Desert Sky Transit Center

Categorical Exclusion

August 2012

City of Phoenix

PUBLIC TRANSIT DEPARTMENT

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CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION

FTA Project No: AZ-04-0204

Grant Applicant: City of Phoenix Public Transit Department

Proposed Project: Desert Sky Transit Center

Project Location: Southeast corner of 79th Avenue and Thomas Road, Phoenix, Arizona

REQUEST

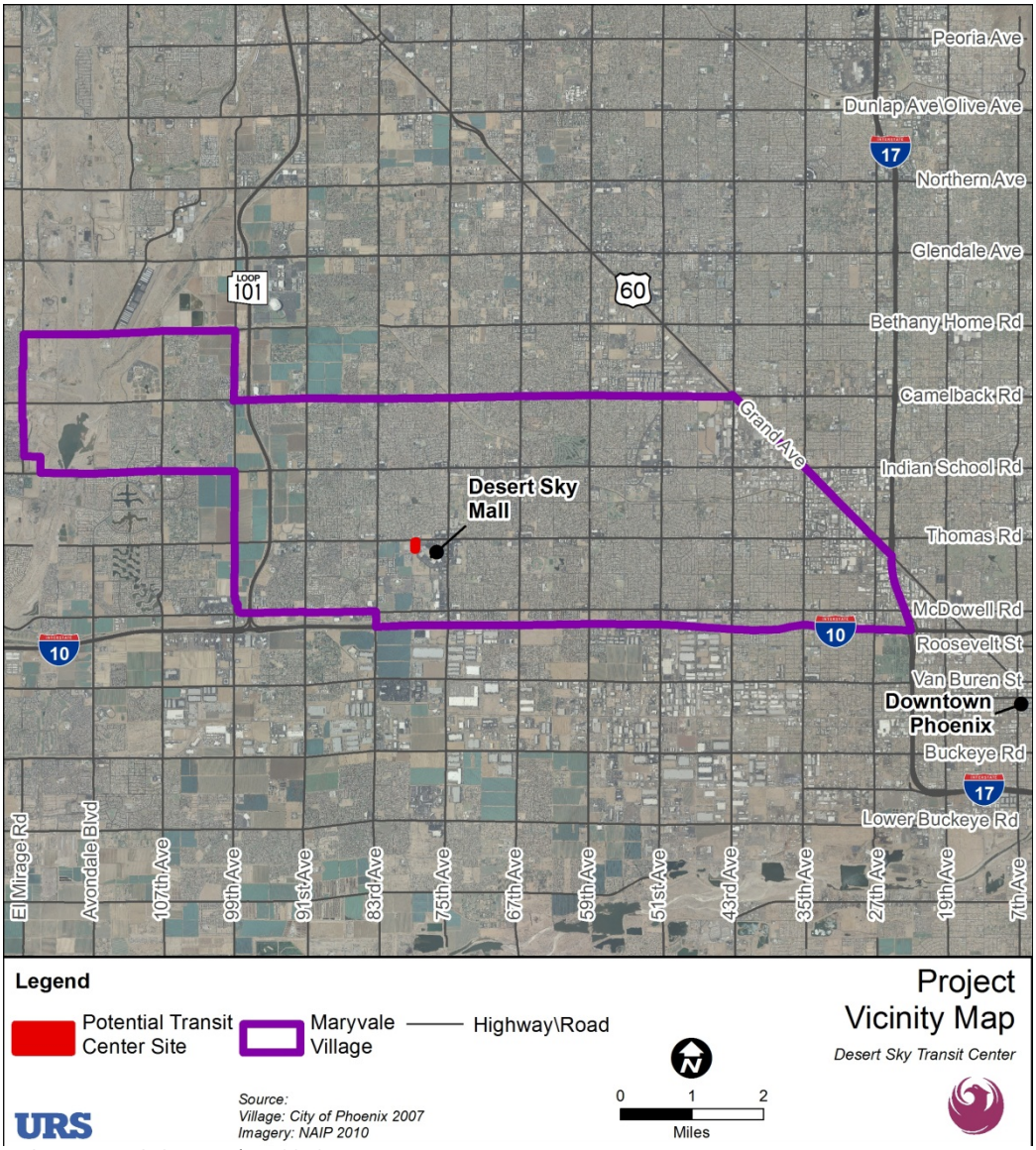
This is a request for a Categorical Exclusion (CE) under Title 23 CFR, Section 771.117(d) 10 which allows for a CE, with Federal Transit Administration (FTA) approval, for "Construction of bus transfer facilities (an open area consisting of passenger shelters, boarding areas, kiosks and related street improvements) when located in a commercial area or other high activity center in which there is adequate street capacity for projected bus traffic." The proposed project would include the land acquisition, design, and construction of a transit center facility located on the southeast corner of 79th Avenue and Thomas Road in Phoenix, Arizona.

A. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT

1. Project Location

The proposed project is located within the City of Phoenix on the southeast corner of 79th Avenue and Thomas Road. The preferred site is located on an existing 4.1 acre vacant parcel within Maryvale Village (Maryvale), as shown in **Figure 1, Project Vicinity Map**. Maryvale is one of 15 urban villages within the City of Phoenix that have been arranged in order to efficiently respond to and engage each local community on future planning issues as shown in **Figure 2, Phoenix Villages**. Maryvale encompasses 32.5 square miles and is bounded by Interstate 17 (I-17) and Grand Avenue on the east, Interstate 10 (I-10) on the south, 99th Avenue and El Mirage Road on the west and Camelback Road on the north.

Figure 1 Project Vicinity Map



Source: URS Corporation, 2012.

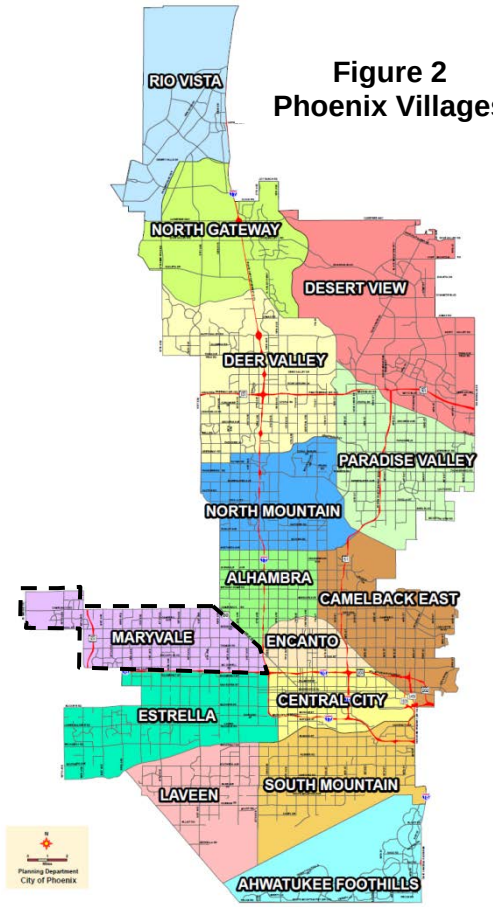
The Maryvale Village core provides a mix of employment, housing and retail development that is designed to serve as a gathering place with pedestrian activity and a focus for the local transportation system. Maryvale is a growing community that has seen its population increase nearly 7.6% since the year 2000 and is anticipated to increase another 10.8% by 2030.

2. Purpose and Need

The purpose of the proposed project is to develop a permanent transit facility to accommodate existing and future transit passengers by providing improved access in the busiest market for bus ridership in the City of Phoenix and to make improvements reflective of the recommendations of local and regional transportation planning efforts. The need for the project is to provide for:

- parking and waiting areas that would include more security features;
- bus boarding and alighting areas that are better signed and easier to understand;
- bus staging and layover areas to accommodate multiple buses;
- improved and designated access for pedestrians, automobiles, and bus traffic;
- upgrades to be compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA);
- bicycle racks or storage; and
- other passenger facilities to serve this heavily transit-dependent market.

Figure 2
Phoenix Villages



The Maryvale Village, shown in purple, is located in West Phoenix.
Source: City of Phoenix, 2011

The proposed facility would improve upon the services provided by the existing Desert Sky Transit Center which is currently located in the north parking lot of Desert Sky Mall, south and east of the proposed project site. The existing facility is currently the smallest transit center (0.25 acre) in the City of Phoenix and consists of a 510-foot long curb and walkway which is 25 feet at its widest point. Currently, the existing transit center serves the most bus riders of any City of Phoenix transit center, averaging over 68,000 boardings per month. Its passenger amenities include two seating areas: one with a shelter and one without. It also includes a water fountain and a worn information kiosk that is difficult to read and is missing information. In addition, the existing facility was reviewed in 2005 by an ADA consultant who advised that the parking access aisle, drinking fountain, and boarding areas may not be ADA compliant. While the routes, parking, and curb ramps are ADA compliant, the curbs are still not ADA accessible. The transit center is sloped throughout which makes it inconvenient for wheelchair-bound customers to maneuver in a comfortable manner. ADA compliance must to be up to the current City of Phoenix standards and adhere to FTA Guidelines.

The recently adopted Maryvale Village Core Plan envisions the area surrounding the proposed transit center site as a pedestrian-friendly environment that provides high quality transit services and amenities. The proposed facility would provide connections

to a planned light rail extension in the I-10 corridor, the 79th Avenue/I-10 Park-and-Ride, and the West Operating Facility at 79th Avenue and Van Buren Street.

The proposed facility would provide direct pedestrian and bicycle access to regional transit routes including planned high capacity transit service along I-10 as well as to Desert Sky Mall and would comply with the requirements of the ADA. Design of the facility would integrate opportunities for small or distributed scale solar power projects on City-owned facilities and pursue neutral energy use, consistent with the City of Phoenix's Sustainability Strategic Plan. Additionally, the new transit center would expand the existing facilities currently in operation and provide an enhanced link to the Thomas Road and I-10 corridors in West Phoenix.

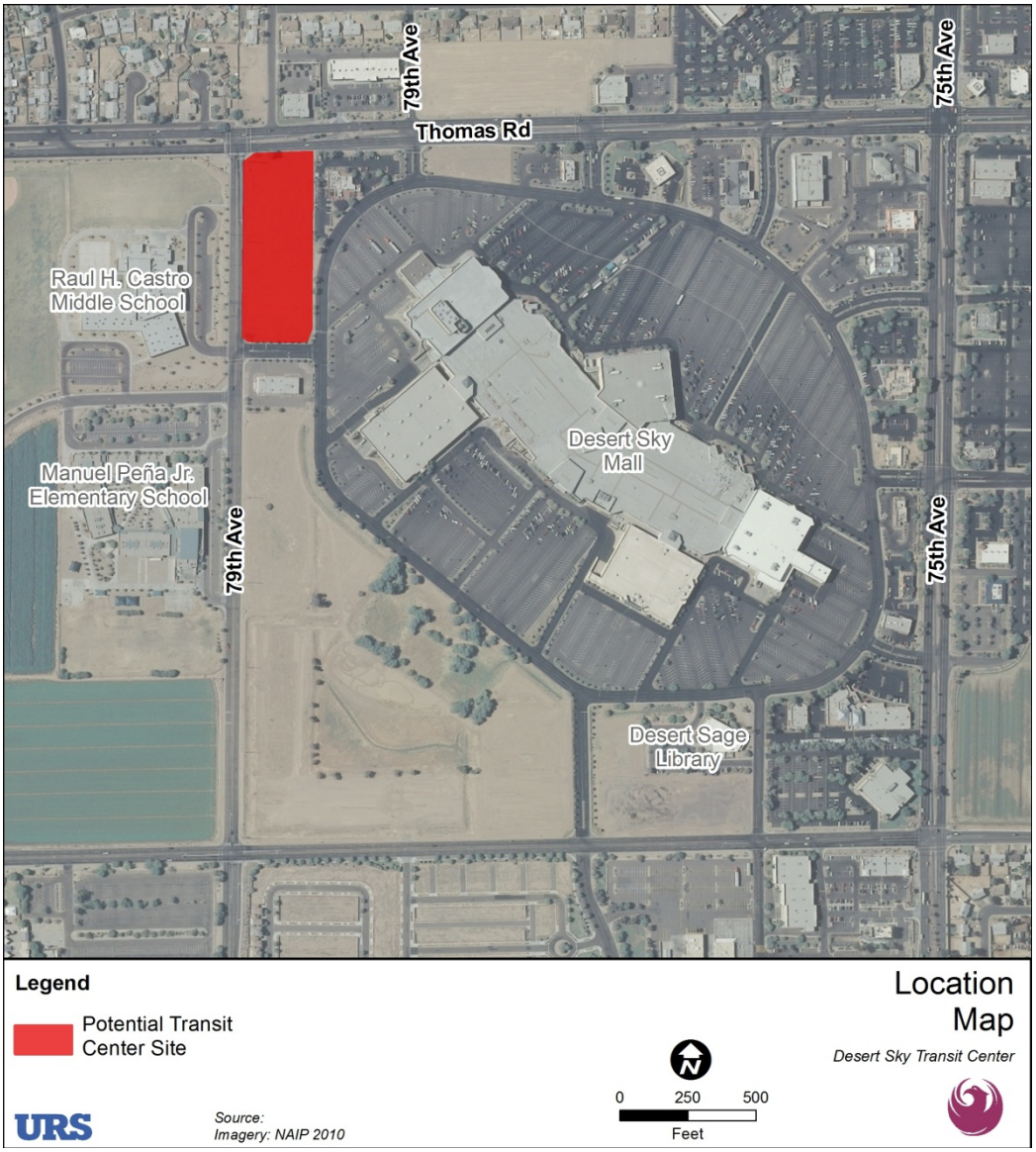
3. Project Description

The City of Phoenix Public Transit Department would acquire land for, plan, design, and construct a transit center facility on a privately owned 4.2 acre vacant parcel on the southeast corner of 79th Avenue and Thomas Road. The project site is located adjacent to the Desert Sky Mall within the Maryvale Village Core which is approximately 11 miles west of downtown Phoenix and one mile north of I-10 in West Phoenix. The area directly north of Thomas Road is largely residential, and commercial businesses including Desert Sky Mall are located to the east of the site along Thomas Road and south along 75th Avenue. Manuel Peña Elementary School and Raúl H. Castro Middle School are located west of the project site on the southwest corner of 79th Avenue and Thomas Road. Ashley Furniture HomeStore Concert Pavilion is located to the immediate southwest, and Banner Estrella Medical Center is located approximately 1.5 miles west of the proposed site along Thomas Road. The project location is shown in **Figure 3, Project Location Map**.

The transit center would serve seven public transit routes including three of the top 10 most productive routes with the City of Phoenix: **Route 17** (McDowell Road), **Route 29** (Thomas Road), and **Route 41** (Indian School Road). The routes currently serving the Desert Sky Transit Center are shown in **Figure 4, Bus Routes Currently Serving the Desert Sky Transit Center**. The remaining four routes the proposed transit center would serve include:

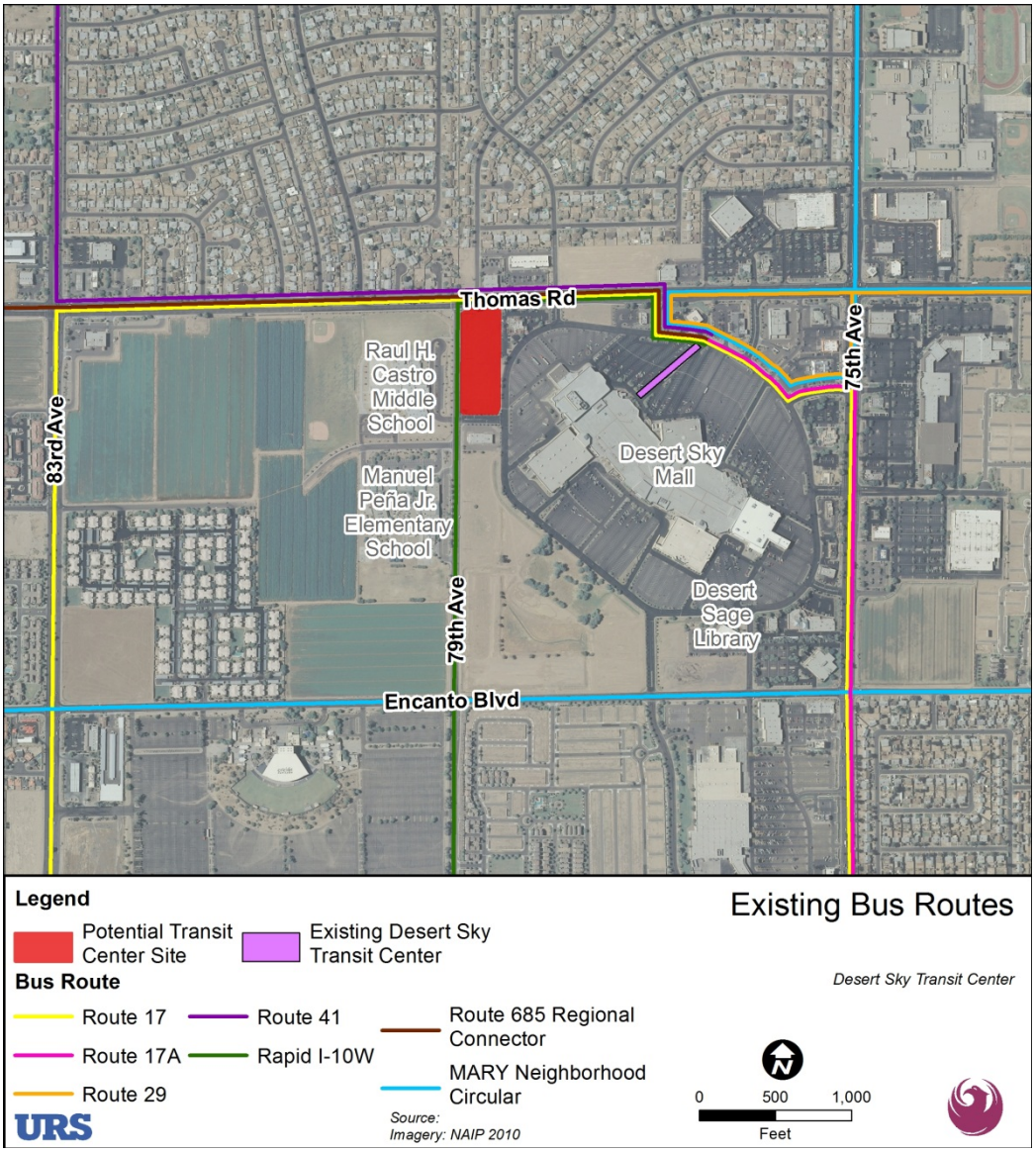
- **Route 17A** – East-West route along McDowell Road providing service to the City of Avondale.
- **Route 685** – Regional connector route operating daily between Ajo and Gila Bend, Arizona and the existing Desert Sky Transit Center.
- **I-10 RAPID** – East-West express service within the City of Phoenix connecting the existing transit center at Desert Sky Mall to downtown Phoenix during peak commute times during the week.
- **MARY Circulator** – A free neighborhood circulator provided by the Phoenix Public Transit Department that operates within the Maryvale Village. This circulator is one of the most utilized circulators within the City of Phoenix and provides direct service to Desert Sky Mall as well as connections to regional transit routes throughout West Phoenix.

Figure 3 Project Location Map



Source: URS Corporation, 2012.

Figure 4 Bus Routes Currently Serving the Desert Sky Transit Center



Source: URS Corporation, 2012.

