



Arizona Avenue Alternatives Analysis Chandler Transportation Commission Presentation

JUNE 23, 2020

VALLEY METRO STAFF PRESENTED THE ALTERNATIVES ANALYSIS UPDATE AT A REGULAR MEETING FOR THE CHANDLER TRANSPORTION COMMISSION

Advertising the Presentation

Valley Metro advertised the Arizona Avenue Alternatives Analysis (AAAA) presentation on the study website (www.valleymetro.org/az-ave). In addition, e-mail notifications were sent to individuals who have expressed a desire to receive e-mail notifications. The e-mail notifications were sent on Thursday, June 18 and Tuesday, June 23, 2020. In addition, the city of Chandler (COC) advertised the Chandler Transportation Commission meeting through their regular outlets.

The Presentation

The AAAA study manager, Deron Lozano, delivered the PowerPoint presentation to the Commissioners and other meeting attendees during an online meeting, which was recorded by COC representatives and available to the public to access. The meeting can be viewed by using this link:

<https://chandleraz.webex.com/recording-service/sites/chandleraz/recording/playback/69c42e149aec43d5bdd720d286941104> [password: sRD29u7a (case sensitive)].

Questions, Comments and Responses

Below are the Chandler Transportation Commissioner questions and comments regarding the AAAA study and the associated responses.

Alternatives

Question (Q): I recently read the May 2017 Fiesta-Downtown Chandler Transit Corridor Study Final Report, which recommended a high capacity transit route connecting

Dobson Road, then Southern and Arizona avenues. The presentation today does not show the Dobson Road and Southern Avenue connections. Were these removed?
Deron Lozano, Valley Metro (VM): As you mentioned, the Fiesta-Downtown Chandler Transit Corridor Study recommended the corridor you mentioned. This study recommended phasing the Dobson Road and Southern Avenue portion as one phase and the Arizona Avenue portion as another phase. Since those two roadways are in the city of Mesa, Mesa has incorporated the additional review in the Fiesta District Alternatives Analysis. So Dobson Road and Southern Avenue are still being considered as future high capacity roadway corridors.

Q: The AAAA study is currently looking at three possible corridors with the intent to recommend the corridor with the best potential for high capacity transit. After the one corridor is recommended, what happens to the other two corridors? Are they studied further or eliminated from future consideration?

Deron Lozano, VM: The AAAA study will prioritize the three corridors and will rank them according to the results of the study analysis, which will be detailed in the final report. It will be up to the city decision makers to decide which corridor or corridors would be funded for high capacity transit. It is important to note, depending on the modeling, none or all three could be considered to move forward; then it would depend on funding.

Funding

Q: Has the study team already anticipated future funding sources?

Jason Crampton, COC: The recommendations that come out of the AAAA study are unfunded at this point. There will be opportunities for funding through a regional sales tax extension that was discussed at the last Chandler Transportation Commission meeting. In addition, federal funding might be available, with a local funding match.

Q: Based on analysis and prioritization of the AAAA study being provided for the three corridors, could funding be used for one of the corridors, which would take funding from a Chandler Transportation Master Plan (TMP) recommended element?

Jason Crampton, COC: The TMP didn't designate timing for funding of the elements. If we advance one of the corridors in the AAAA study, we will want to make sure the Chandler TMP would support the corridor with some of the other recommended enhancements. It would need to be a delicate balance with the available funding.

Comment (C): As we start looking at last mile connections, and how the different transit modes will integrate with pedestrians, single car vehicles and cyclists, it is important to start anticipating funding sources. And then begin looking at priorities and recommendations as they relate to funding.

Economy

Q: Is the study team thinking through how areas with low income individuals can access the high capacity transit modes to have opportunities to travel to areas with high economic development potential?

Deron Lozano, VM: Yes, connectivity is the key for developing these types of investments. In general, we anticipate there will be a large number of individuals who

will access the high capacity transit modes by walking or cycling to the stops or stations. In addition, we need to make sure we have good connecting transit routes, such as connections with local or circulator bus routes.

Q: Thinking about the economy, and the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, which may be an issue which isn't going away anytime soon. Because of this, many businesses have employees working from home. Are these factors being considered in your study for the recommended corridor?

Deron Lozano, VM: The industry has taken that question to heart but doesn't really have an answer at this point. Our goal is to get the public back to riding transit. So is a factor difficult to evaluate right now, but it is something we will evaluate as the study progresses.

Q: Has Valley Metro done any analysis to assess how businesses are performing before, during light rail construction and after the business is connected to the Valley's light rail system?

Michael Book, VM: Valley Metro has not performed any studies regarding business viability before and after it is connected to the Valley's light rail system. There are a variety of factors for business performance and so it would be difficult to determine how the light rail's proximity is impacting revenue. During light rail construction, Valley Metro assigns a community outreach coordinator and a business assistance specialist to the project. The community outreach person works with the business owners and public during construction to address any issues or questions they might have. The business assistance specialist communicates with the business owners in the construction corridor to inform and assist them in taking advantage of Valley Metro programs to generate additional advertising opportunities for them during construction.

C: I think it would be a good idea for Valley Metro to consider performing a business viability study to evaluate business performance after they are connected with the Valley's light rail system.

Technology

C: I feel busses offer the most flexibility. But I think we must keep an eye on technology. There are private companies, which are offering the public more transportation options. Another item is technology allowing traffic signals to be timed with busses. Is the city of Chandler considering these options?

Jason Crampton, COC: Yes, the city is instituting technological advances in some areas. For example, about ten years ago on Arizona Avenue, the city installed technology to give busses traffic signal priority. In any case, the city continues to consider technological opportunities to suppress traffic congestion.

General

C: Looking at the future of Chandler, mobility is a critical issue and it is important to evaluate how local issues connect with the region. For instance the AAAA study of the Price Road corridor, which could complement the Price and Ocotillo Roads Shared Use Path (which was the previous presentation in this meeting).

C: Taking into context what Tempe, Mesa and Phoenix have done with transportation planning, there can be many lessons taken from others outside the state. I encourage the AAAA study team to look at what other states, such as Colorado, Texas and Utah have done with transportation planning to address traffic congestion.

C: I am so impressed the Chandler TMP is not sitting on a shelf, but being used to help guide strategy for other area transportation studies.

C: This approach is well thought out and makes a lot of sense. You have considered system, funding, public and stakeholder outreach, as well as the TMP recommendations.