Overview of Regional Commuter Rail

Webinar: Phoenix, Arizona December 18, 2013
The Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG) is the designated metropolitan planning organization (MPO) for transportation planning in the Maricopa County region. MAG is responsible for developing a regional transportation plan (RTP).

The RTP, approved by voters in November 2004, provides a broad vision for the regional transportation system for the next two decades. The RTP includes many different modes of transportation including freeways, streets, and transit. MAG also engages in studies to evaluate future transportation alternatives and opportunities, including commuter rail.

Website - www.azmag.gov/Projects/
MAG Commuter Rail System Study

- Multimodal RTP approved by voters in November 2004. Commuter rail study funds allocated to MAG in RTP.
- Commuter rail Strategic Plan completed in 2008.
- Commuter rail **System Studies Project** completed in 2010 to evaluate passenger rail service on existing BNSF Railway and Union Pacific Railroad freight corridors and possible extensions. Prioritized implementation through:
  - Ridership Potential
  - Operating Strategies
  - Capital and Operating Costs
  - Governance and Operating Agency
- System study recommends corridor ranking, ADOT coordination, further studies, and immediate next steps.
WHAT IS COMMUTER RAIL?

- Peak Period, Peak Direction Service.
- Traditionally carries less daily riders than light rail, but for longer distances. Similar market and characteristics with Bus Rapid Transit / Express.
- Can share railroad right of way (row) and track with freight railroads and can operate concurrently (does not require exclusive right-of-way).
- Typically longer station spacing (every 3-7 miles on average) than light rail (1-2 miles) with emphasis on park-and-rides and traditional city central business districts (CBDs).
- Locomotive technology (diesel or clean/green hybrid Genset).
- Passenger coaches (push-pull). Engines and cars meet federally mandated structural requirements for rolling stock crash resistance.
- Larger, heavier profile than light rail vehicles.
- Higher max. speed (79mph), slower acceleration/deceleration than light rail. Average speed approx 44mph.
- Lower capital cost per mile ($10-$20M) due to existing right of way use/reuse. Light rail traditionally ($40-$80M).
MAG REGION ~ Daily Boardings per Revenue Mile – Interlined Corridors
MAG REGIONAL COUNCIL
(MAY 26, 2010)

1. Accepted the findings of the Grand Avenue Commuter Rail Corridor Development Plan, Yuma West Commuter Rail Corridor Development Plan, and Commuter Rail System Study

2. Revise the corridor ranking included in the Commuter Rail System Study upon the completion of update regional socioeconomic forecasts or relevant passenger rail studies.
COMMUTER RAIL IMPLEMENTATION STEPS

1. Continued coordination with ADOT and railroads *(ADOT Passenger Rail Study to be completed in fall 2014)*

2. Determine liability and indemnification statutes *(State Legislature)*

3. Regional Sustainable Transportation and Land Use Integration Study *(completed in Summer 2013)*

4. **Identify local funding**

5. Develop and implement governance plan

6. Railroad agreements

7. Design and construction

8. Operation

3-5 years (avg.)
THANK YOU & QUESTIONS?

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