B. ALTERNATIVES TO THE PROPOSED PROJECT

1. Alternatives Analysis Strategies

In 2010 and 2011, the City of Phoenix conducted the *Desert Sky Transit Center Study: An Assessment of Existing Facility and Operational Conditions and Alternative Site Analysis* (Exhibit A). The purpose of this alternative site analysis was to identify a preferred location for an upgraded transit passenger facility to serve both the existing and planned transit routes that operate in the Thomas Road and 79th Avenue corridors in West Phoenix. Through the documentation of existing conditions, City of Phoenix planning initiatives, input from City staff, and a visual survey performed by Public Transit Department staff, a series of nine sites were identified as potential locations for the development of a new transit center. These sites, including the preferred site, are shown in **Figure 5**. In order to effectively identify future potential sites, staff defined the study area through the following considerations:

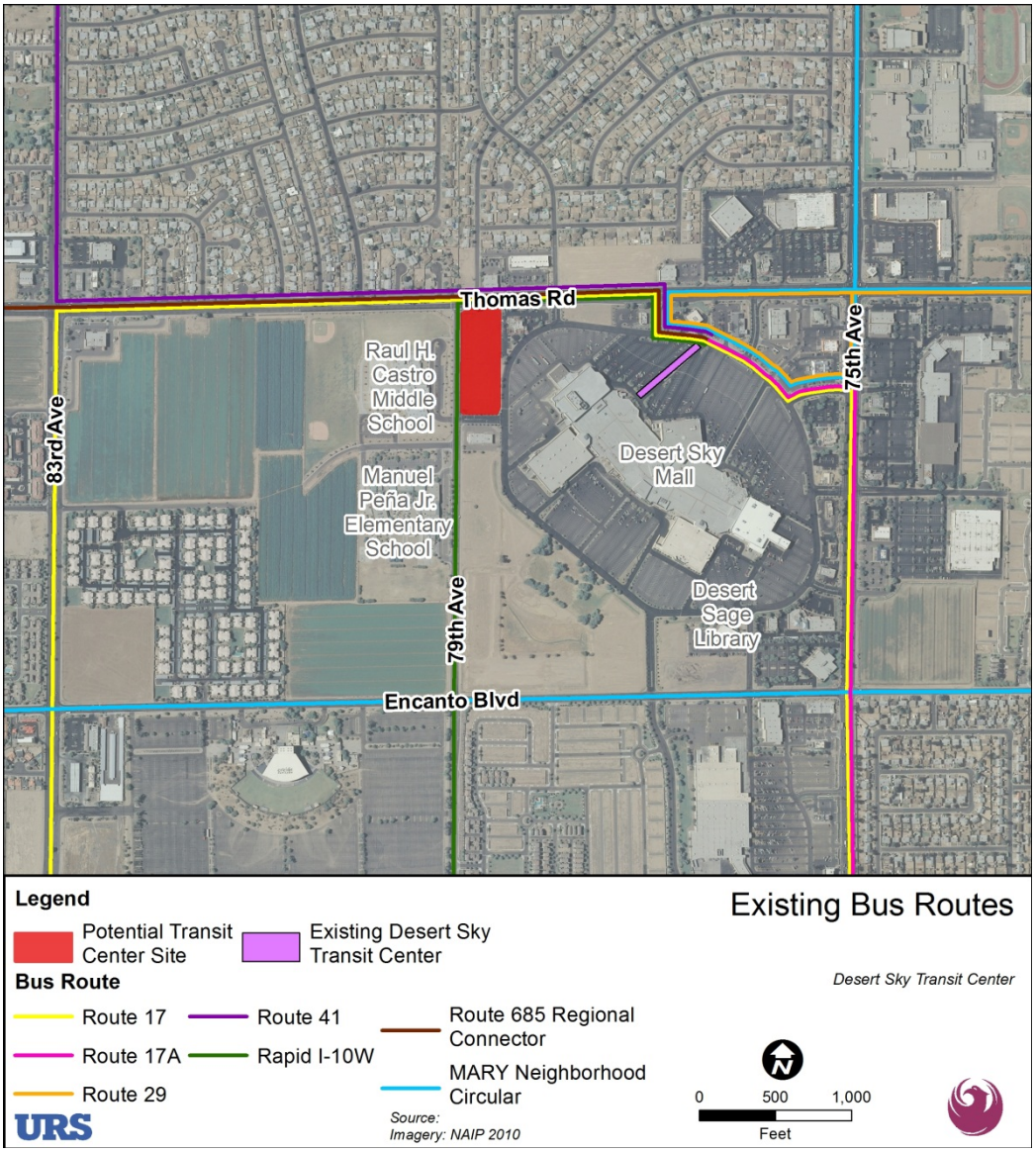
- Locate near the existing site to minimize disruptions to existing transit routes and transit users;
- Locate within 0.5 mile of Thomas Road, an identified High Capacity Transit Corridor;
- Locate within 0.5 mile of 79th Avenue, which provides direct access to the 79th Avenue and I-10 Park-and-Ride, the dedicated High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) access to I-10, and the West Transit Operations Facility;
- Locate within the Maryvale Village Core to support the General Plan goal of locating dense and intense land uses within Village Cores, thus creating a focal point for activity and the local transportation system;
- Locate near employment and commercial centers; and
- Locate near existing or planned community facilities.

2. Alternatives Analysis Results

The needs assessment findings and project goals and objectives led to the identification of nine (9) preliminary sites designated for analysis as well as a set of evaluation criteria. Each of these standards was developed into a matrix that rated the initial set of transit center site alternatives.

Proximity to Existing Transit Center and Routes – As the existing transit center currently serves over 68,000 transit riders per month, locating a new facility in close proximity to the existing facility would minimize the disruption for current passengers. Additionally, there are currently eight routes that serve the transit center. Sites were evaluated based on the ability to serve the existing routes with minimal disruption or rerouting.

Figure 5 Transit Center Alternative Site Locations



Source: City of Phoenix, 2011.

Proximity to Existing and Future Transportation Corridors – (Bus access/routing, freeway system, bikeways, major arterial streets). All planned transit facilities must consider the overall transportation network to determine whether the facilities make appropriate connections between existing and future transit routes, freeways, and pedestrian and bicycle corridors. All of these transportation modes are important to ridership connections and ease of accessibility to a given system. Sites were evaluated based on their proximity to the identified Thomas Road and I-10 High Capacity Transit corridors, including the HOV connection to I-10 at 79th Avenue, as well as major arterials important to the provision of local service, Thomas Road and 75th Avenue.

Site Size and Configuration – The size and configuration of a potential site is an important consideration. Enough acreage must be available to support planned operations and passenger amenities, with room for expansion if possible. However, sites that are too large may cause problems during acquisition if lot splits are required or require future land disposition if too much land is purchased. The site configuration must allow the transit center facility to maximize the utilization of space. To accommodate planned transit operations, the Desert Sky Transit Center site should be at least 4 to 5 acres in size.

Visibility and Rider Attractiveness – Area transit facilities should be very visible from highly utilized areas in as many directions as possible to foster a sense of security for the passenger. A well-defined and visible transit center should include convenient linkage to adjacent uses and use of existing surrounding architectural opportunities for ties with the proposed facility. The objective is to encourage flexibility and creativity while still meeting transit and community objectives. Adjacent street design must recognize the need for easy and safe pedestrian access and visibility and lend itself to appropriate changes for pedestrian crossings and access points. Sites were evaluated based on their proximity to highly trafficked automobile and pedestrian corridors.

Safety Concerns – While the transit center would be designed and developed to maximize safety, opportunities can be present to maximize the safety of the passenger and facility. Sites located adjacent to uses or businesses with extended hours of activity can provide valuable “eyes on the site” safety.

Accessibility – Buses must be able to access the chosen transit center site safely with minimal passenger delay due to bus route diversion. Sites were evaluated based on the ability of buses to make safe left turns, direct access to arterial streets, minimal cross-access through private property, and convenient bus turn-around routes.

Acquisition Issues – A host of issues arise when alternative sites are being studied for the location and development of a transit center. The difficulty in acquiring a site may hinge upon cost, existing plans already submitted to the Planning and Development Services Department, questions of ownership, and known legal problems or zoning conflicts.

Pedestrian Connectivity to Desert Sky Mall – All of the proposed sites are located within the Maryvale Village Core, where higher concentrations of commercial and employment activity and higher density residential development is desired and supported by the Phoenix General Plan and existing zoning. However, the success of the existing transit center, despite the lack of traditional amenities provided at other City of Phoenix transit centers, is due in part to the proximity of the Desert Sky Mall. The Desert Sky Mall is a key activity center within the Maryvale Village Core. Sites were evaluated based on the ability to tie the future transit center into existing pedestrian connections to the Desert Sky Mall.

Land Use Compatibility – Land use patterns in the surrounding area have a significant impact on transit operations and on the level of transit ridership. Some land uses are particularly sensitive to the impacts associated with transit centers: noise, exhaust, and waiting passengers. Transit-oriented pedestrian-bicycle networks provide direct, safe and interesting pedestrian paths to transit facilities from residences or commercial development. As all of the potential sites are located within the Maryvale Village Core,

sites were evaluated based on compatibility with existing development. Sites adjacent to residential development were seen to be more sensitive to transit center operations than those adjacent to commercial establishments.

Potential Light Rail Connectivity – The Phoenix West light rail transit (LRT) extension is part of a regionally approved transportation plan and is one of the LRT extension corridors that would travel westbound from the existing METRO system in downtown Phoenix to the 79th Avenue park-and-ride area. Studies are also ongoing to evaluate continuing LRT from 79th Avenue northwest to Glendale. Sites were evaluated based on connectivity with potential Phoenix West LRT routes.

Based on a full evaluation of the site potential, the proposed site (shown in **Figure 5**) was selected. In the second tier of analysis, this site was reviewed along with other sites and was determined to be the most compatible based on the criteria listed and the fact that it is surrounded by non-residential land uses. The proposed site offers the following:

- Convenient access to future high capacity transit on Thomas Road;
- Five of eight routes currently serving the area pass by the site and the remaining three can be easily modified to serve the site;
- Crossroads of major transit activity;
- Adequate size for current and future transit needs;
- Commercial properties surround the site; minimal impact to adjacent properties;
- Signalized intersection at 79th Avenue/Thomas Road;
- Close proximity to commercial activity;
- Close proximity to existing transit center and minimal disruption to passengers and transit routes; and
- Compatible with the potential LRT corridor along 79th Avenue.

3. No-Build Alternative

The No-Build alternative consists of the continued operation of the existing Desert Sky Transit Center without improvement. This alternative is undesirable as current transit operations have outgrown the existing leased 0.25-acre site. The transit center suffers from bus overcrowding and limited space for layovers during peak periods; a lack of transit operative support services, such as break areas and restrooms; lack of on-site security; and minimal passenger amenities such as adequate wayfinding signage; lack of on-site customer service, and fare media sales. The No-Build Alternative would not address ADA accessibility needs for the transit facility. A larger site that can accommodate traditional transit center features and amenities is necessary.

C. ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING AND IMPACTS

The potential environmental impacts of developing a transit center facility on the southeast corner of 79th Avenue and Thomas Road in Phoenix, Arizona, have been assessed pursuant to the joint environmental regulations related to guidance found in 23 CFR §771. Environmental impacts of the proposed action are addressed in relation to each of the required analysis categories.

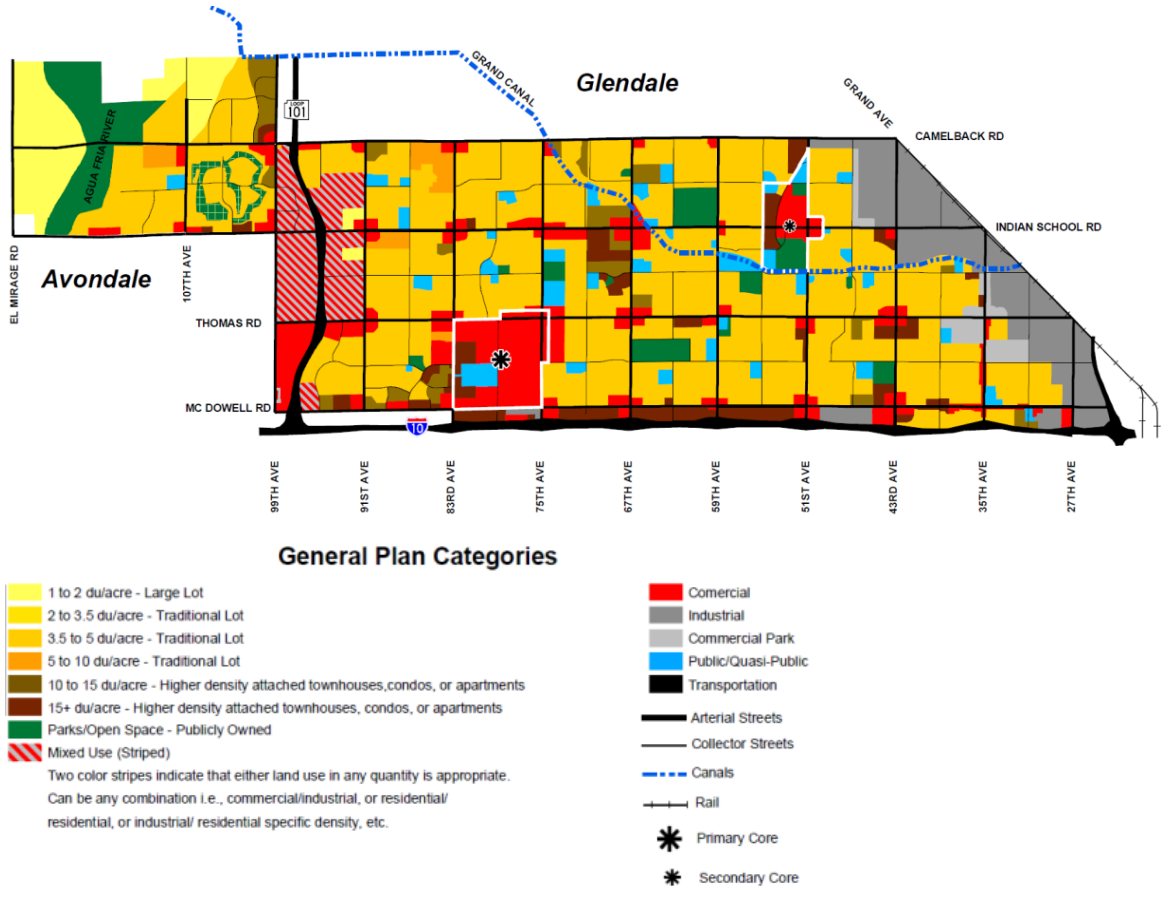
1. Land Acquisition and Displacements

The 4.2-acre proposed project site consists of vacant land owned by Westpen Associates, a privately owned company who owns multiple vacant and undeveloped parcels within the Maryvale Village Core. Although the 4.2-acre parcel would be acquired under this proposed action, no changes to or displacement of existing adjacent land uses is anticipated as part of the proposed project.

2. Land Use and Zoning

As identified in the City of Phoenix General Plan, the current land use designation for the proposed transit center site is commercial land use within the primary core of the Maryvale Village. According to the General Plan, the surrounding area also includes high density residential land uses (10 to 15 and 15+ dwelling units [du]/acre) in addition to some public/quasi-public land uses. The current zoning of the proposed site is C-2 (Intermediate Commercial) which permits the use of a transit center. Zoned parcels in the immediate vicinity of the proposed site include RSC (Regional Shopping Center), R1-6 (Single Family Residence), PAD (Planned Area Development), and C-O (Commercial Office). As shown in the City of Phoenix General Plan, **Figure 6** identifies the Maryvale Village Land Use Map.

Figure 6 Maryvale Village General Plan Land Use Map



Source: City of Phoenix, 2011

The Village of Maryvale in coordination with the City of Phoenix has recently completed the *Maryvale Core Urban Design Plan*, adopted in 2012. This plan provides Maryvale standards for the future growth and development the village core, includes design guidelines and policies, and addresses key land use and transportation issues in order to provide the City Council with guidance for future land use and infrastructure decisions. The Maryvale Village Core Urban Design Plan identifies the proposed transit center site as an area of future commercial growth surrounded by mixed use development to the south and west. In addition, this plan acknowledges the possibility of a future LRT extension along 79th Avenue that would connect the proposed Phoenix West LRT extension along I-10 to the Thomas Road corridor. The overall concept for the Maryvale Core is to promote an urban environment conducive to transit-oriented development (TOD), which offers direct support to the development of a transit center on the proposed project site. The recommended development pattern for the Maryvale Core as identified in the *Maryvale Core Urban Design Plan* is depicted in **Figure 7**.

Figure 7 Maryvale Core Concept Plan

Source: City of Phoenix, 2011.

3. Air Quality

The proposed transit center is included in the Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG) Transportation Improvement Plan, Fiscal Years 2011-2015 (approved July 28, 2010). Therefore, it was included in the air quality analyses performed to fulfill federal and state regional air quality conformity requirements, as described in the 2010 MAG Conformity Analysis for the FY 2011-2015 MAG Transportation Improvement Program and the MAG Regional Transportation Plan 2010 Update (July 2010). Project-related traffic data showed that affected signalized intersections would all operate at Level of Service C or better (Exhibit H). Therefore, no hot-spot modeling analyses was required, and the proposed project is not expected to cause or contribute to a new violation of the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) National Ambient Air Quality Standards, increase the severity of an existing violation, or delay timely attainment or maintenance of the standards. Therefore, the proposed transit center meets conformity on both a regional and localized (project) level.

Short-term impacts to particulate matter equal to or less than 10 microns in diameter may occur during the construction phase, but these would be reduced through the use of dust control measures in compliance with Maricopa County Air Quality Department Rule 310 and other appropriate federal, state, and local rules and ordinances, including MAG Uniform Standard Specifications and Details. In addition, the proposed new transit center has not been found to be a "project of air quality concern," as defined by the Federal Highway Administration and EPA guidance.

Appendix: Exhibit B

4. Noise

Conclusions from the Desert Sky Transit Center Noise Assessment state that project contributions to the existing ambient noise environment would not be of a significant magnitude to constitute noise impacts at any of the noise sensitive receivers examined in accordance with FTA criteria. The nearby residential receivers and Raúl H. Castro Middle School would not exceed FTA's impact criteria due to the proposed project.

Appendix: Exhibit C

5. Water Quality

No water bodies are within the project area. Therefore, no further analysis regarding existing water bodies is required.

Regarding water quality issues, the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality, Water Quality Division, provided one comment:

Stormwater discharges associated with construction activities, such as clearing, grading, or excavating, that disturb one acre or more must obtain permit coverage under the Arizona Pollutant Discharge Elimination System's (AZPDES) Construction General Permit. As part of permit coverage, a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) must be prepared and implemented before ground disturbance begins. The SWPPP must comply with ADEQ's Construction General Permit's SWPPP requirements, and must identify such elements as the project scope, anticipated acreage of land disturbance, and the best management practices that would be implemented to reduce soil erosion, and contain or minimize the pollutants that might be released to waters of

the U.S. In addition to preparing the SWPPP, the project proponent must file for permit coverage. The Construction General Permit, SWPPP checklist, and associated forms are available on ADEQ's website at: http://www.azdeq.gov/environ/water/permits/stormwater.html#const.

Appendix: Exhibit D

6. Wetlands

Based upon site reconnaissance, the site and vicinity lack any natural or manmade habitat meeting the definition of wetlands. As a result, no further analysis is required.

Appendix: Exhibit D

7. Flooding

This property is located outside the 100-year floodplain. The proposed project is not near or within any current or proposed Flood Control District of Maricopa County plans or projects. The proposed project is not anticipated to have any floodplain impacts.

8. Navigable Waterways and Coastal Zones

There are no navigable waterways and coastal zones within the project area. Therefore, no further analysis is needed.

9. Ecologically Sensitive Areas

The site and adjacent land do not contain woodlands, prairies, marshes, bogs, lakes, streams, landforms, geological formations, or other pristine natural areas. Therefore, no ecologically sensitive areas would be impacted by the proposed project. An assessment conducted by the Arizona Department of Agriculture determined that no protected native plants would be affected by the project.

Appendix: Exhibit E

10. Endangered Species

In compliance with the Endangered Species Act, the City of Phoenix considered the proposed project's potential to impact federally threatened and endangered species, species proposed for these categories, and designated critical habitat. Information concerning endangered and threatened species, or critical habitat that may occur in the project area was obtained from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Arizona Ecological Services Field Office website for Maricopa County, Arizona. Review of the USFWS database and evaluation of the habitat in the project area indicates that no federally listed species or critical habitat has the potential to occur in the project area and the project will not affect federally listed species or critical habitat.

Arizona Game and Fish Department Heritage Data Management System records do not indicate the presence of any special status species in the project vicinity (3-mile radius). In addition, the project does not occur in the vicinity of any designated or proposed critical habitats.

As noted in Appendix D, it was reported that burrowing owls had moved into the site and this was verified during a site visit on July 5, 2012. Two adult burrowing owls and at least one burrow were observed. Burrowing owls are protected by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (http://www.fws.gov/migratorybirds/RegulationsPolicies/treatlaw.html), a federal law which protects all migratory birds and their parts (including eggs, nests, and feathers). It is recognized that the City does not currently own the property and so the recommendations moving forward are as follows:

Prior to the City owning the property:

- Notify the current landowner that burrowing owls are present on the property and recommend coordination with the Arizona Game and Fish Department regarding any activates which could impact the owls including grading, weeding, and spraying. (http://www.azgfd.gov/w_c/nongameandendangeredwildlifeprogram/Raptors/BurrowingOwlManagement.shtml)

If the City takes possession of the property:

- Coordinate with the City's 404 Coordinator who will work with the Arizona Game and Fish Department regarding appropriate measures to protect the owls prior to construction.
- Notify the City's 404 Coordinator at least 60 days prior to construction to allow time for:
    - The City (Office of Environmental Programs) to obtain a relocation permit from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and
    - The City to coordinate with Wild at Heart to perform the burrowing owl relocation. The Public Transit Department or their contractor will contract directly with Wild at Heart (http://wildatheartowls.org/).

