more 4,000 single-family detached housing.
  - ✘ Employment centers vs. residential centers.
  - ✘ Development of equestrian trails.
  - ✘ Light rail and connecting bus routes.
  - ✘ More emphasis on single-family homes instead of multi-family/commercial.
  - ✘ Upgrade urban neighborhoods and parks.
  - ✘ Minimize government intervention on residential facades and encourage homeowner association involvement.
  - ✘ Promote higher education institutions in core area.
  - ✘ Light rail and improved mobility options are important to maintain economic vitality of central core.
  - ✘ Transit-oriented activity centers should be encouraged, where appropriate.
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- × Revised tax structures can lead to regional land use decisions.
- × For effective regional planning eliminate local jurisdictions.

#### LAND USE AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT ISSUES (CONTINUED)

- × Plan and build infrastructure in advance of development.
- × Preserve large amounts of undeveloped land throughout the metro area to provide breaks in continuous development.
- × Link preserved areas with trails.
- × Include increased value of developed land in determining impact of preserving land.
- × Develop regional system for hiking, biking, equestrian.
- × Develop “sub-core” of economic intensified activity concentration to reduce commutes.
- × Develop more economic activity around Deer Valley airport, Williams, and encourage air service to them.
- × Extend light rail to airports in #3.
- × Would expect to see dense infill of core corridors (i.e. Camelback from Central past Scottsdale Rd. – Downtown Phoenix – Papago Park to Central Tempe).
- × Pressure on Indian land for urban development (i.e. homes, shops, business).
- × Consolidate grade and high school, students are learning at a faster rate.
- × Transit must develop to suit weather conditions.
- × Region and county must plan together. Not to each his own.
- × Plan land use for people, not only businesses.

#### TRANSPORTATION AND TECHNOLOGY ISSUES

- × Expansion of Sky Harbor Airport – Terminal 5 – 4th runway – exponential air cargo growth.
- × Extension of tax supporting freeways and RPTA.
- × Expansion of regional bus system.
- × [Need] LRT construction.
- × Improvement of the Broadway curve (I-10).
- × [Need] other alternatives to driving.
- × [Need to] build another airport.
- × Plan – early workers and late afternoon to avoid so much traffic.



- ✘ Recognize that we cannot build our way out of congestion.
- ✘ Use of Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) to improve efficiency, safety and emergency service response time.
- ✘ Use of real time info and ITS to enhance transit service and opportunities.

**TRANSPORTATION AND TECHNOLOGY ISSUES (CONTINUED)**

- ✘ Commute (and general transportation) difficulties will grow – even as new facilities installed.
- ✘ Telecommuting may become a factor but for less than sometimes suggested.
- ✘ Cars will continue as dominant mode.
- ✘ [The use of] alternative fuel cars will become significant.
- ✘ Sky Harbor will have to be supplemented significantly.
- ✘ High-tech is huge electrical drain. Must plan and prepare for adequate electrical capacity. (Maybe this should be under a different topic.)
- ✘ Regional airport should be decided and built or current airports should share burden of traffic.
- ✘ Internet buying will require more consideration of where to locate freight and delivery truck centers.
- ✘ More convenient and efficient transportation options (other than cars/freeways) need to be provided.
- ✘ Accept congestion in certain areas – central downtown locations.
- ✘ Make sure tax money is available to support the transportation system.
- ✘ Provide incentives for businesses who support local transit systems (i.e. bus pass program).
- ✘ Amount of parking lots/spaces will continue to increase unless caps are put in place.
- ✘ Integrate streetlights between municipalities and put them on the same system (leading left turn, etc.).
- ✘ Increase metering of freeway ramps.
- ✘ Extend message boards to all freeways before freeway-to-freeway intersections.
- ✘ Develop regional airport, especially for freight.
- ✘ Develop better alternative fuel program to encourage HOV use.
- ✘ Commute times will change as the Valley grows. People will be spending more time on the roads. Possibly the answer would be a rapid transit system – but more ambitious than the light rail system now being proposed between Phoenix and Tempe.
- ✘ Need high-speed mass transit with dedicated right-of-way (e.g. heavy rail along freeway with park-and-ride).
- ✘ Expanded airport capacity – 4<sup>th</sup> runway, replace terminal 2 with larger facility, connect terminals with rail.
- ✘ Expand light rail system throughout metro area with dedicated right-of-way (streetcar along Central Avenue doesn't do it).
- ✘ Concerns about truck traffic throughout neighborhoods.



- ✘ Air traffic routes over predominantly residential developments.
- ✘ Additional incentives needed to encourage car pools, etc.
- ✘ Congestion in and around school zones and community parks.

#### **TRANSPORTATION AND TECHNOLOGY ISSUES (CONTINUED)**

- ✘ Develop light rail and bus 24-7 in central area.
- ✘ Develop BIG Regional airport near Casa Grande on fast rail line.
- ✘ Incentive employers to discourage auto-miles commuted – i.e. live close to work or take transit.
- ✘ Experiment with different ways of auto ownership/insurance/registration/sharing.
- ✘ Freight – there must be a better way! I think the same thing that is made here finds its market in New York, while we import the items from New York for customers here.
- ✘ Congestion is “here” and getting worse every day.
- ✘ Gas prices will continue to rise.
- ✘ Car prices will continue to rise.
- ✘ Insurance will continue to rise.
- ✘ There will be more vehicles on our roads every day.
- ✘ Develop [alternatives to] relieve airports.
- ✘ Develop toll lanes on freeways.
- ✘ Impact of telecommuting on transportation system.

#### **PART III. ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION COMMENTS**

The following are issues that were identified by participants in an informal, roundtable discussion held during the Ahwatukee/Guadalupe/Tempe Focus Group, regarding future transportation in the Valley.

- ✘ Population (need limitations).
- ✘ Resources – need to preserve availability (water, electricity).
- ✘ Tax revenues – need to equalize regional planning.
- ✘ Need to encourage local farming (county-wide).
- ✘ Traffic (through) in Guadalupe.



- × [Need] affordable housing.
- × [Need] partnership of small towns (resources).
- × Rethink four-year high school (integrate technology).
- × Transit (need for increased).
- × Monitoring growth/urban boundaries.

### **PART III. ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION COMMENTS (CONTINUED)**

- × Need overall regional planning authority.
- × Develop subregions (manufacturing housing).
- × Change airport usage (another Williams) – develop regional airport between Phoenix and Tucson.
- × Conservation of water and electricity – explore solar energy.
- × Growth (manage) avoid urban sprawl – preserve open space.
- × Need good mass transit system.
- × Infrastructure needs to be in place (proactive) to meet growth.
- × Resources conservation.
- × Maintaining quality of life.
- × Sunset tax supporting freeway (need more improvements).
- × Neighborhood preservation (crime, cut-through traffic – property maintenance).
- × Better regional planning – agency that has power – shared sales tax (cities – towns).
- × Airport issues (no regional airport) small airports (east and west).
- × Affordable housing (especially east of Central).
- × Need to work to prevent “peak” in transportation.
- × Can’t manage growth.
- × Need relief for Sky Harbor [Airport].
- × Need to accommodate population growth:
  - × Regional planning;
  - × Transit alternatives;
  - × Urban growth boundaries;
  - × Preserve resources;



- ✘ Preserve open spaces;
- ✘ Access (economic divide between rich and poor) (transportation – parks/open spaces) – healthcare and housing; and
- ✘ Preserve natural resources – especially \$\$ need comp transit – bus-rail-transit-taxi, etc.
- ✘ Expansion of US 60 is a joke.
- ✘ Property management – neighborhood property maintenance.