Appendix: Exhibits D, F, and G

11. Traffic and Parking

Results from the Desert Sky Transit Center Traffic Impact Study indicate that the proposed facility would not have a significant impact on 79th Avenue, Thomas Road, the intersection of 79th Avenue and Thomas Road, or the study intersections included in the Traffic Impact Study. The intersection levels of service in the horizon years 2015 and 2031 with the development of the site are acceptable. The existing queue lengths at study intersections are found to be acceptable and are anticipated to accommodate the future car and bus traffic. Specific City of Phoenix Street Transportation Recommendations are included in Table 4. The preliminary site access plan is shown in **Figure 8, Preliminary Site Access Plan**.

Appendix: Exhibit H

Figure 8 Preliminary Site Access Plan

Source: URS Corporation, 2012.

12. Energy Requirements and Potential for Conservation

With the development of the transit facility, there would be an overall conservation of energy that would otherwise be required to transport people to, from and within the study area. The conservation would be derived from the reduction in the demand for single occupant vehicle travel in the Thomas Road and 79th Avenue corridors due to the fact that the facility would provide dedicated, covered, secure parking and a passenger waiting area for commuter service.

As part of the City of Phoenix's Sustainability Program, opportunities for small scale solar power generation would be identified as funding allows. Potential solar projects include installation of solar-powered shade canopies or canopy-mounted photovoltaic systems on transit facilities. Solar facilities may generate power for night and security lighting, fans, or other facility needs.

13. Historic Properties and Parklands

The City of Phoenix Archaeologist issued an Archaeology Assessment Result Form indicating that no further review by the Phoenix Archaeology Office is necessary for this project area. However, if any archaeological materials are encountered during construction, all ground disturbing activities must stop in the vicinity of the discovery and the Phoenix Archeology Office must be contacted immediately and allowed time to properly assess the materials. As part of the City Archaeologist's review process, no properties listed, or eligible for listing, on the National Register of Historic Places were identified at the project location. Consultation with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) is complete and FTA received concurrence from SHPO that the project would have no impact on historic properties (Exhibit J).

Appendix: Exhibits I and J

14. Section 4(f) and Section 6(f) Properties

Section 4(f) refers to Section 4(f) of the U.S. Department of Transportation Act of 1966 and restricts the use of any publicly owned land from a public park, recreation area, or wildlife and waterfowl refuge of national, State, or local significance as determined by the Federal, State, or local officials having jurisdiction thereof, or any land from an historic site of national, State, or local significance. Section 4(f) states that FTA may not approve the use of land from a significant publicly owned park, recreation area, wildlife or waterfowl refuge, or historic site unless a determination is made that there is no feasible and prudent alternative to the use of land from the property and the action includes all possible planning to minimize harm to the property resulting from such use, then the taking may be approved.

There is a 12.6 acre parcel located approximately 0.2 miles southwest of the proposed transit center site which is owned by the City of Phoenix and is currently zoned R1-6, Single Family Residential. Located directly west of the Manuel Peña Elementary School, the City of Phoenix *Maryvale Village Core Urban Design Plan* identifies this site as a proposed park in the future, however nothing has been developed to-date. There are no other publicly owned parks, wildlife and waterfowl refuges, or any historic resources located within 0.25 mile of the project limit. Manuel Peña Elementary School and Raúl H. Castro Middle School are located west of the project site on the southwest corner of 79th Avenue and Thomas Road. However, the playgrounds and recreational fields located on the school properties are not considered subject to Section 4(f) as they serve primarily school functions (Exhibit K).

Section 6(f) refers to Section 6 (f) (3) of the Land and Water Conservation Fund of 1965 and stipulates that once a city, county, or agency has used Section 6(f) for funds, either the land or the park appurtenances cannot be eliminated or acquired without coordination with the National Park Service and mitigation that replaces the eliminated items.

According to the Arizona State Parks listing of Land and Water Conservation Fund Grant Recipients from 1965 to 2009, there are no properties within 0.25 mile of the project limit that would be considered Section 6(f) resources.

The construction and operation of the project would not affect any Section 4(f) or 6(f) resources.

Appendix: Exhibit K

15. Construction

All construction activities would be undertaken in accordance with the MAG Uniform Standard specifications and details. These specifications provide for the mitigation of potential impacts arising from construction including noise, disruption of utilities, disposal of debris and soil, water quality and dust control and safety and security. The specific control measures that apply when the construction phase of the project begins are Maricopa County Rules 310 and 310.01.

16. Aesthetics

The project would comply with all design criteria associated with the existing zoning district and the *Maryvale Core Urban Design Plan.* Design issues such as aesthetics, utility undergrounding, vehicular and pedestrian access, landscaping, buffering and screening would be addressed in the Design Review process.

17. Community Disruption

Traffic, noise, and air quality studies conducted for this project determined that there would be no impacts to sensitive land uses in the area and therefore, no community disruption is expected to result from this project.

18. Safety and Security

The site has excellent visibility for security and access to and from 79th Avenue and Thomas Road. Crime Prevention through Environmental Design techniques to enhance safety and security would be used in the design of the facility. Therefore, the proposed project would have no significant safety and security impacts. In addition, all City of Phoenix passenger facilities include security staff during hours of operation, ample lighting, and CCTV surveillance cameras in selected locations at the park-and-ride facility.

19. Secondary Development

The proposed project is a transit passenger facility and would not induce growth. However, the facility would provide needed transit amenities in this area of high transit use, helping to link the residential uses with employment areas. The location of the transit center would provide ideal connections to retail, residential, and other developments. As noted in Section 2, the Maryvale Village Core Urban Design Plan identifies the proposed transit center site as an area of future commercial growth surrounded by mixed use development to the south and west.

20. Consistency with Local Plans

The transit center facility is consistent with the City of Phoenix General Plan as well as the Maryvale Village Core Urban Design Plan. As identified, the General Plan land use designation for the proposed project site is commercial. Land surrounding the proposed transit center includes high density residential, mixed use, and public facilities. The Maryvale Village Core Urban Design Plan promotes an environment that is conducive to TOD which supports the development of a transit center. In addition, Thomas Road is a major arterial roadway within Phoenix and is considered an 'Upper Tier' high capacity transit corridor in the City of Phoenix High Capacity Transit Corridor Study. The location of a transit center along a future high capacity transit corridor would enhance connectivity opportunities and improve access the regional transit network.

21. Title VI and Environmental Justice

Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act states that "No person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance."

"Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations" (EO 12898) directs each federal agency to "make achieving environmental justice part of its mission by identifying and addressing, as appropriate, disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of its programs, policies, and activities on minority populations and low-income populations," including tribal populations. Executive Order 12898 requires that federal agencies identify and address as appropriate, disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of proposed actions on minority and low-income populations. Executive Order 12898 clarifies and reinforces Title VI responsibilities as well as addresses effects on low-income populations.

The Title VI/Environmental Justice analysis examined the racial and ethnic composition and poverty levels for the population in the study area and compared demographic characteristics to citywide totals. **Table 1** provides 2010 Census data for a breakdown of the population of the project area and City of Phoenix by census tract. The boundaries for the census tracts are shown in **Figure 9**. Approximately 60% of the population within the census tract containing the project site is considered a minority. The percent of the population that is part of a racial minority group in the vicinity of the proposed project site (census tract 1125.09) is almost double that of the City of Phoenix and all of the census tracts reviewed in the area include minority populations that exceed 50%. The proportion of Hispanic community members within the project area is also generally 70% or more of the population, compared to 41% citywide.

The percent of the population below the poverty level located in the census tract that includes the proposed project site (census tract 1125.09) is 24% according to the 2006-2010 American Community Survey. **Table 2** compares the percentage of the population below the poverty level located within the census tracts in the project area to overall poverty statistics for the City of Phoenix. Generally, the area of the proposed project includes a larger proportion of the population below the poverty level than the average for the City. Most of the census tracts within the proposed project area exceed the National Poverty Threshold of 15%.

Table 1 Minority Population – 2010 Census

	City of Phoenix	Census Tract 1097.02	Census Tract 1097.05	Census Tract 1125.03	*Census Tract 1125.09
Total Population	1,445,632	5,053	1,803	7,944	**6,909**
White	951,958	2,520	835	3,931	**2,781**
African American	93,608	156	92	335	**927**
American Indian	32,366	63	19	184	**212**
Asian	45,597	46	15	65	**128**
Hawaiian	2,555	0	1	10	**17**
Other	267,214	2,113	790	3,149	**2,489**
Two or more	52,334	155	51	270	**355**
% Racial Minority (non-white)	34%	50%	54%	51%	**60%**
Hispanic	589,877	3,972	1,411	6,525	**4,772**
% Hispanic	41%	79%	78%	82%	**69%**

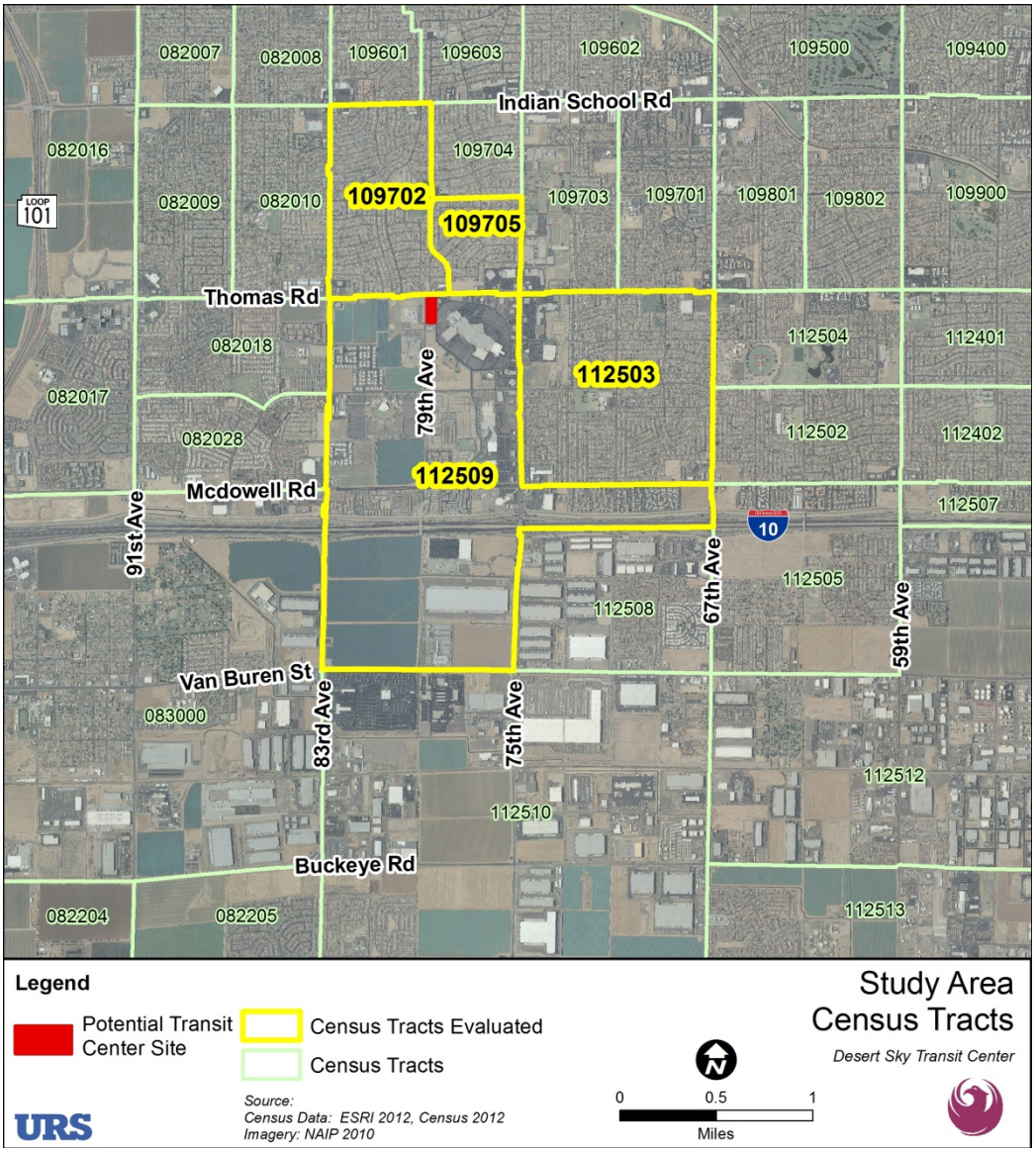
*The proposed project site is located within Census Tract 1125.09
Source: US Census Bureau, 2010.

Table 2 Poverty Level – 2006-2010 American Community Survey

	City of Phoenix	Census Tract 1097.02	Census Tract 1097.05	Census Tract 1125.03	*Census Tract 1125.09
Total population for whom poverty status is determined	1,430,897	3,801	1,851	8,182	**5,530**
Total population below the poverty level	273,925	1,337	71	2,089	**1,319**
% Below the poverty level	19%	35%	4%	26%	**24%**

*The proposed project site is located within Census Tract 1125.09
Source: American Community Survey (2006-2010); US Census Bureau, 2010.

Figure 9 Study Area Census Tracts



Source: URS Corporation, 2012.

The review of demographic data for the proposed project area indicates that a large minority and low-income population resides within the area surrounding the proposed project and likely would experience both the beneficial and adverse effects resulting from the proposed project. At this time, no adverse impacts have been identified to result from the proposed project. The project would provide an upgraded transit facility to the area; a benefit to those populations currently utilizing public transportation. No relocations or substantial impacts on land use and community services are anticipated.

After a full review of information provided by the Civil Rights Manager, it was concluded that no specific minority-owned businesses or residents would be affected by the facility construction. The vacant site would have no adverse effects on surrounded uses or displace people. Therefore, the proposed project would have no impacts related to Title VI and/or Environmental Justice.

Appendix: Exhibits L and M

22. Hazardous Materials

URS Corporation (URS) completed a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment for the proposed Desert Sky Transit Center located at the southeast corner of Thomas Road and 79th Avenue in Phoenix, Arizona (draft report dated July 3, 2012). Based on URS' site reconnaissance, the property is a vacant graded lot within the Desert Sky Mall development. Historical information indicates that the property was primarily agricultural land from at least 1937 until the property was graded as part of the mall development in the late 1970s.

URS reviewed information gathered from several environmental databases, including listings of known hazardous waste sites, landfills, leaking underground storage tanks and facilities that use, store or dispose of hazardous materials. The subject property was not identified in the databases reviewed. Although a former hazardous waste generator facility and facilities with underground storage tanks and leaking underground storage tanks were identified within the vicinity of the subject property, no indications of hazardous materials use or storage or underground storage tanks were identified adjacent to the subject property boundaries. No indications of environmental impacts to the subject property were identified in the databases reviewed.

Based on URS' site reconnaissance and a review of historical and regulatory information, no historical, onsite or offsite recognized environmental conditions or de minimis conditions were identified for the subject property. Based on the scope of services performed for the Phase I Environmental Site Assessment, URS recommended no further action.

Appendix: Exhibit N

D. CONCLUSION

No significant impacts were identified in the environmental analysis of the proposed transit center facility located at the southeast corner of 79th Avenue and Thomas Road in Phoenix, Arizona. **Table 3** summarizes the results of each of the impact measurement categories. **Table 4** provides the summary of short-term, long-term, and ongoing recommendations and responsibilities for the project.

Table 3 Summary of Environmental Findings

Impact Categories		Findings	Exhibits
C.1	Land Acquisition and Displacements	Not Significant	—
C.2	Land Use and Zoning	Not Significant	—
C.3	Air Quality	Not Significant	B
C.4	Noise	Not Significant	C
C.5	Water Quality	Not Significant	D
C.6	Wetlands	Not Significant	D
C.7	Flooding	Not Significant	—
C.8	Navigable Waterways and Coastal Zones	Not Significant	—
C.9	Ecologically Sensitive Areas	Not Significant	E
C.10	Endangered Species	Not Significant	D, F, G
C.11	Traffic and Parking	Not Significant	H
C.12	Energy Requirements and Potential for Conservation	Not Significant	—
C.13	Historic Properties and Parklands	Not Significant	I, J
C.14	Section 4(f) and Section 6(f) Resources	Not Significant	K
C.15	Construction	Not Significant	—
C.16	Aesthetics	Not Significant	—
C.17	Community Disruption	Not Significant	—
C.18	Safety and Security	Not Significant	—
C.19	Secondary Development	Not Significant	—
C.20	Consistency with Local Plans	Not Significant	—
C.21	Environmental Justice	Not Significant	L, M
C.22	Hazardous Materials	Not Significant	N

Source: URS Corporation, 2012.

Table 4 Short-term, Long-term and Ongoing Recommendations

Recommendation	Timeframe	Implementation and Monitoring
Apply dust control measures in compliance with Maricopa County Air Quality Department Rule 310 and other appropriate federal, state, and local rules and ordinances, including MAG Uniform Standard Specifications and Details.	During construction	City of Phoenix Contractor and City of Phoenix Office of Environmental Programs
Obtain permit coverage under the AZPDES Construction General Permit including preparation of a SWPPP prior to ground disturbance.	Prior to construction (monitoring during construction)	Arizona Department of Environmental Quality, Water Quality Division.
Appropriate notification to property owner and/or Arizona Game and Fish Department regarding appropriate measures to protect burrowing owls.	Prior to and during construction	City of Phoenix 404 Coordinator City of Phoenix Office of Environmental Programs
Provide protected left turn from westbound Thomas Road to southbound 79th Avenue.	Short term	City of Phoenix Street Transportation City of Phoenix Public Transit
Monitor intersection of 76th Avenue and Thomas Road; future development may affect queue storage needs.	Long term	City of Phoenix Street Transportation
Monitor intersection of 79th Avenue and McDowell Road; may require additional queue storage length due to vehicles exiting park and ride lot to McDowell.	Mid term	City of Phoenix Street Transportation

Recommendation	Timeframe	Implementation and Monitoring
Consider traffic signal at school crossing of 79th Avenue.	Ongoing	City of Phoenix Street Transportation
Consider school access routes as Maryvale Core Plan is implemented.	Ongoing	City of Phoenix Street Transportation City of Phoenix Planning Department
Consider traffic signal for potential school crossing when Cartwright Avenue is extended to 79th Avenue.	As needed	City of Phoenix Street Transportation
In the event that archaeological materials are encountered during construction, stop ground-disturbing activities and assess materials.	During construction	City of Phoenix Archaeology Office

Source: URS Corporation, 2012.

E. COMMENTS AND COORDINATION

1. Public Involvement Process

During the development of the Desert Sky Transit Center Study and the scoping process for this CE, the City of Phoenix coordinated through public forums for the Maryvale Village Core Plan that included transit; the West Phoenix Revitalization Community Advisory Board; the Citizens Transit Commission; the Maryvale Village Planning Committee, and the Cartwright School District. The public and elected officials have been supportive of the Maryvale Village Core Plan and this proposed transit project which is a key aspect of the overall vision of the area.

2. Agencies/Persons Contacted

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F. LIST OF APPENDICES

Exhibit	Description
A	*Desert Sky Transit Center Study: An Assessment of Existing Facility and Operational Conditions and Alternative Site Analysis*. Prepared by City of Phoenix Public Transit Department.
B	*Air Quality Assessment: Desert Sky Transit Center*. Prepared by URS Corporation.
C	*Transit Noise Analysis: Desert Sky Transit Center*. Prepared by URS Corporation.
D	Clean Water Act Section 404 Initial Assessment Form from the City of Phoenix Office of Environmental Programs.
E	Letter from the Arizona Department of Agriculture.
F	Letter from the Arizona Game and Fish Department.
G	Letter from the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service.
H	*Traffic Impact Study: Desert Sky Transit Center*. Prepared by URS Corporation.
I	Archaeology Assessment Result Form submitted by the Archaeology Section of the City of Phoenix Parks and Recreation Department.
J	Federal Transit Administration Recommendation to the Arizona State Historic Preservation Office for an Endorsement of No Impact on Historic Properties.
K	Correspondence from Cartwright School District regarding use of Recreational Fields
L	Memorandum from the City of Phoenix Public Transit Department Civil Rights Manager regarding Environmental Justice Findings.
M	Environmental Justice documentation:
	Figure A1 Percent Minority Map by Census Block; obtained from EPA Environmapper Website
	Figure A2 Per Capita Income Map by Census Block Group; obtained from EPA Environmapper Website
	Figure A3 Percent below the Poverty Level Map by Census Tract; obtained from EPA Environmapper Website
N	*Phase I Environmental Site Assessment: Desert Sky Transit Center SEC Thomas Road and 79th Avenue*. Prepared by URS Corporation.

G. REPORT AUTHOR

Mark Melnychenko, AICP
City of Phoenix Public Transit Department

EXHIBIT A

Desert Sky Transit Center Study:

An Assessment of Existing Facility and Operational Conditions and Alternative Site Analysis

Prepared by City of Phoenix Public Transit Department

March 2011

Desert Sky Transit Center Study

An Assessment of Existing Facility and Operational Conditions and Alternative Site Analysis

City of Phoenix
PUBLIC TRANSIT DEPARTMENT

1. INTRODUCTION

The Desert Sky Transit Center Study was initiated by the City of Phoenix Public Transit Department as part of the continuing efforts to improve public transit service and in support of the City's revitalization goals for West Phoenix.

The purpose of this study is to document current conditions at the existing transit center and assess how well the facility is meeting the City's transit operation needs as well as transit system user, or passenger, needs.

Finally, the study will serve as a major component of any future environmental assessment of impacts as required by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA).

Organization of the Study

The Desert Sky Transit Center Study provides an overview of existing conditions within the Maryvale Village and West Phoenix Revitalization Area, documents current site conditions at the transit center, assesses transit operation and passenger needs, evaluates nine potential new transit center sites, and recommends a preferred site.

The report is organized into the following sections:

- *Area Profile* provides an overview of the population and socio-economic data for the study area. Additionally, it describes both the urban development and transportation network within the study area and its relationship to other plans and programmed activities in the West Phoenix area.
- *Existing Conditions and Needs Assessment* describes and documents the current site and operational conditions at the existing Desert Sky Mall Transit Center. Existing transit center features and level of amenities are evaluated and compared to those found at a typical transit center and at other transit centers throughout the City of Phoenix.
- *Alternative Site Analysis and Recommendation* identifies potential transit center sites and evaluates each in accordance with established criteria. A recommendation is made for the preferred site and alternative sites for a new Desert Sky Transit Center.

2. AREA PROFILE

The Desert Sky Mall Transit Center is located with the Maryvale Village Core, in the north parking lot of the Desert Sky Mall, approximately 1,100 feet south and east of the southeast corner of 79th Avenue and Thomas Road.

The Phoenix City Council and Planning Commission have divided the city into fifteen planning areas called urban villages in order to work better with the community on planning issues (Figure 2.1). The urban villages are based on the Phoenix General Plan that was adopted to guide the urban form of the city while creating a sense of place. Three key principles of the General Plan are:

- Balance housing and employment
- Concentrate intensity in village cores
- Promote the unique character of each village

Each village has a core that serves as the community focal point by combining the most intense land uses with a great variety of uses. By providing a mix of employment, housing and retail opportunities, this village "downtown" creates a physical identity for the residents. It is designed to serve as a gathering place with pedestrian activity and a focus for the local transportation system.

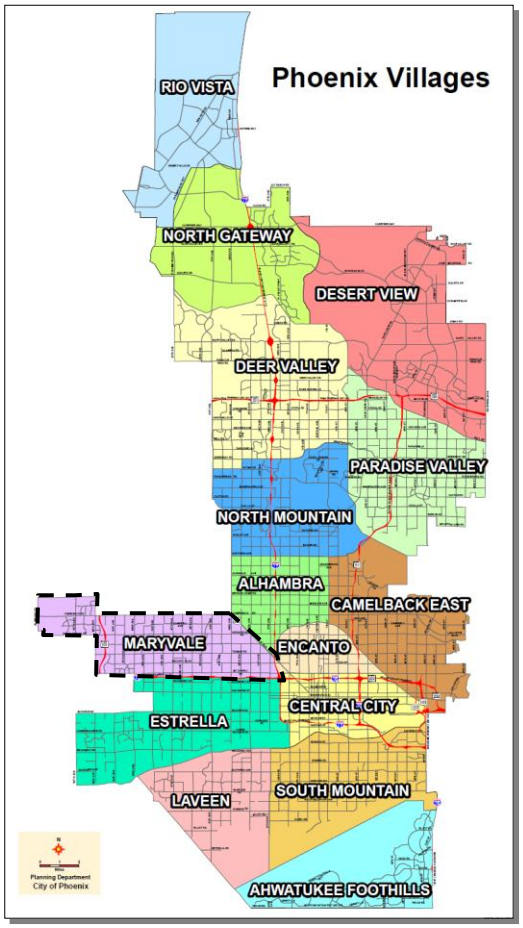


Figure 2.1 The Maryvale Village, shown in purple, is located in West Phoenix.

The Maryvale Village is located on the west side of Phoenix and is generally bounded by Interstate 17 (I-17) and Grand Avenue on the east, Interstate 10 (I-10) on the south, 99th Avenue and El Mirage Road on the west and Camelback Road on the north. The Village encompasses 32.5 square miles, approximately 6.3% of the land area in Phoenix.

Demographics[1]

Maryvale is one of the most populous of the 15 urban villages, with approximately 14.1% of Phoenicians residing within the Village. The Village's 2010 population is 204,560, up 7.6% from the 2000 Census, 189,996. Maryvale is expected to grow an additional 10.8% by 2030, accommodating 226,600 people. Maryvale has a population density of 6,296 persons per square mile which is more than double that of Phoenix, 2,785 persons per square mile.

Maryvale boasts a young, diverse population, as shown in Table 2.1. When compared to Phoenix at large, the percent of households living in poverty is only

[1] Demographic information reported is based on 2010 Census and 2006-2010 Census American Community Survey information unless noted otherwise. Specific information for the Maryvale Village has been calculated using Census Block Group data (to the best geographic fit with Census Block Groups).

slightly higher in Maryvale, while the median household income is approximately 17% lower. With respect to race, approximately 51% of the Maryvale population reported being non-white or two or more races compared to 34% of all Phoenicians. Further, 88% more Maryvale residents reported being of Hispanic or Latino decent.

Table 2.1
Demographic Comparison of Maryvale and Phoenix

	Population	18 Years & Over	Hispanic or Latino	Household Size	Median Household Income	Population Living in Poverty
Maryvale	204,560	62.1%	77.2%	4.1	$40,504	20.6%
Phoenix	1,445,632	71.8%	40.8%	3.7	$48,845	19.1%

The Village Core is home to 3,337 employees. The retail sector employs the greatest number of people, 60%, while 36% of employees work in the service sector. Wal-Mart is the single, largest employer. Sears, Lowe's, Dillard's and Target are also major employers within the area.

Land Use

Maryvale is composed of a mix of land uses, as shown on the *Maryvale Village General Plan Land Use Map* (Figure 2.2). A variety of single- and multi-family neighborhoods dominate the landscape. The Village core, located between 75th and 83rd avenues and Thomas and McDowell roads, surrounds the Desert Sky Mall, an 892,642-square foot regional shopping center, and Ashley Home Furniture Pavilion, a 20,000-seat, open-air concert venue. A smaller, secondary core has developed at 51st Avenue and Indian School Road. An emerging mixed-use business center is developing along Loop 101. Banner Estrella Medical Center is located at the southern edge of the business center at southwest corner of 91st Avenue and Thomas Road. A significant industrial area is located on the east side of the Village adjacent to Grand Avenue and the Burlington-Northern Railroad tracks.

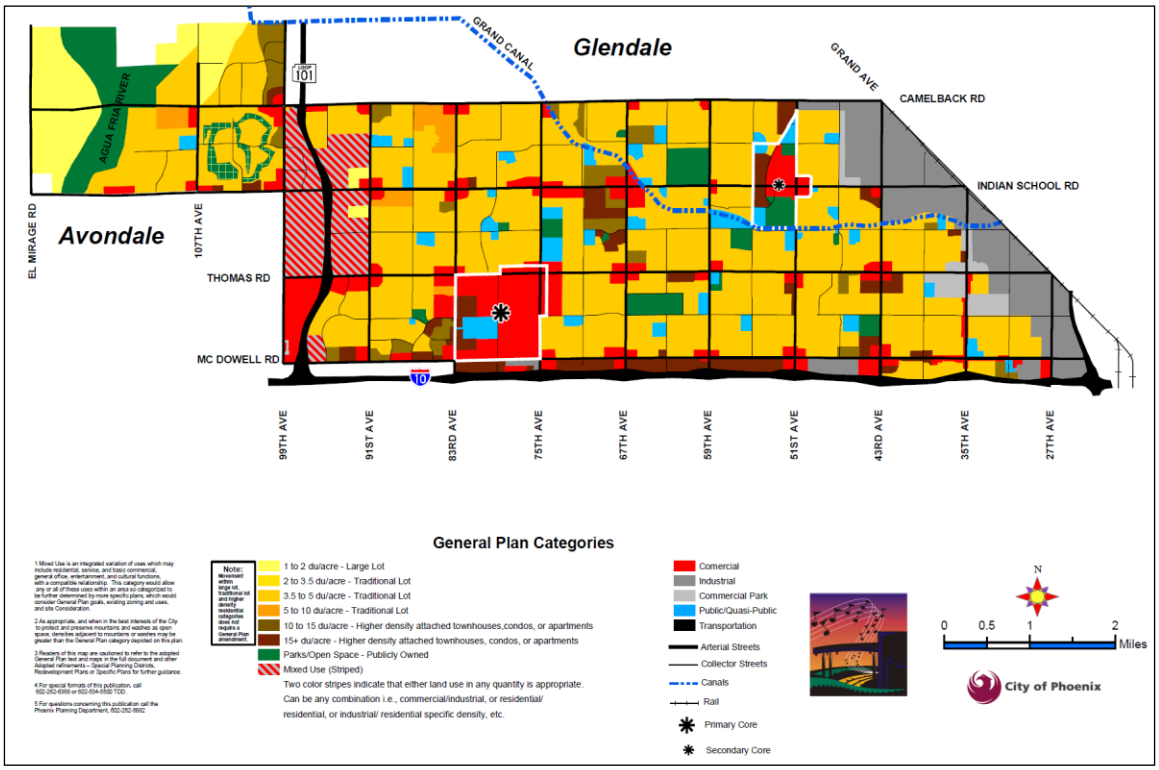
Public Facilities

Two primary schools, Manuel Pena Elementary School and Raul H Castro Middle School, are located within the Village Core, immediately west of Desert Sky Mall on the southwest corner of 79th Avenue and Thomas Road. The Desert Sage Library is located on the south side of the mall, north of Encanto Boulevard, between 79th and 75th avenues.

Transportation Network

The area is served by an extensive transportation network. Interstates 10 (I-10) and 17 (I-17) provide access to the southern and eastern portions of the village, respectively and Loop 101 runs through the west. A comprehensive system of major arterial, arterial, collector and local streets laid out on a grid network serve the village. The village is bisected by a network of local streets, with four major east-west arterials crossing the village: Camelback, Indian School, Thomas and McDowell roads.

Figure 2.2: *Maryvale Village General Plan Land Use Map*



Four of the City's top 10 most productive local fixed routes serve the area: Route 29 (Thomas Road); Route 41 (Indian School Road); Route 50 (Camelback Road); Route 17 (McDowell Road). Additionally, two of the top city-wide High Capacity Transit corridors are located within the Village, I-10 West and Thomas Road. The City of Phoenix High Capacity Transit Corridor Study evaluated 21 potential corridors and identified nine upper tier corridors based on the following criteria:

- Population Concentrations
- Employment Concentrations
- Ridership Potential
- Economic Development Potential
- Transportation Connections
- Regional Serving Destinations Inside the City
- Potential for High Speed Operations
- Promotion of Regional Smart Growth Principles
- Regional Destinations Outside the City

The I-10 West and Thomas Road corridors ranked second and fourth, respectively.

Transit riders within the Village and greater area are served by the Desert Sky Transit Center and the 79th Ave and I-10 Park-and-Ride. The Desert Sky Transit Center, located within the Village Core, is described in detail in the following section. The 79th Avenue and I-10 Park-and-Ride is located at the southeast corner of 79th Avenue and McDowell Road, just north of I-10. A High-Occupancy Vehicle (HOV)-only ramp to and from I-10 is located at 79th Avenue, directly connecting the park-and-ride facility with the Interstate.

West Phoenix Revitalization Area

The Phoenix City Council created the West Phoenix Revitalization Community Advisory Board in 2006 to give advice and provide recommendations on long-term approaches to revitalizing West Phoenix. The area, known as the West Phoenix Revitalization Area (WPRA), encompasses 52 square miles and is comprised of portions of Alhambra, Encanto and Maryvale villages (Figure 2.3). The Desert Sky Transit Center is the only transit center located within the WPRA.

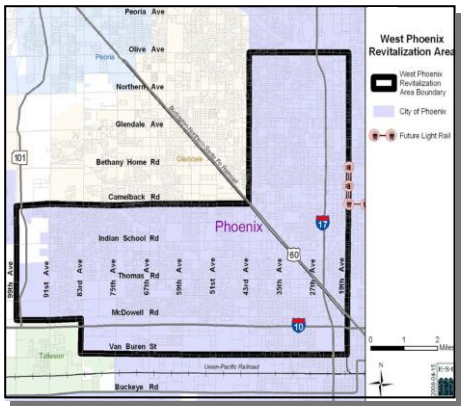


Figure 2.3 The West Phoenix Revitalization Area (WPRA), shown here, encompasses 52 square miles northwest of downtown Phoenix.

Utilizing a planning grant from the Economic Development Administration, the Phoenix Neighborhood Services Department and the WPRA Advisory Board created the *City of Phoenix: West Phoenix Revitalization Area Economic Development Plan* in July 2008. The plan recognized that host of activities are needed to begin revitalizing the WPRA. The plan identifies the following key activities for success:

- Identifying and capitalizing on economic development opportunities within key corridors.
- Promoting the creation of mixed use, including office, retail and entertainment, which in turn drive a critical mass of economic activity within the WPRA.
- Preparing the workforce for career jobs.
- Providing quality public infrastructure and streetscapes within major corridors to spur on private sector investment.
- Enhancing the safety and image of the area by eliminating crime and blight.

As the Desert Sky Transit Center is the only transit center in the WPRA, improving and upgrading the facility would not only be an investment in public transit, but an investment in the community. An upgraded facility would support the goals and efforts of the WPRA by providing quality public infrastructure in an area that is in great need. Additionally, the investment could help spur private investment in the community to further enhance the revitalization efforts of the community and the WPRA.

Conclusions

The Maryvale Village has a dense and diverse population. The area is of regional significance for current and future public transit service. Existing and potential transit usage is high as evidenced by the fact that four of the most productive local fixed transit routes within the City pass through the Village (Routes 17, 29, 41, and 50) as well as two of the top High Capacity Transit Corridors (I-10 West and Thomas Road). The Village Core has a concentration of commercial retail and office activity and serves as a focal point for the local transportation system.

3. EXISTING CONDITIONS AND NEEDS ASSESSMENT

EXISTING CONDITIONS

A transit center is a passenger facility sited at the confluence of several routes where passengers transfer and/or at major destinations served by the regional transit system. The design of transit centers must facilitate vehicular movements as well as boarding and transferring of passengers (including intermodal transfers).

Figure 3.1 The Desert Sky Transit Center is a linear facility that sits on one-quarter acre within the parking lot of the Desert Sky Mall.

The Desert Sky Mall Transit Center is located within the Maryvale Village core, in the north parking lot of the Desert Sky Mall, approximately 1,100 feet south and east of the southeast corner of 79th Avenue and Thomas Road (Figures 3.1 and 3.2). The transit center was built on leased property in 1989 and was refurbished in 2003 with upgrades to the lighting; landscaping and irrigation systems; passenger shelter; drinking fountain, and coolers.

Figure 3.2: ***Desert Sky Mall Transit Center Aerial Map***

Transit Center Amenities

The Desert Sky Mall Transit Center consists of a 510-foot long curb and walkway (Figure 3.3). Passengers board awaiting buses along the east side of the walkway. Public transit vehicles typically queue in the order that they arrive to the transit center, moving forward to provide space for additional vehicles as needed. There are no designated or signed stops.

Figure 3.3 The Desert Sky Transit Center is a long, linear passenger platform. As buses only board on the east side of the platform, passengers must walk up and down the row of buses to find their desired bus amid the unmarked row of awaiting buses.

The transit center's walkway is 25 feet at its widest point. Static transit information is displayed in a three-sided information kiosk located in the middle of the center. Passenger amenities include two seating areas: one seating area is located within a shelter structure equipped with evaporative coolers and the other consists of six benches adjacent to shade trees. A water fountain is located adjacent to the shelter structure.

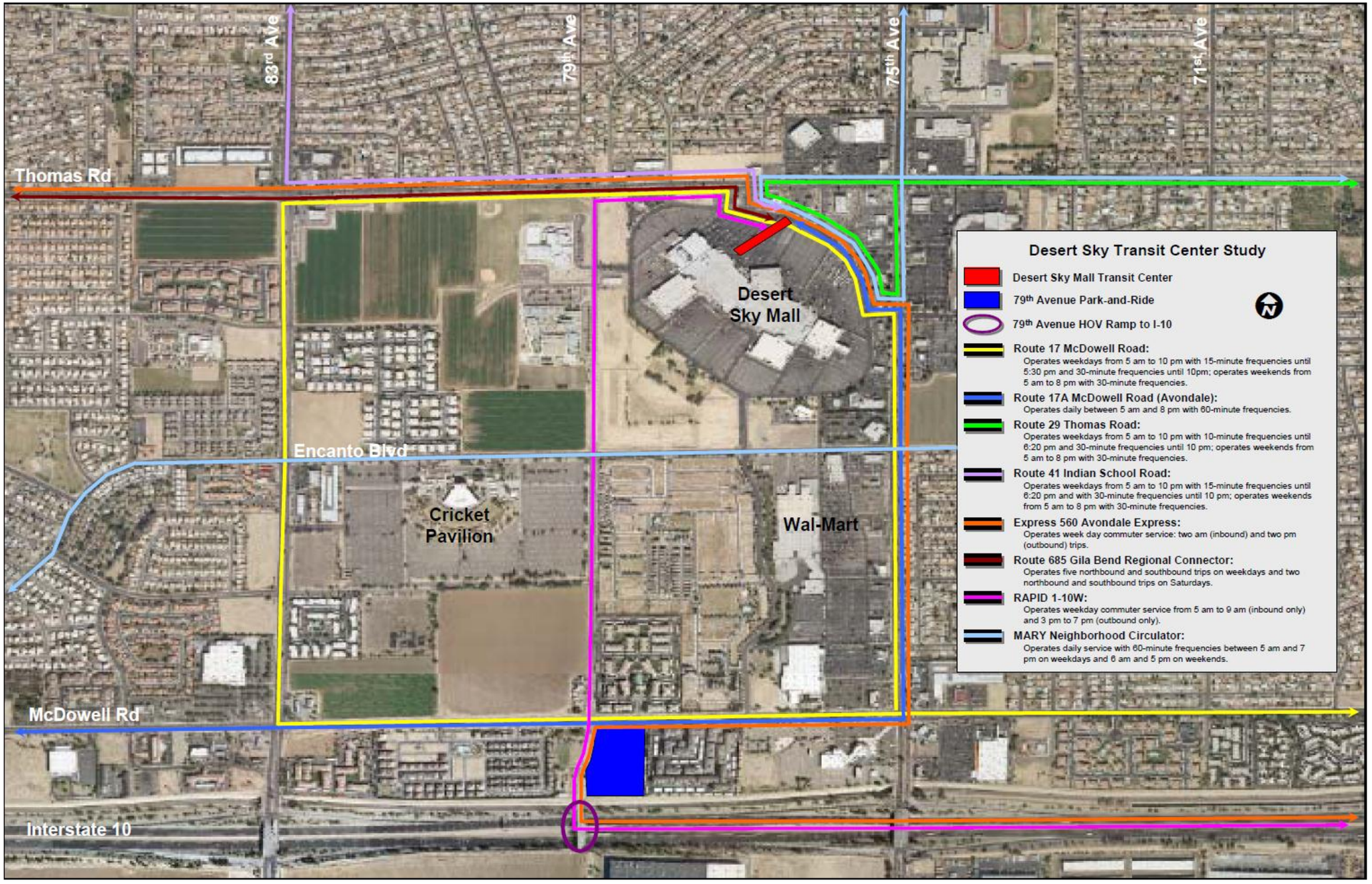
A visual inspection of the site revealed that the passenger shelter and bench seating areas show signs of peeling paint, rusting and graffiti damage and are in need of attention. The water fountain appears to be rusting and was leaking on the day of inspection. Route information in the information kiosk appeared to be difficult for some passengers to read and one side of the display was missing information altogether.

Additionally, an American with Disabilities Act (ADA) review conducted in 2005 determined the parking access aisle, drinking fountain, and boarding area as "non-compliant". While the routes, parking, and curb ramps are ADA compliant, the curbs are still not ADA accessible. The transit center is sloped throughout which makes it inconvenient for wheelchair-bound customers to maneuver in a comfortable manner. ADA compliance must to be up to the current City of Phoenix standards and adhere to Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Guidelines.

Routes and Passengers

The Desert Sky Mall Transit Center is served by a variety of public transit routes, including three of the top 10 most productive local routes, 17, 29 and 41. As of August 2010, eight public transit routes serve the Desert Sky Mall Transit Center including RAPID, Express, Local and Neighborhood Circulator service. The routes are described and depicted in *Figure 3.4: Public Transit Routes Serving the Desert Sky Mall Transit Center*. Access to the transit center is provided through the parking lot of the Desert Sky Mall. Buses utilize drive aisles with shopping center

Figure 3.4: ***Public Transit Routes Serving Desert Sky Mall Transit Center***



patrons and a portion of the access route travels down a parking aisle, creating hazardous conditions during peak transit and shopping times.

Staff analyzed passenger boardings at all Phoenix transit centers between January and June of 2010 (Table 3.1). Data shows that, on average, there are over 60,000 passenger boardings per month at the Desert Sky Transit Center, making it the City's busiest transit center for bus boardings. Desert Sky falls behind Central Station when light rail boardings are added to the equation, as Central Station is the only Phoenix transit center along the light rail line.

Table 3.1 *Passenger Bus Boardings*

MONTH	Ed Pastor	PV Mall	Sunnyslope	Metro Center	Central Station*	Desert Sky
January	9,894	12,597	26,755	43,146	40,646	68,187
February	6,251	13,656	22,912	41,061	39,872	72,322
March	7,484	14,687	28,418	45,370	45,858	75,824
April	8,501	14,276	26,952	44,125	44,563	78,298
May	6,987	13,469	25,034	43,146	45,214	60,862
June	6,223	13,394	24,115	41,963	51,084	60,161
Total	**45,340**	**82,079**	**154,186**	**258,811**	**267,237**	**410,654**
Ave/Month	**7,557**	**13,680**	**25,698**	**43,135**	**44,540**	**68,442**

* Each month there is an average of 47,975 weekday light rail passenger boardings at Central Station in addition to the bus boardings.

NEEDS ASSESSMENT

This section provides an assessment of the current conditions and identifies improvements that may be needed to meet the City's operational and passenger needs. Facility refurbishments were last completed in 2003, including passenger shelters, lighting fixtures, evaporation coolers, and other structural repairs.

Located within the Maryvale Village Core, the Desert Sky Transit Center fits the definition of an Urban Transit Center:

> *Urban Transit Centers are typically located within an urban core and primarily serve as destination facilities of the regional transit system. They are designed to maximize pedestrian connections with major employment centers and activity centers, and will typically be served by local shuttle service in addition to regional and community bus routes.*[2]

Public Transit Operations

Designated Stops

Well-designed transit centers have designated bus stops and protected waiting areas for both buses and passengers. Signs identifying bus routes and berths direct the flow of buses as well as help passengers locate buses (Figure 3.5).

There is currently no signage identifying the routes that serve the transit center or where passengers should wait for the next bus. Passengers report being confused about where to wait for a specific bus and have reported missing a connecting bus. The lack of signage on site creates confusion and adds to congestion at the facility, especially during peak times (Figure 3.6).

Figure 3.5 Designated bus stops with clearly identified, shaded passenger waiting areas at the Paradise Valley Transit Center.

Figure 3.6 Without dedicated berths and adequate signage, it is often difficult for passengers to find their connecting bus amidst the long row of buses.

[2] Excerpt from Valley Metro: *Passenger Facilities Handbook*, June 1995.

Bus Staging and Layovers

The Desert Sky Transit Center serves as the terminating point for many of the public transit routes that serve West Phoenix. The period between the end of one route and the beginning of the next is known as the staging and layover time. Ideally, buses stage in a berth assigned to a particular route or in a designated general staging area able to accommodate multiple buses. During this staging period, it is not unusual for bus operators to take breaks, inspect their vehicle or perform shift changes.

The number of buses accessing the existing transit center exceeds its current capacity. The Desert Sky Transit Center is currently served by eight routes. With 510 linear feet available, the number of buses that can access the facility at one time is limited. No berths or bus bays exists. As a result, buses are forced to find an alternate location to stage and layover. While no formal agreement between the City or the transit operating company and the shopping center exists, buses (five to eight during peak times) have been staging and laying over in the former Shoe Pavilion parking lot located in the northeast corner of the shopping center (Figure 3.7).

Figure 3.7 Buses serving the Desert Sky Mall Transit Center layover on private property. This aerial photo shows eight vehicles, including two articulated buses, awaiting their next routes. In the photo inset, an articulated bus and a standard 40-foot bus wait during their layover.

Designated on-site berths, or bus bays, are necessary to provide protected space within the transit center for buses during staging and layover periods.

Transit Center Access

Adequate access into a transit center is important for traffic calming and volume flow in and out of the facility. Lanes should be designated for a specific direction and buses should not have to cross into the opposite lane to pass a staged bus. There is space available for buses to depart and pass staged buses without encroaching into regular vehicular traffic.

Upon entering the facility, there is only one lane available which ingress and egress could potentially cause problems and safety issues for pedestrians and oncoming vehicles entering into the transit center. There are cases where buses have to cross into the opposite lane in order to keep on schedule to exit the facility as shown in Figure 3.8.

Figure 3.8 Buses that maneuver out of the pick-up/drop-off lane have no alternative available except to cross into oncoming traffic.

Security

Sufficient security is essential in order for patrons to feel safe while waiting for a bus to arrive and also to keep civil order at the facility. Additionally, on-site security serves to safeguard the facility and the public investment that have been made. Currently, there is not an on-site security office or closed-circuit security cameras at the transit center. Limited on-site security is provided: a security guard patrols the site on weekdays during peak afternoon times. Additionally, Macerich, the shopping center owner, provides limited, ancillary security coverage as part of their facility operations.

Passenger Amenities

Transit center designers strive to provide for the security and comfort of passengers. When successful, the resulting sense of safety and comfort of the passengers increases their willingness to use the facility and helps bolster ridership and utilization of the public transit system.

On-Site Customer Service

On-site customer service staff provides a vital service to transit passengers. Customer service staffs at Phoenix transit centers sell fare media, provide information about transit route schedules and operating times, and help

passengers navigate the public transit system. There is currently no on-site customer service provided at the Desert Sky Transit Center. Passengers are able to purchase fare media inside the Desert Sky Mall at the mall's customer service desk. With more than 68,000 passenger boardings each month, the Desert Sky Transit Center is in need of on-site customer service to assist passengers.

Information Kiosk

Information kiosks provide static information about the public transit system including route maps and schedules as well as important customer notifications. There is a three-sided information kiosk located in the middle of the passenger boarding area at the Desert Sky Mall Transit Center. This kiosk is the only forum for public transit information available and suffers from occasional vandalism (Figure 3.9).

Figure 3.9 As the only form of transit information at the Desert Sky Mall Transit Center, passengers rely on the schedules and notices posted in the information kiosk to help them navigate the public transit system throughout the day. Frequent vandalism reduces the effectiveness of the kiosk as the sole information source on site.

Passenger Comfort Amenities

Access to drinking fountains is a frequent request and expectation of passengers at transit facilities, especially in the Phoenix area. The drinking fountain at the Desert Sky Mall Transit Center needs to be brought into compliance with ADA requirements (Figure 3.10).

Figure 3.10 The drinking fountain at the Desert Sky Mall Transit Center lacks the ADA-required dual-height fountains.

While the popularity of personal cellular telephones have reduced the demand for public pay phones in recent years, pay phones should be provided to meet all passenger needs as well as ensure passengers have the ability to make emergency calls should the need arise.

Restrooms are one of the most-requested passenger amenities and public transit facilities, especially at transit centers where passengers may have extended layover times between connecting routes. However, they can have a significant impact on the annual operation and maintenance costs of the facility. As a result, the

decision to provide public restrooms at a transit center is often a policy decision, rather than a design consideration. There are currently six transit centers in the Phoenix transit system. Public restrooms are provided at two of the six, Central Station and Ed Pastor. Restrooms are provided for transit center staff and bus operators at the Sunnyslope and Paradise Valley Mall transit centers. No restrooms, for the public or staff, are available at the Desert Sky Mall or MetroCenter transit centers.

Passenger Seating

Passenger seating areas should be designed to provide relief from the elements. A combination of horizontal and vertical shade elements, including natural vegetation as well as man-made structures, can provide an effective and attractive passenger spaces that provide relief from the sun, wind and rain (Figure 3.11). While there are two passenger seating areas at the Desert Sky Transit Center – one cluster of benches set amidst a number of shade trees as well as one protected by a shade structure, they are not adequate to provide sufficient shade or seating for the volume of passengers.

Figure 3.11 A mixture of nature shade (trees) and shade structures provides an abundance of shade options for patrons that are waiting for buses, especially during summer months, at the Paradise Valley Mall Transit Center.

Bicycle Lockers or Rack and Parking

Bicycle lockers or racks are needed at transit centers to accommodate and encourage multimodal use. Depending on the location and anticipated transit services provided, the addition of a park-and-ride component is warranted at a transit center. For example, if commuter service is provided, like RAPID service at the Desert Sky Mall Transit Center, weekday commuters will likely access the facility via their personal automobile and would need to be accommodated. While no parking spaces are included in the area leased for the Desert Sky Mall Transit Center, RAPID passengers do park in the mall parking lot adjacent to the facility.

Conclusion

Developing an independent transit facility located apart from the shopping center parking lot would alleviate the disorder, clutter, and confusion that transit riders experience at the existing facility. Further, while there are amenities available at the Desert Sky Transit Center, as shown in Table 3.3, the variety and quality of amenities, including security, customer service, fare sales, ticket vending machines, restrooms, and covered parking are not available at this facility. A new facility would allow for improvements to be made to the public transit infrastructure and level of amenities provided to transit riders in the West Phoenix area that are not currently possible due to the limitations of the current facility size and property lease agreement.

Table 3.2: City of Phoenix Transit Center Characteristics and Features

TRANSIT CENTER CHARACTERISTICS AND FEATURES							
		Central Station	**Desert Sky**	Ed Pastor	Metrocenter	Paradise Valley	Sunnyslope
Public Transit Operations	Facility Size (acres)	2.6	**0.25**	4.4	2.6	1	1.8
	Average Monthly Boardings	44,540	**68,442**	7,557	43,135	13,680	25,698
	Designated Stops/Staging	X		X	X	X	X
	Bus-Only Access	X		X	X	X	X
	Operator Restrooms	X		X		X	X
	On-Site Security	X		X	X		X
	Security Cameras	X		X	X	X	X
Customer Service Amenities	On-Site Customer Service	X		X	X		X
	Information Kiosk	X	**X**	X	X	X	X
	Fare Media Sales	X		X	X		X
	Public Restrooms	X		X			
	Drinking Fountains	X	**X**	X	X	X	X
	Bicycle Lockers/Racks	X		X	X	X	X
	Public Pay Phones	X		X	X	X	X
	Shaded Seating	X	**X**	X	X	X	X
	Parking[3]			X	X	X	X

[3] Parking is for employees only at Ed Pastor Transit Center and covered parking is available at Metrocenter and Sunnyslope Transit Center. While there are no designated parking spots for transit passengers at Desert Sky Mall within the leased transit center area, transit passengers do utilize a number of spaces in the shopping center parking lot that are within close walking distance to the transit center.

4. SITE ALTERNATIVES ANALYSIS

The documentation of existing conditions, City of Phoenix planning initiatives, input from City staff, and a visual survey performed by Public Transit Department staff all contributed to the identification of a series of sites for the potential development of a new Desert Sky Transit Center. These sites were put through an evaluation process to determine the two most appropriate sites for further consideration from the initial field of nine alternatives.

Study Area

To help identify a study area for a new transit center, staff identified the following site location considerations:

- Locate near the existing site to minimize disruptions to existing transit routes and transit users;
- Locate within one-half mile of Thomas Road, an identified High Capacity Transit Corridor;
- Locate within one-half mile of 79th Avenue, which provides direct access to the 79th Avenue and I-10 Park-and-Ride, the dedicated HOV access to I-10, and the West Transit Operations Facility;
- Locate within the Maryvale Village Core to support the General Plan goal of locating dense and intense land uses within Village Cores, thus creating a focal point for activity and the local transportation system;
- Locate near employment and commercial centers; and
- Locate near existing or planned community facilities.

Based on these considerations, staff defined a study area within the Maryvale Village Core approximately bound by 83rd Avenue on the west, Thomas Road on the north, 75th Avenue on the east, and Encanto Boulevard on the south. Nine potential sites were identified within the study area (Figure 4.1) and are described in Table 4.1.

Figure 4.1: ***Desert Sky Transit Center Existing and Potential Sites***

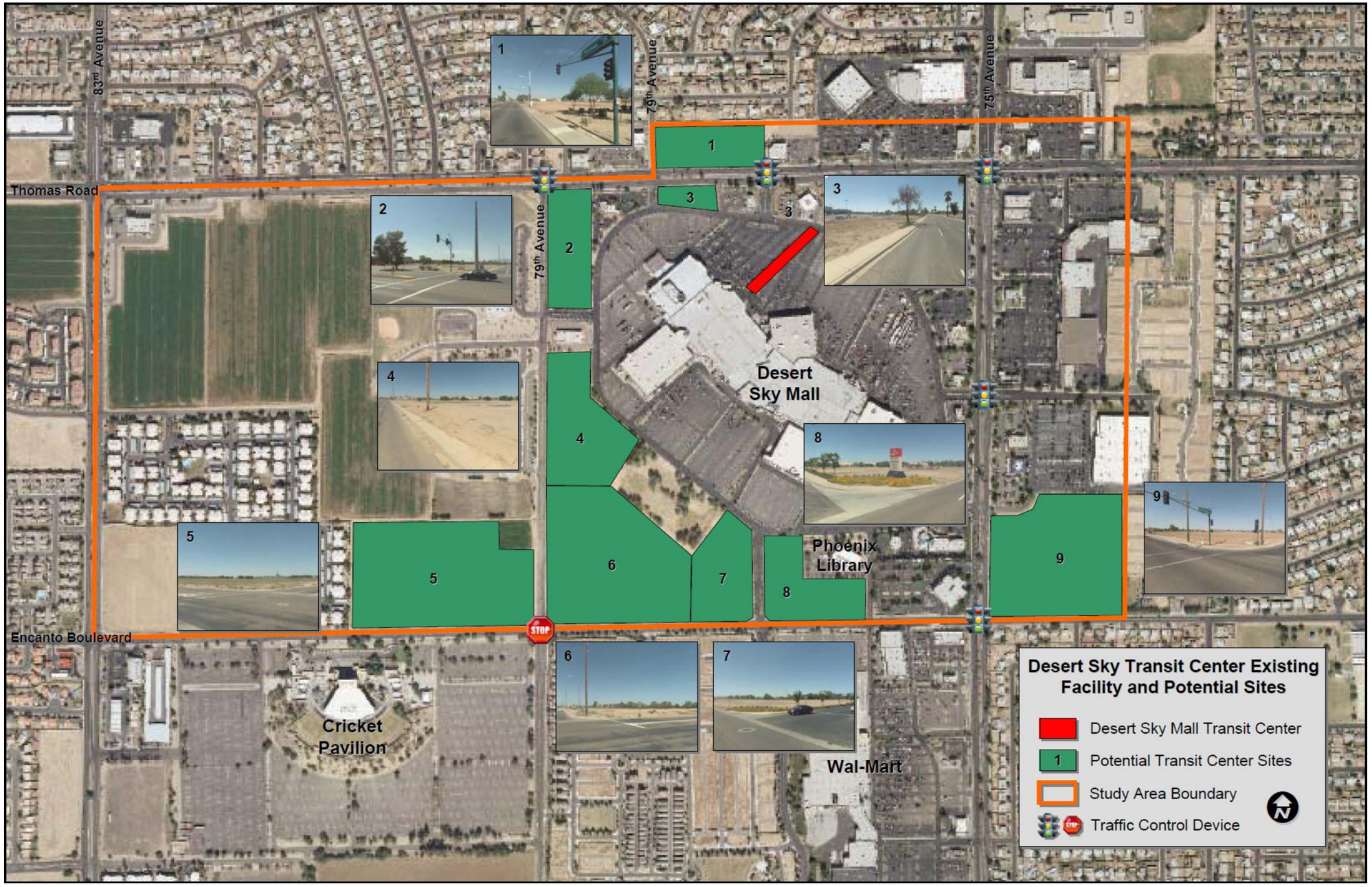


Table 4.1 *Potential Transit Center Site Size and Location*

Site #	Size	Location	Primary Owner	General Characteristics
1	4.2 ± acres	695 ft east of the northeast corner of 79th Ave/ Thomas Rd	Thomas and Patricia Tait	• Vacant, linear site • Access to Thomas Rd and 79th Ave • Signal on Thomas at east property line • North of Desert Sky Mall • Adjacent to existing single-family residential
2	4.1 ± acres	Southeast corner of 79th Ave/ Thomas Rd	Westpen Associates	• Vacant, linear site • Access to Thomas Rd and 79th Ave • Signal at Thomas Rd and 79th Ave • On northwest corner of Desert Sky Mall property
3	1.8 ± acres	695 ft east of the southeast corner of 79th Ave/ Thomas Rd	Westpen Associates	• Vacant, linear site • Access to Thomas Rd • On north side of Desert Sky Mall property
4	6.9 ± acres	990 ft south of the southeast corner of 79th Ave/ Thomas Rd	Westpen Associates	• Vacant, irregularly shaped site • Access to 79th Ave • One-quarter mile south of Thomas Rd • On west side of Desert Sky Mall property
5	14.1 ± acres	Northwest corner of 79th Ave/ Encanto Blvd	79th & Encanto LLC	• Vacant, rectangular site • Access to 79th Ave and Encanto Blvd • Four-way stop at 79th Ave and Encanto Blvd • One-half mile south of Thomas Rd • West of Desert Sky Mall; North of Cricket Pavilion • Adjacent to existing multi-family residential
6	13.4 ± acres	Northeast corner of 79th Ave/ Encanto Blvd	Westpen Associates	• Vacant, irregularly shaped site • Access to 79th Ave and Encanto Blvd • Four-way stop at 79th Ave and Encanto Blvd • One-half mile south of Thomas Rd • On southwest corner of Desert Sky Mall property; Northeast of Cricket Pavilion
7	4.7 ± acres	1,335 ft east of the northeast corner of 79th Ave/ Encanto Blvd	Westpen Associates	• Vacant, irregularly shaped site • Access to Encanto Blvd • One-quarter mile east of 79th Ave and west of 75th Ave • On south side of Desert Sky Mall property
8	4.2 ± acres	675 ft west of the northwest corner of 75th Ave/ Encanto Blvd	Westpen Associates	• Vacant, L-shaped site • Access to Encanto Blvd • One-quarter mile east of 79th Ave and west of 75th Ave • On south side of Desert Sky Mall property • Adjacent to the City of Phoenix Desert Sage Library
9	12.6 ± acres	Northeast corner of 75th Ave/ Encanto Blvd	Westridge Park Investors LP	• Vacant, rectangular site • Access to Encanto Blvd and 75th Ave • Traffic signal at Encanto Blvd and 75th Ave • One-half mile south of Thomas Rd • Southeast of Desert Sky Mall • Adjacent to residential development

ANALYSIS

The mix of land uses and urban design features in transit corridors contribute to transit's attractiveness as a mode of travel. The characteristics of areas around stations strongly influence the way in which patrons travel to and from transit. Measures of "pedestrian friendliness" include the following attributes:

- Street connectivity
- Sidewalk and bikepath connectivity
- Use of street crossing on principle arterials
- Absence of topographical constraints to pedestrian mobility

Urban design features (defined as "aesthetic urban settings") have the greatest influence of any of the factors analyzed on transit mode choice. The presence of shade trees and sidewalks and the absence of graffiti and other factors contribute to the mode choice decisions.

Studies have shown that neighborhood shopping and pedestrian access possess a strong correlation with vehicle miles traveled. Land use mix has special importance for people walking or bicycling to transit services. Also, businesses providing services to riders, such as personal services and retail attract more people to stations.

As the Desert Sky Transit Center is one of the busiest transit centers in the City of Phoenix Public Transit system, particular care needs to be taken when developing a new expanded facility to ensure that the location, size, and proposed amenities at the facility meet the needs of existing and future transit users.

Criteria for Preliminary Site Evaluation

The needs assessment findings and project goals and objectives included in this study led to the identification of nine (9) preliminary sites designated for analysis as well as a set of evaluation criteria. Each of these standards was developed into a matrix that rated the initial set of transit center site alternatives.

Proximity to Existing Transit Center and Routes – As the existing transit center currently serves an average of 60,000 transit riders per month, locating a new facility in close proximity to the existing facility will minimize the disruption for current passengers. Additionally, there are currently eight routes that serve the transit center. Sites were evaluated based on the ability to serve the existing routes with minimal disruption or rerouting.

Proximity to Existing and Future Transportation Corridors – *(Bus access/routing, freeway system, bikeways, major arterial streets)*. All planned transit facilities must consider the overall transportation network to determine whether the facilities make appropriate connections between existing and future transit routes, freeways, and pedestrian and bicycle corridors. All of these

transportation modes are important to ridership connections and ease of accessibility to a given system. Sites were evaluated based on their proximity to the identified Thomas Road and I-10 High Capacity Transit corridors, including the HOV connection to I-10 at 79th Avenue, as well as major arterials important to the provision of local service, Thomas Road and 75th Avenue.

Site Size and Configuration – The size and configuration of a potential site is an important consideration. Enough acreage must be available to support planned operations and passenger amenities, with room for expansion if possible. However, Sites that are too large may cause problems during acquisition if lot splits are required or require future land disposition if too much land is purchased. The site configuration must allow the transit center facility to maximize the utilization of space. To accommodate planned transit operations, the Desert Sky Transit Center site should be at least four to five acres in size.

Visibility and Rider Attractiveness – Area transit facilities should be very visible from highly utilized areas in as many directions as possible to foster a sense of security for the passenger. A well-defined and visible transit center should include convenient linkage to adjacent uses and use of existing surrounding architectural opportunities for ties with the proposed facility. The objective is to encourage flexibility and creativity while still meeting transit and community objectives. Adjacent street design must recognize the need for easy and safe pedestrian access and visibility and lend itself to appropriate changes for pedestrian crossings and access points. Sites were evaluated based on their proximity to highly trafficked automobile and pedestrian corridors.

Safety Concerns – While the transit center will de design and developed to maximize safety, opportunities can be present to maximize the safety of the passenger and facility. Sites located adjacent to uses or businesses with extended hours of activity can provide valuable “eyes on the site” safety.

Accessibility – Buses must be able to access the chosen transit center site safely with minimal passenger delay due to bus route diversion. Sites were evaluated based on the ability of buses to make safe left turns, direct access to arterial streets, minimal cross-access through private property, and convenient bus turn-around routes.

Acquisition Issues – A host of issues arise when alternative sites area being studies for location and development of a transit center. The difficulty in acquiring a site may hinge upon cost, existing plans already submitted to the Planning and Development Services Department, questions of ownership and known legal problems or zoning conflicts.

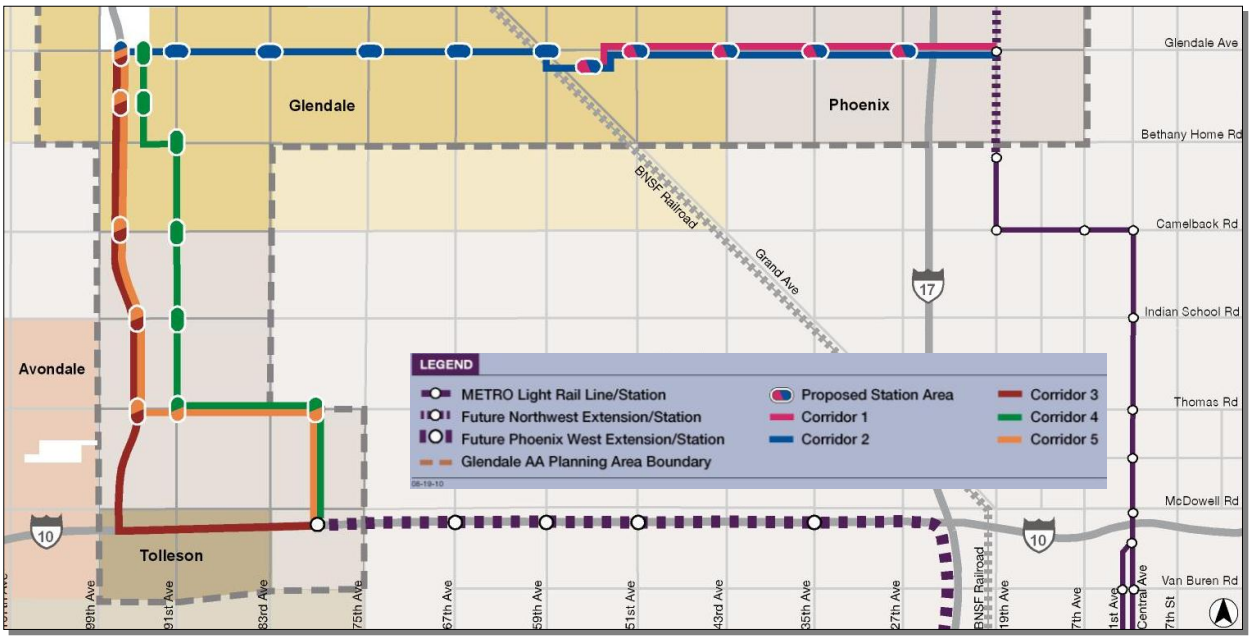
Pedestrian Connectivity to Desert Sky Mall – All of the proposed sites are located within the Maryvale Village Core, where higher concentrations of commercial and employment activity and higher density residential development is desired and supported by the Phoenix General Plan and existing zoning.

However, the success of the existing transit center, despite the lack of traditional amenities provided at other City of Phoenix transit centers, is due in part to the proximity of the Desert Sky Mall. The Desert Sky Mall is a key activity center within the Maryvale Village Core. Sites were evaluated based on the ability to tie the future transit center into existing pedestrian connections to the Desert Sky Mall.

Land Use Compatibility – Land use patterns in the surrounding area have a significant impact on transit operations and on the level of transit ridership. Some land uses are particularly sensitive to the impacts associated with transit centers: noise, exhaust, and waiting passengers. Transit-oriented pedestrian-bicycle networks provide direct, safe and interesting pedestrian paths to transit facilities from residences or commercial development. As all of the potential sites are located within the Maryvale Village Core, sites were evaluated based on compatibility with exiting development. Sites adjacent to residential development were seen to be more sensitive to transit center operations than those adjacent to commercial establishments.

Potential Light Rail Connectivity – The Phoenix West Light Rail (LRT) Extension is part of a regionally-approved transportation plan and is one of the LRT extension corridors that will travel westbound from the METRO starter line in downtown Phoenix to the 79th Avenue park-and-ride area. In all scenarios the Phoenix West LRT will stop along I-10 West at 79th Avenue, serving the I-10/79th Avenue Park-and-Ride. Two potential extentions to Glendale would bring LRT north on 79th Avenue to Thomas Road, continuing west and north to the Westgate entertainment district in Glendale (Figure 4.2). Sites were evaluated based on connectivity with potential Phoenix West LRT routes.

Figure 4.2: LRT Glendale Corridor Alternatives



Results of Preliminary Site Evaluation

The preliminary sites were evaluated using the ten criteria described above. Table 4.2, *Preliminary Site Evaluation Summary*, condenses the evaluation process and illustrates the rating comparison of each of the proposed sites. A site collecting a perfect rating would obtain 45 points. Based on this evaluation, sites 1, 2, and 4 earned ratings of 39, 45, and 37, respectively, and were chosen for further analysis.

Table 4.2 *Preliminary Site Evaluation Summary*

Criteria / ***Site#***	***1***	***2***	***3***	***4***	***5***	***6***	***7***	***8***	***9***
Proximity to Existing Transit Center and Routes	4	5	5	3	2	2	1	1	3
Proximity to Existing and Future Transportation Corridors	5	5	5	3	3	3	1	1	4
Site Size and Configuration	5	5	1	5	2	2	5	3	2
Visibility and Rider Attractiveness	5	5	5	2	2	2	1	1	4
Safety Concerns	4	5	5	5	4	4	5	5	4
Accessibility	5	5	2	4	5	5	4	4	5
Acquisition Issues	4	5	4	5	1	4	5	5	1
Pedestrian Connectivity to Desert Sky Mall	4	5	5	5	1	2	5	5	3
Land Use Compatibility	3	5	4	5	4	5	5	5	4
Potential Light Rail Connectivity	3	5	3	5	5	5	3	3	1
TOTAL	**42**	**50**	**39**	**42**	**34**	**34**	**35**	**33**	**36**

Through the preliminary site evaluation, the initial nine alternative sites were narrowed to four for further study and prioritization. All of the sites eliminated from further consideration are listed in Table 4.3, *Alternative Transit Center Site Issues*, with an identification of areas of concern for each site.

Site 3, located along the south side of Thomas Road, immediately north of the existing transit center, was eliminated primarily due to its size. At less than two acres, the site is simply too small to accommodate current and planned transit operations.

Sites 5, 6, and 9 are all located along the north side of Encanto Boulevard and are greater than 10 acres, larger than is needed for a transit center or even a joint transit center and park-and-ride facility at this location. Additionally, sites 5 and 9 have recent or active development interest and plans filed with the Planning and Development Services Department. Site 6 is located adjacent to a large stormwater retention basin in to which the entire Desert Sky Mall site drains.

Sites 7 and 8 are located one-quarter mile between 75th and 79th avenues along the north side of Encanto Boulevard. Both sites have good pedestrian connections to Desert Sky Mall and are adjacent to the Desert Sage branch of the Phoenix Library, providing a strong link to another community facility. However, the sites were eliminated because they are not located on a major arterial street

and would require the rerouting of seven of eight transit routes to access the site. Additionally, neither site has a strong connection to existing or planned transit corridors and poor visibility from highly utilized areas.

Table 4.3 *Alternative Transit Center Site Issues*

Site #	Acres	Issues (Areas of Concern)	Score
1	**4.2 ±**	**Selected for further analysis**	**42**
2	**4.1 ±**	**Selected for further analysis**	**50**
3	1.8 ±	Small linear station. Limited ability to develop adequate bus staging and layover areas. Little room for expansion or additional amenities. Mid-block location lacks opportunities for buses to make protected left-turn movements onto Thomas Rd	39
4	**6.9 ±**	**Selected for further analysis**	**42**
5	14.1 ±	Large site, more land than is needed for a joint transit center and park-and-ride facility at this location. Property has increased zoning – C-2 with a height and density waiver; development interest in multi-family residential. Not convenient for future high capacity transit on Thomas Rd. Two of eight routes currently serving the area pass by the site. Not at crossroads of major transit activity 79th Ave and Encanto Blvd are both half-mile streets, not major arterial streets.	34
6	13.4 ±	Large site, more land than is needed for a joint transit center and park-and-ride facility at this location. Not convenient for future high capacity transit on Thomas Rd. Site is adjacent to large stormwater retention area to which the entire Desert Sky Mall shopping center site drains. Size/location of the site may be better suited for a revenue-generating land use. Two of eight routes currently serving the area pass by the site. Not at crossroads of major transit activity. 79th Ave and Encanto Blvd are both half-mile streets, not major arterial streets.	34
7	4.7 ±	Not convenient for future high capacity transit on Thomas Rd. One of eight routes currently serving the area pass by the site. Not at crossroads of major transit activity. Encanto Blvd is half-mile street, not a major arterial street.	35
8	4.2 ±	L-shape site may be difficult to develop efficiently. Not convenient for future high capacity transit on Thomas Rd. One of eight routes currently serving the area pass by the site. Not at crossroads of major transit activity. Encanto Blvd is half-mile street, not a major arterial street.	33
9	12.6 ±	Large site, more land than is needed for a joint transit center and park-and-ride facility at this location. Not convenient for future high capacity transit on Thomas Rd. Commercial establishments interested in developing the site. Potential impacts to adjacent residential development.	36

<u>No-Build Alternative</u>

The No-Build alternative consists of the continued operation of the existing Desert Sky Transit Center without improvement. As discussed in the Needs Assessment

section, this alternative is undesirable as current transit operations have outgrown the existing leased 0.25-acre site. The transit center suffers from bus overcrowding and limited space for layovers during peak periods; a lack of transit operative support services, such as break areas and restrooms; on-site security; and minimal passenger amenities such as adequate wayfinding signage; on-site customer service and fare media sales. A larger site that can accommodate traditional transit center features and amenities is necessary.

Site Selection

Three sites were identified during the Preliminary Site Evaluation for further analysis: sites 1, 2, and 4.

Site 2, a 4.1-acre parcel located at the southeast corner of 79th Avenue and Thomas Road, received the maximum score of 50/50 in the Preliminary Site Evaluation demonstrating that it meets all 10 evaluation criteria. Site 2 is the preferred site for the Desert Sky Transit Center as it offers the following:

- *Convenient access to future high capacity transit on Thomas Rd.*
- *Five of eight routes currently serving the area pass by the site and the remaining three can be easily modified to serve the site.*
- *Crossroads of major transit activity.*
- *Adequate size for current and future transit needs.*
- *Commercial properties surround the site; minimal impact to adjacent properties.*
- *Signalized intersection at 79th Avenue/Thomas Road.*
- *Close proximity to commercial activity.*
- *Close proximity to existing transit center; minimal disruption to passengers and transit routes.*
- *Compatible with the potential light rail corridor along 79th Avenue.*

Sites 1 and 4 both scored 42/50 in the Preliminary Site Evaluation. Site 1 is located Thomas Road, midblock on the north side between 79th and 75th avenues and out scored Site 4 in two key areas: proximity to existing and future transit corridors and visibility and attractiveness to transit riders. Additionally, Site 1 is served by traffic signal which could help facilitate left-turns into the site. However, this site is located adjacent to an existing single-family residential neighborhood. As the site is long and narrow, opportunities to buffer neighborhood from the transit operations through site design would be limited. Additionally, the site is located approximately 1/8-mile east of 79th Avenue, a potential future light rail corridor, which could be problematic for future rail to bus connections.

Site 4, a 6.9-acre parcel located on the east side of 79th Avenue between Thomas and Encanto roads, is the largest of the three sites selected for further analysis. The additional land could be reserved for future expansion, developed with a larger park-and-ride facility, or part of the land could be co-developed with METRO if 79th Avenue becomes a light rail corridor. As the site is surrounded by non-residential land uses, a transit center is more compatible on Site 4 than on Site 1.

Consequently, Site 4 is the recommended alternative site and Site 1, the second alternative.

Recommendation

Based on the data and analysis presented, Staff recommends initiating environmental studies, land acquisition and preliminary site design for a new Desert Sky Transit Center located on the 4.1-acre parcel at the southeast corner of 79th Avenue and Thomas Road.

EXHIBIT B

Air Quality Assessment:

Desert Sky Transit Center

Prepared by URS Corporation

Memorandum

URS

To: Mark Melnychenko, City of Phoenix Public Transportation Department
Connie Randall, City of Phoenix Public Transportation Department

From: Christina Schmitt, P.E., URS
Kammy Horne, URS

Date: June 25, 2012

Subject: Desert Sky Transit Center - Air Quality

This memo discusses the air quality analysis for the proposed Desert Sky Transit Center Project. It describes how air quality is categorized and measured, and discusses appropriate regulatory criteria, the expected effects of the proposed project, and mitigation measures. It includes an evaluation of the No-Build Alternative and the Desert Sky Transit Center Alternative (Build Alternative).

1.0 AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

1.1 Project Description

The City of Phoenix Public Transit Department would plan, design and construct a transit center facility on a 4.1 acre vacant parcel on the southeast corner of 79th Avenue and Thomas Road to serve eight public transit routes including three of the top 10 most productive routes with the City of Phoenix: Route 17 (McDowell Road), Route 29 (Thomas Road), and Route 41 (Indian School Road). The proposed transit center site is shown in Figure 1, *Project Location Map*.

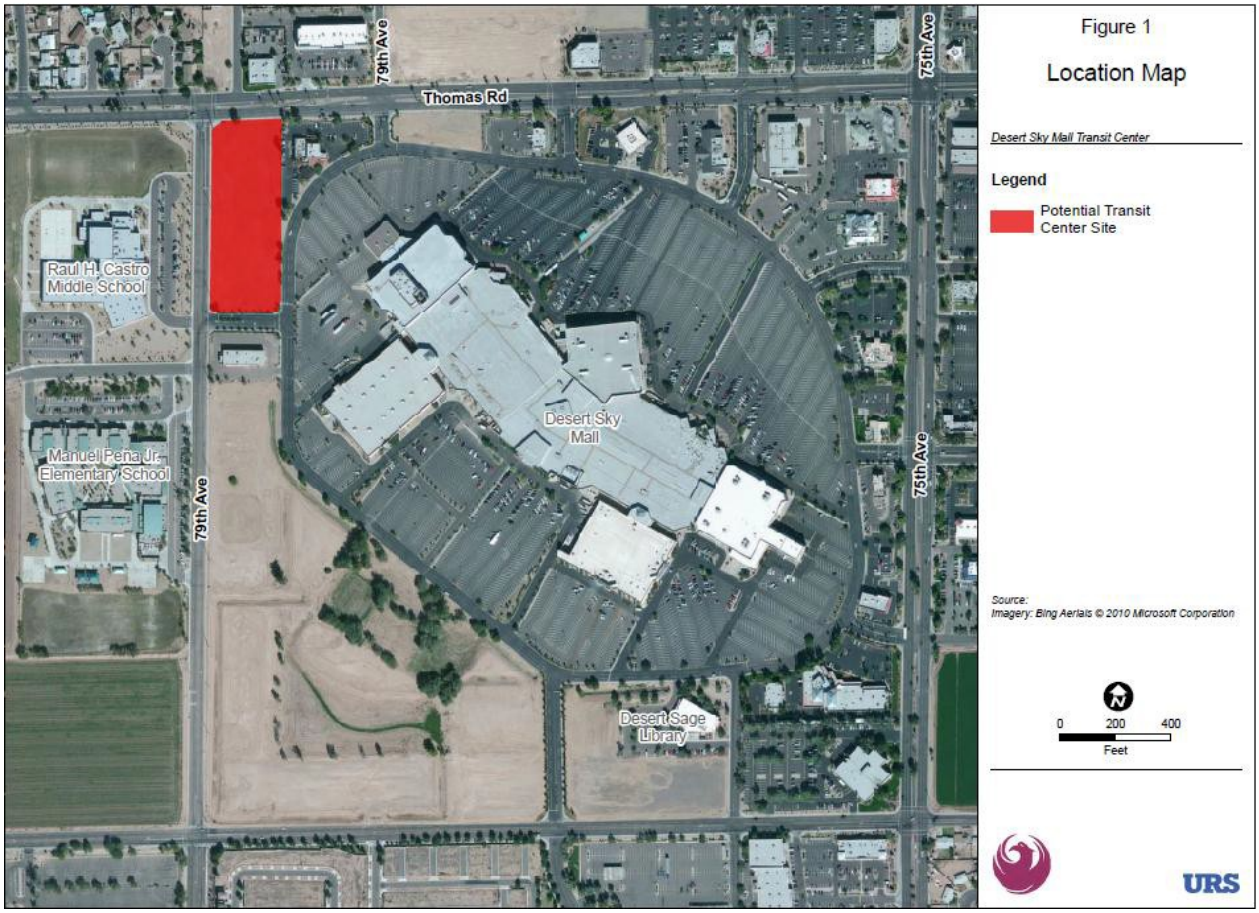
The proposed facility would improve upon the existing Desert Sky Transit Center which is currently located in the north parking lot of Desert Sky Mall, south and east of the proposed project site. The existing transit center consists of a 510-foot long curb and walkway that is 25 feet at its widest point. Current passenger amenities include two seating areas: one with a shelter and one without. It also includes a water fountain and an aging information kiosk that is difficult to read and is missing information. In addition, the existing facility was reviewed in 2005 by an ADA consultant who advised that the parking access aisle, drinking fountain, and boarding areas may not be ADA compliant. ADA compliance must to be up to the current City of Phoenix standards and adhere to FTA Guidelines.

1.2 Regional Climatology

Phoenix is located in the broad, generally flat plain known as the Salt River Valley. The Salt River runs through the valley, from east to west, but is usually dry due to upstream damming. Several mountainous areas surround Phoenix, with smaller peaks within a few miles to the north and south (such as Camelback Mountain, 6 miles north, at about 2700 feet above mean sea level [MSL]). Higher mountains are slightly further out, to the east and west, the largest being the Superstition Mountains, approximately 35 miles east, rising to 5000 feet MSL. The valley climate is desert, with low annual rainfall and low relative humidity. Daytime temperatures are high throughout the summer months, and the

winters are generally mild, with nighttime temperatures often dropping below freezing during the colder months. Total sunshine in Phoenix is 86 percent of possible, with up to 94 percent sunshine in June.

Figure 1 Project Location Map



There are two separate rainfall seasons in the Phoenix area. The first occurs during the winter months, from November through March, when the area is subjected to occasional storms from the Pacific Ocean. Snowfall is rare in the valley, but may occur in the higher mountains surrounding the valley. While these months are considered a rainy season, there can be periods of a month or more with no precipitation. The second rainfall period occurs during July and August, with widespread thunderstorm activity due to moisture from the Gulf of Mexico, the Pacific Ocean, and the Gulf of California, and the nearby topography (higher mountains).

Winds in the spring are predominantly from the southwest and west, and are associated with the passage of low-pressure troughs. Local, strong, gusty winds occur during the

thunderstorm season (July and August) and often create considerable blowing dust. These winds generally come from the northeast or southeast.

1.3 Regulatory Environment

Air Quality Standards

Air quality in the Project area is regulated by the Maricopa County Air Quality Department (MCAQD), which follows air quality regulations set forth by the federal Clean Air Act (CAA). Under the CAA and CAA amendments, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has established the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS), which specify maximum concentrations for carbon monoxide (CO), particulate matter equal to or less than 10 micrometers in diameter (PM_{10}), particulate matter equal to or less than 2.5 micrometers in diameter ($PM_{2.5}$), ozone (O_3), sulfur oxides (SO_x), lead (Pb), and nitrogen dioxide (NO_2). Federal standards for the four pollutants relevant to vehicular emissions (CO, PM_{10}, $PM_{2.5}$, and O_3) are listed below in Table 1. A brief summary of pollutant characteristics is provided below.

Table 1
Ambient Air Quality Standards (AAQS)

Pollutant	Averaging Time	Federal Standard (NAAQS)
Carbon Monoxide (CO)	1-hour	35 ppm
	8-hour	9 ppm
Ozone (O_3)	8-hour	0.075 ppm
Particulate Matter < 2.5 µm ($PM_{2.5}$)	24-hour	35 µg/m3
	Annual	15 µg/m3
Particulate Matter < 10 µm (PM_{10})	24-hour	150 µg/m3

µm = micrometers (for particulate diameter)
µg/m^3 = micrograms of pollutant per cubic meter of air
ppm = parts per million

Source: EPA Office of Air Quality Planning (http://www.epa.gov/air/criteria.html).

Carbon monoxide (CO) is a colorless, odorless, tasteless gas resulting from incomplete combustion of carbon-based fuels. Adverse health effects from CO are due to its ability to chemically bind with hemoglobin, thereby impairing oxygen transport. In most areas, vehicle emissions are the primary source of CO. In Arizona‟s metropolitan areas, about half of the CO emissions are from on-road motor vehicles.

Particulate matter (PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$) consists of very small solid or liquid particles. They pose a threat to both human health and also have the ability to degrade visibility and cause economic damages. There are both natural and anthropogenic sources of particulates, which can be in the form of suspended dust, fibers, combustion ash, and

other fine particles. The major source of PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$ is industrial emissions, but they also result from diesel vehicle emissions, unpaved roads, agricultural activity, and mechanical resuspensions on paved roads due to vehicle activity. Soil dust contributes to more than 70 percent of the coarse particulate emissions in Phoenix.

Ozone (O_3) is a colorless, slightly odorless gas produced through complex chemical reactions in which precursor pollutants, such as hydrocarbons (HC) and nitrogen oxides (NO_x), are transformed by sunlight into O_3. Ozone may cause physiological and pathological changes in both humans and animals, primarily affecting the respiratory system. It is also considered to be a phytotoxin, affecting the regulation of plant respiration. The primary source for ozone precursors are vehicle and industrial emissions, however biogenic sources are also prevalent. Background levels of O_3 in rural, remote areas can be high, up to about one-half to three-quarters of urban area levels. Due to its reactive formation, urban O_3 concentrations are low at night, rise rapidly through the morning, and peak in the afternoon.

Nonattainment Areas

Nonattainment areas are geographical regions where air pollutant concentrations exceed the NAAQS for a pollutant. Air quality maintenance areas are regions that have recently attained compliance with the NAAQS. The Project is located in Maricopa County, portions of which have been designated nonattainment for CO, PM_{10}, and O_3. The Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG) is the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for Phoenix. MAG develops air quality plans for nonattainment and maintenance pollutants, and helps implement those plans region-wide. MAG is also responsible for modeling transportation improvements for air quality impacts, in accordance with conformity regulations. In addition to MAG and MCAQD, the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ) and the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) also provide input and assistance in preparation of air quality plans.

The CO nonattainment area was redesignated to attainment on June 14, 2005, and has an approved maintenance plan through 2015. The 1-hour O_3 nonattainment areas was also redsignated to attainment/maintenance on June 14, 2005, however, EPA revoked the 1-hour O_3 standard on June 15, 2005. Although not considered an averaging period for attainment status, portions of the 1-hour O_3 maintenance control measures remain in place as part of the continued progress toward the 8-hour O_3 attainment goals. The 8-hour nonattainment area was designated on June 15, 2004 for the 1997 8-hour O_3 standard; the area is still pending status determination for the 2008 standard for 8-hour O_3.The MAG *Eight-Hour Ozone Plan for the Maricopa Nonattainment Area* was adopted by the ADEQ and submitted to EPA on June 13, 2007; EPA action is still pending.

Maricopa County was classified as a serious PM_{10} nonattainment area in 1996. In order to meet requirements of the CAA, the *MAG 2007 Five Percent Plan for PM-10* was submitted to EPA in 2007. The plan included control measures from the state, county, and local governments, with a demonstration that these measures would reduce PM_{10} emissions by at least five percent per year, showing attainment of the PM_{10} standard by 2010. There have been no violations of the standard during stagnant conditions since the plan was submitted in 2007. However, EPA disapproved of the plan in 2010, primarily

due to non-concurrence of several „exceptional events". „Exceptional events" include uncontrollable natural events (such as high wind or wildfires) or non-recurring human-caused events (such as fireworks); the data and demonstration of such events are submitted to EPA for concurrence. MAG recently revised the plan to accommodate existing control measures, along with a new measure designed to reduce PM_{10} during high risk conditions, including high winds. The *MAG 2012 Five Percent Plan for PM-10 for the Maricopa County Nonattainment Area* was finalized in May 2012.

Air quality emissions in the region are currently being managed under the provisions of the State Implementation Plan (SIP). The Arizona SIP was first submitted in 1972, and is revised as needed, with new federal or state requirements, or when an area"s attainment status changes. The cumulative revisions have been approved by EPA, known as the "applicable Arizona SIP", and are federally enforceable.

Any regionally significant transportation project in these areas must conform to the SIP. Conformity is demonstrated by showing that the project would not cause or contribute to any new violation of any NAAQS, would not increase the frequency or severity of any existing violation of any NAAQS, or would not delay timely attainment of the NAAQS. As discussed above, MAG is the local MPO responsible for coordinating the regional transportation processes, including performing regional conformity assessments.

1.4 Existing Pollutant Levels

The ADEQ publishes ambient data collected from a variety of agency monitoring networks. The most recent publication is from 2009, which includes data analysis through 2008. This monitoring networks are operated to collect ambient air quality data in order to evaluate air quality conditions (and to compare to the NAAQS), and to help the air quality control agencies identify the causes of pollution in the air. The MCAQD operates a monitoring network within the urban Phoenix area, and throughout Maricopa County. The nearest ambient monitors to the Desert Sky Transit Project site are West Phoenix (WP, approximately 4.5 miles due east), Greenwood (GR, approximately 5 miles east southeast), Durango Complex (DC, approximately 5.5 miles southeast), West 43rd Avenue (WF, approximately 5.5 miles south southeast), and Glendale (GL, approximately 5 miles north northeast). There are no nearby monitors to the proposed site, indicating that air pollutant levels in the immediate area are not of high concern.

EPA determines attainment of the CO standards by having no more than one exceedance per calendar year, over a two year period. There were no reported exceedances of the 1-hour or 8-hour CO standards in 2007 or 2008. In 2008, the maximum 1-hour and 8-hour CO levels in Maricopa County were 4.7 ppm and 3.1 ppm, respectively. These are both well below the 1-hour and 8-hour NAAQS of 35 and 8 ppm, respectively. Both of these maximums occurred at the West Phoenix monitoring site.

Compliance with the 24-hour PM_{10} standard is attained when the expected exceedance rate is one or less per year measured over three years. There were five monitoring sites in Maricopa County in violation of the standard during the 2006 to 2008 period. Of the

monitoring locations near the proposed Project site, only the Durango Complex, Greenwood, and West 43rd Avenue showed an exceedance of the standard, with the West 43rd Avenue site having the most expected exceedances of any site in the county.

The annual $PM_{2.5}$ standard is met when the three-year average of annual means is less than or equal to 15.0 µg/m^3. The 24-hour standard is met when the three-year average of the yearly 98th percentile value is less than 35 µg/m^3. There were no exceedances of either of these standards in Maricopa County in 2008. The maximum annual average within Maricopa County for the 2006 to 2008 period was 11.96 µg/m^3, and the highest for monitors near the proposed Project site was 11.68 µg/m^3 at the West Phoenix monitor. The maximum 24-hour average within Maricopa County for the 2006 to 2008 period was 27 µg/m^3, occurring at the West Phoenix monitor.

Although there is no longer a 1-hour O_3 standard, compliance with the old standard is achieved when, for a three year period, the expected number of days per calendar year with maximum hourly average concentrations above 0.12 ppm is equal to or less than one. There were no exceedances of the 1-hour standard in 2008. The 8-hour O_3 standard is met when the three-year average of the annual fourth-highest daily maximum 8-hour average O_3 concentration is less than or equal to the new 2008 standard of 0.075 ppm. For the period between 2006 and 2008, there were no Arizona monitoring sites in violation of the pre-2008 standard of 0.08 ppm. However, 11 sites in Maricopa County exceeded the 2008 standard during this time period. No data is yet available for the post-2008 years which would be applicable to the newer standard. The maximum three-year average of the fourth-high 8-hour concentration in Maricopa County was 0.081 ppm (below 0.084 ppm, which is the rounding value for compliance with the pre-2008 standard) at the North Phoenix monitoring site. Of the monitoring locations near the proposed Project site, only West Phoenix showed an exceedance of the new standard, at 0.078 ppm.

2.0 AIR QUALITY ANALYSIS METHODOLOGY

Proposed projects must meet conformity rules on a regional level and on a localized (project) level. To meet conformity at a regional level, a project must be in an approved Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), which is developed as a condition to securing federal funds for transportation projects in accordance with federal law. The TIP includes a set of regional projects all of which are analyzed for regional air quality conformity to ensure that the entire package of projects help the region meet federal and state air quality guidelines.

As listed in 40 CFR 93.126, bus terminals and transfer points are categorically exempt from the regional emissions analyses for conformity, unless the MPO, ADOT, EPA, or the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) concur that it has potential regional impacts for any reason. The Desert Sky Transit Center Project is included in the MAG *Transportation Improvement Plan, Fiscal Years 2011-2015*, approved July 28, 2010. Therefore, it was included in the air quality analyses performed to fulfill federal and state regional air quality conformity requirements, as described in the *2010 MAG Conformity*

Analysis for the FY 2011-2015 MAG Transportation Improvement Program and the MAG Regional Transportation Plan 2010 Update (July 2010). Therefore, no further regional conformity analysis would be expected for the Desert Sky Transit Center.

To meet conformity at a localized, or project level, a project must not cause or contribute to a new violation of the NAAQS, increase the severity of an existing violation, or delay timely attainment or maintenance of the standards. To determine whether a proposed project meets project level conformity, traffic levels at local intersections must be examined. A hot-spot analysis is required if the project is forecast to significantly increase intersection-level traffic and degrade the intersection performance. A hot-spot analysis may involve air quality modeling to determine whether a project conforms to the NAAQS.

Air quality effects of CO and particulate matter from vehicle traffic are localized in nature. The study area for these near-field effects has been defined as the immediate vicinity (i.e., within 1 mile) of the Project (Transit Center and each affected intersection). Ozone is considered a "regional" pollutant, with emissions directly at the source and effects occurring at considerable distances from emission sources due to complex atmospheric reactions (with precursor pollutants) and prevailing meteorological conditions. Therefore, emissions of ozone and its reactive precursors from a particular area can contribute to ambient concentrations recorded at monitoring locations throughout the Maricopa County region.

Project-related traffic analyses for No-Build and Build Alternative are evaluated for existing year, 2012 (No-Build only), design year, 2015, and future year, 2031. See further clarification regarding analysis years in the Project traffic report.

3.0 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

3.1 Operations

With the No-Build Alternative, current operations would not change (except for increased traffic due to growth and other changes in the surrounding area), and the existing transit center operations would remain in the mall parking area. The proposed Project (Build Alternative) would increase the number of bus operations on 79th Avenue because the route to the existing bus terminal would be changed. However, the number of bus operations on Thomas Road would not be expected to increase due to the proposed project. The following is a list of the roadway segments and the number of bus operations:

- 79th Avenue between Thomas Road and 76th Avenue
  - 33 hourly buses in the daytime hours (7 am to 10 pm)
  - 7 hourly buses in the nighttime hours (10pm to 7 am)
  - 40 peak hour buses

- 79th Avenue south of 76th Avenue
  - 1 hourly bus in the daytime hours (7 am to 10 pm)

- 1 hourly bus in the nighttime hours (10pm to 7 am)
- 5 peak hour buses

As discussed above in the Methodology section, the Desert Sky Transit Center Project meets conformity on a regional level. Although regional air pollution is not expected to change significantly due to the Project, modifications in traffic patterns can create local hot-spots near congested intersections. This type of localized analysis is discussed below for CO and PM_{10}; these are the pollutants of concern in the Phoenix area that have potential for local, near-field, impacts.

Hot-Spot Analyses

A local CO hot-spot analysis is used to identify when traffic patterns, idle times, queue lengths, and vehicle CO emission rates might lead to elevated CO levels near congested intersections, possibly exceeding the NAAQS. Following EPA guidance (EPA, 1992a), signalized intersections for the CO analysis were evaluated using traffic data from the Project traffic analysis. The guidance recommends ranking intersections based on LOS and traffic volumes (vph) to select the intersections where CO impacts are most likely to occur. There are no signalized intersections expected to operate at LOS D, E, or F under any scenario or analysis year for the Project. Therefore, a hot-spot analysis is not required, and it is assumed that the intersections would all meet the NAAQS. Table 2 provides a summary of LOS for each signalized intersection by scenario and analysis year.

Table 2
Intersection Level of Service (LOS)

Intersection	LOS (AM / PM / School PM)				
	2012	2015		2031	
	No Build	No Build	Build	No Build	Build
Thomas Rd. & 79th Ave.	A/A/A	B/A/A	B/B/B	C/A/B	C/B/B
McDowell Rd. & 79th Ave.	A/B/A	A/B/A	A/B/A	A/B/B	A/B/B
Thomas Rd. & 76th Ave.	A/A/A	A/A/A	A/A/A	A/A/A	A/A/A

Source: Synchro Model Runs for Desert Sky Transit, URS, May 2012.

EPA guidance also requires a qualitative PM_{10} hot-spot analysis for projects that are considered to be an air quality concern. Per 40 CFR 93.123(b)(1), the Desert Sky Transit Project would not meet the criteria for being a project of air quality concern due to the operation levels of the affected intersections. In addition, with the nearest PM_{10} monitors located approximately 5 miles from the proposed Project site, this location is not an identified area of concern for PM_{10}. Also, as shown with the projected increases in bus operations, the proposed transit center does not exhibit a significant increase in the number of diesel vehicles congregating at a single location.

In addition to the operational items described above, the Desert Sky Transit Center Project may also include increased commuter parking. The additional commuter parking is expected to have minimal local effects, as vehicle movement within the lot would be relatively short-term and infrequent. The effects on nearby intersections due to the increased parking are included in the traffic analysis, and have been shown to be negligible. Compared to the No Build Alternative, operations for the Desert Sky Transit Center (Build Alternative) are not expected to have additional regional or local air quality effects through the design and future analysis years.

3.2 Construction

There would be no construction activity for the No-Build Alternative, and therefore no air quality effects.

Construction activities for the Desert Sky Transit Center Project (Build Alternative) would generate PM_{10} and small amounts of CO and other criteria pollutants from construction machinery exhaust. The sources of particulates would be "fugitive dust" from demolition and earth moving excavation, and from diesel exhaust. Fugitive dust includes fine particles raised by construction activities, and is common in dry windy weather. Its dispersion depends on the dryness of the soil, the soil texture, and the general weather conditions such as presence or absence of precipitation and wind velocity. It is most common in dry windy weather. Larger particles would settle near the source, while fine particles would be dispersed over greater distances. Temporary increases in particulate emissions could be noticeable if uncontrolled.

4.0 MOBILE SOURCE AIR TOXICS

In addition to the regional effects on criteria pollutants, Mobile Source Air Toxics (MSATs) are also expected to be minimally impacted by Project. Regionally, MSAT emissions are proportional to vehicle miles traveled (VMT), however MSAT emission rates typically decrease with increased speed (therefore, they may improve with improve traffic flow) and are also expected to be greatly reduced by technological improvements over the next several years.

The purpose of this project is to alleviate overcrowding and to meet capacity needs for public transportation at the Desert Sky Mall, by replacing the existing transit center operations with a new transit center. Based on this the Project classification and operations, it is considered to fall under a Level One assessment for MSATs, per Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) guidelines. The following language addresses the environmental consequences for MSATs: "This project will not result in any meaningful changes in traffic volumes, vehicle mix, location of the existing facility, or any other factor that would cause an increase in emissions impacts relative to the no-build alternative. As such, FHWA has determined that this project will generate minimal air quality impacts for Clean Air Act criteria pollutants and has not been linked with any special MSAT concerns. Consequently, this effort is exempt from analysis for MSATs.

"Moreover, EPA regulations for vehicle engines and fuels will cause overall MSATs to decline significantly over the next 20 years. Even after accounting for a 64 percent increase in VMT, FHWA predicts MSATs will decline in the range of 57 percent to 87 percent, from 2000 to 2020, based on regulations now in effect, even with a projected 64 percent increase in VMT. This will both reduce the background level of MSATs as well as the possibility of even minor MSAT emissions from this project."

5.0 CLIMATE CHANGE

Climate change is a global problem caused by emissions of greenhouse gases (GHG) from every conceivable source in every nation of the world. Transit projects, in general, can both add (e.g., operations of buses) and reduce GHG (e.g., the overall reduction of vehicle trips). A study by the American Public Transportation Association titled "Public Transportation‟s Contribution to Greenhouse Gas Reduction" by Todd Davis and Monica Hale of Science Applications International Corporation, September 2007, suggests that investments in transit generally lead to long-term reduction in the growth of GHG emissions. Further, because transit projects vary it is difficult to provide an overall statement of transit projects‟ effects on GHG. However, very generally speaking, the (adverse) impact of any one transit project on GHG emissions, even in a cumulative effects evaluation, is miniscule within the global context of the problem. Thus, the increased use of transit locally in Phoenix, and across the United States may have a measurable (positive) impact on the environment from the overall reduction in GHG emissions. Therefore, as a general proposition, FTA does not view climate change as a useful consideration in choosing a preference from among the alternatives considered during the NEPA review of a single proposed transit project. Furthermore, as a general proposition, the overall increase or decrease in global GHG emissions resulting from an individual transit project is so small that it would not be possible to predict the impact of that project on the global climate.

The effects of the Project on greenhouse gas emissions were not calculated. The Project, consistent with the evaluation of air pollutants that may be generated by the Project, is considered to have a negligible impact on GHG emissions.

6.0 AIR QUALITY MITIGATION

The Desert Sky Transit Center Project would meet air quality conformity criteria, as discussed above; therefore no operational air quality mitigation is required. The proposed Project must meet control requirements listed in maintenance plans for CO, PM_{10}, and O_3.

The project has potential for temporary and localized air quality affects from construction activities. The temporary effects would result from activities such as demolition, grading, paving and the use of heavy equipment. The impacts from these activities would be reduced through the use of dust control measures compliant with MCAQD Rule 310, which established limits for fugitive emissions of particulates. The construction contractors would be required to comply with relevant federal, state and local air quality

regulations. With the implementation of best management practices (BMPs) for the duration of the project construction, effects on air quality are not anticipated to be significant.

During construction, measures would be implemented to minimize construction effects in the Project vicinity. Measures to minimize construction effects to air quality during construction would include BMPs, including the following:

- Use of water spray as necessary to prevent dust emissions.
- Prompt cleanup of any spills of transported material on public roads by frequent use of a street sweeper machine or other appropriate methods.
- Require contractors to maintain all construction machinery engines in good mechanical condition to minimize exhaust emissions.

7.0 CONFORMITY

As discussed above, the federal CAA and amendments require federal agencies and MPOs to demonstrate that all transportation projects conform to the approved air quality SIPs. The proposed Desert Sky Transit Center Project is including in the MAG *Transportation Improvement Plan, Fiscal Years 2011-2015*, approved July 28, 2010, and the *2010 MAG Conformity Analysis for the FY 2011-2015 MAG Transportation Improvement Program and the MAG Regional Transportation Plan 2010 Update* (July 2010). The project is not likely to cause or contribute to the severity or number of violations of the NAAQS.

8.0 REFERENCES

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URS, 2012. *Desert Sky Transit Center - Traffic Report*. June.

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), 1992. *Guideline for Modeling Carbon Monoxide from Roadway Intersections.* EPA-454/R—92-005. Office of Air Quality Planning and Standards, Technical Support Division. November.

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URS
Christina C. Schmitt, Air Quality Engineer, M.S. Chemical Engineering (Colorado State University, 1988), M.S. Atmospheric Science (Colorado State University, 1990).

EXHIBIT C

Transit Noise Analysis:

Desert Sky Transit Center

Prepared by URS Corporation

Memorandum

URS

To:	Mark Melnychenko, City of Phoenix Public Transportation Department
	Connie Randall, City of Phoenix Public Transportation Department
From:	Susumu Shirayama, URS
	Kammy Horne, URS
Date:	July 11, 2012
Subject:	Desert Sky Transit Center – Noise Executive Summary

The City of Phoenix is proposing to relocate its Bus Transit Center to the southeast corner of Thomas Road and 79th Avenue. A noise assessment was conducted to identify impacts to noise sensitive land uses, which included residential land uses to the northwest and a school to the west of the proposed project site. This assessment used the general assessment methodology described in the Federal Transit Administration's Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment (FTA 2006).

Because the FTA requires comparing the existing noise levels to the project only noise levels, sound level measurements were conducted at nearby noise sensitive receivers. The day-night average noise level (L_{dn}) measured to the north of the intersection of Thomas Road and 79th Avenue was 71 dBA L_{dn}, which represented the residential receivers north of Thomas Road. The daytime average sound level measured at the Raul H. Castro Middle School was 55 dBA L_{day}.

Due to the proposed project, the bus volume would not change on Thomas Road. However, the bus volumes would increase to 40 peak hour operations on 79th Avenue between Thomas Road and 76th Avenue. In addition, the peak hour bus volume at the proposed transit center would be 45.

The predicted project only noise levels would be 59 dBA L_{dn} and 53 dBA $L_{eq(peak)}$ at the residential land and the Raul H. Castro Middle School, respectively. According to FTA criteria, a noise impact would not be expected from the proposed project.

Note that there would be no construction noise impacts from the proposed project.

EXHIBIT D

Clean Water Act Section 404 Initial Assessment Form

Prepared by City of Phoenix Office of Environmental Programs

City of Phoenix
Office of Environmental Programs

Clean Water Act Section 404
Initial Assessment Form

Project Number	PT00170005-1	Project Manager	Connie Randall		
Project Name	Desert Sky Transit Center				
Department	Public Transit	Division	Facilities	Date	1-May-12
Location	SEC 79th Avenue and Thomas Road				

Type of Activity		Notes
Pipeline	☐	
Street (paving, curb, etc.)	☐	
Other	X	Construction of a new public transit center

Further Project Description: PTD is looking to relocate and expand the existing Desert Sky Transit Center. The proposed site is an undeveloped, 4+ acre parcel located at the southeast corner of 79th Avenue and Thomas Road along the periphery of the Desert Sky Mall shopping center. The following site features and amenities are being considered for this location: designated bus staging and layover area; security guard building; closed-circuit television security cameras; bicycle lockers; up to 50 covered parking spaces; solar panels; landscaping; shaded passenger seating; drinking fountains; restrooms; on-site customer service staff and security guards; and ticket vending machines.

Are Any of the Following Present?

Desert Wash or Drainageway	☐	No
Wetland	☐	No
Potentially Suitable Habitat(1)	X	~~Potential~~ burrowing owl habitat

To be completed by reviewer

Recommendations / Comments

404 Permit Required?	No	**Assessment Revised July 5, 2012,**
List Potentially Applicable NWPs	NA	**Burrowing Owls present.**
Need Jurisdictional Delineation?	No	**See attached addendum.**
Need Biology Report?	No - ~~no federal or state listed species or their habitats present~~	
Need Consultant?		

~~Site visit and burrowing owl survey conducted 5/3/12, no evidence of owls found.~~

Also no evidence or habitat for bald eagles (identified on AGFD On-Line Assessment Tool).

Signature: Wendy Wonderly Date: 5/3/2012

(1) Potentially suitable habitat for federal or state listed species such as southwestern willow flycatchers, yuma clapper rails, burrowing owls; OR any kind of quality riparian or desert vegetation.

Figure 1

Location Map

Desert Sky Mall Transit Center

Legend

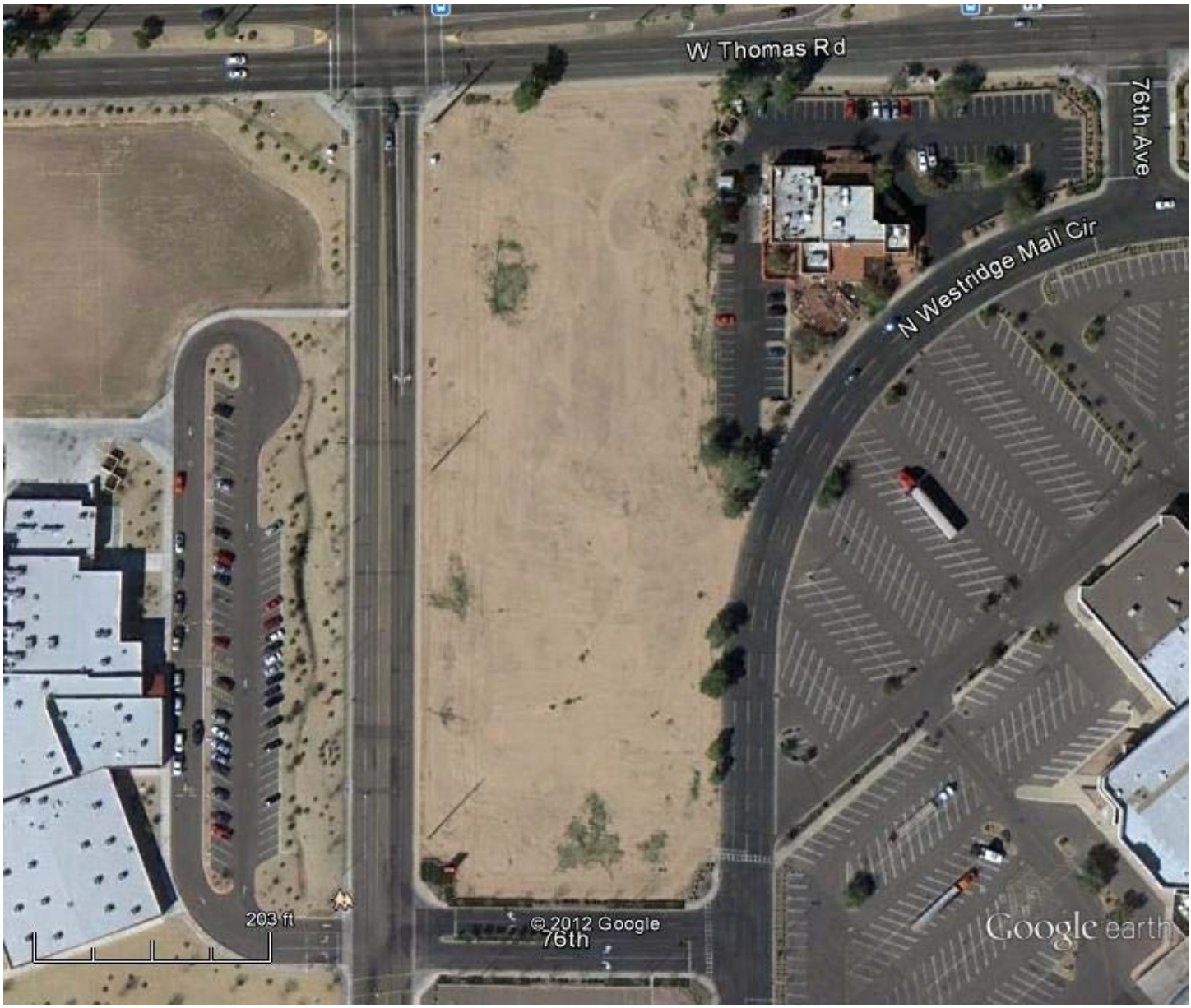
Potential Transit Center Site

Source:
Imagery: Bing Aerials © 2010 Microsoft Corporation

0 200 400
Feet

URS

P:\TRANSPORTATION\City of Phoenix\23446260_Desert Sky Transit Center CE\5_0_Technical\5_3_Maps_Photos\GIS\mxds\Scoping_Letter\Project_Location.mxd (BLC 4/24/2012)

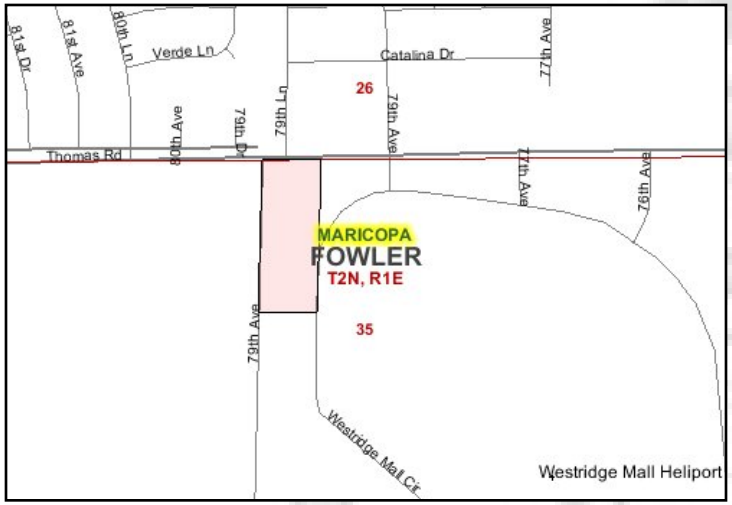


Google earth

feet 500
meters 100

Arizona's On-line Environmental Review Tool
Search ID: 20120503017781
Project Name: Desert Sky Mall Transit Center Expansion
Date: 5/3/2012 1:09:44 PM

Project Location



Project Name: Desert Sky Mall Transit Center Expansion
Submitted By: Wendy Wonderley
On behalf of: CITY
Project Search ID: 20120503017781
Date: 5/3/2012 1:09:40 PM
Project Category: Development Within Municipalities (Urban Growth),Public & Community Facilities (school, library, church) and associated infrastructure,New construction
Project Coordinates (UTM Zone 12-NAD 83): 385845.024, 3705055.777 meter
Project Area: 5.162 acres
Project Perimeter: 645.141 meter
County: MARICOPA
USGS 7.5 Minute Quadrangle ID: 1297
Quadrangle Name: FOWLER
Project locality is currently being scoped

Location Accuracy Disclaimer

Project locations are assumed to be both precise and accurate for the purposes of environmental review. The creator/owner of the Project Review Receipt is solely responsible for the project location and thus the correctness of the Project Review Receipt content.

The Department appreciates the opportunity to provide in-depth comments and project review when additional information or environmental documentation becomes available.

Special Status Species Occurrences/Critical Habitat/Tribal Lands within 3 miles of Project Vicinity:

Name	Common Name	FWS	USFS	BLM	State
Haliaeetus leucocephalus (wintering pop.)	Bald Eagle - Winter Population	SC, BGA	S	S	WSC
Haliaeetus leucocephalus pop. 3	Bald Eagle - Sonoran Desert Population	SC, BGA	S	S	WSC

 APPLICATION INITIALS: _____

Desert Sky Transit Center Planned Expansion Site
Looking SE, May 3, 2012

Desert Sky Transit Center Planned Expansion Site
Looking SW, May 3, 2012

Clean Water Act Section 404
Initial Assessment Form
Desert Sky Transit Center

Addendum

July 5, 2012

It was reported that burrowing owls had moved into the site and this was verified during a site visit on July 5, 2012. Two adult burrowing owls and at least one burrow were observed.

Burrowing owls are protected by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (http://www.fws.gov/migratorybirds/RegulationsPolicies/treatlaw.html), a federal law which protects all migratory birds and their parts (including eggs, nests, and feathers).

It is recognized that the City does not currently own the property and so the recommendations moving forward are as follows:

Prior to the City owning the property:

- Notify the current landowner that burrowing owls are present on the property and recommend coordination with the Arizona Game and Fish Department regarding any activities which could impact the owls including grading, weeding, and spraying. Website: http://www.azgfd.gov/w_c/nongameandendangeredwildlifeprogram/Raptors/BurrowingOwlManagement.shtml

After the City takes possession of the property:

- Coordinate with the City's 404 Coordinator (602-534-1775), who will coordinate with the Arizona Game and Fish Department regarding appropriate measures to protect the owls prior to construction.
- Notify the City's 404 Coordinator at least 60 days prior to construction to allow time for:
    - The City (Office of Environmental Programs) to obtain a relocation permit from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and
    - The City to coordinate with Wild at Heart to perform the burrowing owl relocation. The Public Transit Department or their contractor will contract directly with Wild at Heart (http://wildatheartowls.org/).

EXHIBIT E

Letter from the Arizona Department of Agriculture

JANICE K. BREWER
Governor

DONALD BUTLER
Director

Arizona Department of Agriculture

400 W. Congress St. #124 Tucson, Arizona 85701
(520)-628-6317 FAX (520)-628-6961

May 25, 2012

Kammy Horne
URS Corporation

Re: Project No. PT001 70005-1 Desert Sky Transit Center.

Ms. Horne:

The Department has reviewed the referenced project and site location information in Maricopa County dated May 16, 2012.

Based on the information provided, this project will have minimal or no impact on protected native plant species in the area. The Department does not have any issues or concerns with this project.

We recommend that the City of Phoenix preserve or relocate all protected plants, if necessary, during the clearing and construction process. We also recommend that the construction crews only remove protected plants when specifically authorized to do so, and avoid damaging vegetation that will remain in place. If any protected native plants are to be moved off site for replanting elsewhere, other than to another City of Phoenix property, a permit from the Department of Agriculture is required.

In addition, the following recommendation is suggested:

- Minimize the removal of existing vegetation within the project area to the greatest extant possible.
- Salvage or replant cactus and other protected plants.
- Hazardous material generated (motor oil, paint, etc.) should be disposed of properly or used in a way which will minimize impact on vegetation.

We appreciate the opportunity to review the proposed actions. If you need further information, please contact me at (520) 628-6317, or e-mail me at mreimer@azda.gov.

Sincerely,

Michael Reimer

Michael Reimer, Investigator, OSI
Environmental Services Division

EXHIBIT F

Letter from the Arizona Game and Fish Department

THE STATE OF ARIZONA
GAME AND FISH DEPARTMENT
5000 W. CAREFREE HIGHWAY
PHOENIX, AZ 85086-5000
(602) 942-3000 • WWW.AZGFD.GOV

May 29, 2012

Mary Melnychenko
City of Phoenix Public Transit Department
302 North First Avenue, Suite 900

Re: Desert Sky Transit Center

Dear Ms. Melnychenko:

The Arizona Game and Fish Department (The Department) has received and reviewed your letter of May 16, 2012, regarding the above referenced project. I have used the Department's On-line Environmental Review Tool to search for reports of special status species in the area of your project The receipt attached (#20120529017917) indicates that your project site is within 3 miles of the 8 mile buffer area surrounding a bald eagle nesting area. Be advised that even though the bald eagle is no longer listed under the Endangered Species Act, it is protected under the Bald and Golden Eagle Act. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has responsibility for administering this act. We recommend you contact them to obtain their determination regarding potential impacts of your project.

The Department has no further comments at this time. If you have questions or concerns regarding this letter, please call me at 623 236-7513.

Sincerely,

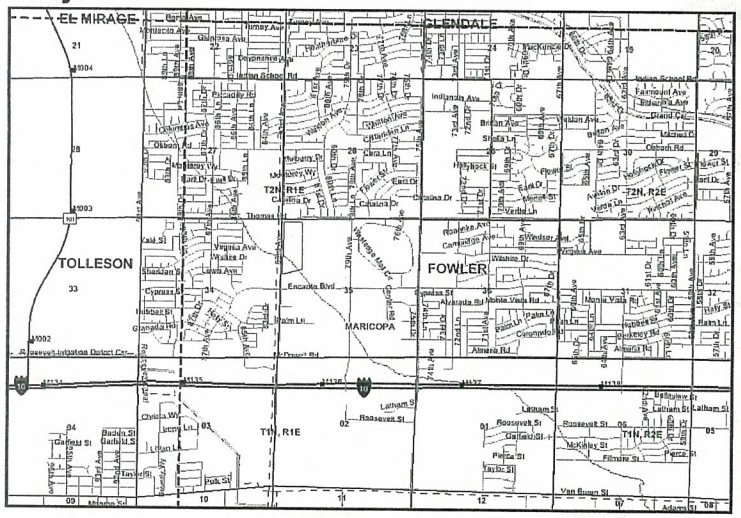
Daniel E. Nelson
Project Evaluation Specialist

Cc: Kelly Wolfe-Krauter, AGFD; Debra Bills USFWS

M12-05290857

Arizona's On-line Environmental Review Tool
Search ID: 20120529017917
Project Name: Desert Sky Transit Center
Date: 5/29/2012 1:12:47 PM

Project Location



Project Name: Desert Sky Transit Center
Submitted By: PEP Project Evaluation Program
On behalf of: CITY
Project Search ID: 20120529017917
Date: 5/29/2012 1:12:43 PM
Project Category: Development Within Municipalities (Urban Growth),Public & Community Facilities (school, library, church) and associated infrastructure,New construction
Project Coordinates (UTM Zone 12-NAD 83): 385120.870, 3704837.554 meter
Project Area: 31.031 acres
Project Perimeter: 1592.846 meter
County: MARICOPA
USGS 7.5 Minute Quadrangle ID: 1297
Quadrangle Name: FOWLER
Project locality is not anticipated to change

Location Accuracy Disclaimer

Project locations are assumed to be both precise and accurate for the purposes of environmental review. The creator/owner of the Project Review Receipt is solely responsible for the project location and thus the correctness of the Project Review Receipt content.

The Department appreciates the opportunity to provide in-depth comments and project review when additional information or environmental documentation becomes available.

Special Status Species Occurrences/Critical Habitat/Tribal Lands within 3 miles of Project Vicinity:

Name	Common Name	FWS	USFS	BLM	State
Haliaeetus leucocephalus (wintering pop.)	Bald Eagle - Winter Population	SC, BGA	S	S	WSC
Haliaeetus leucocephalus pop. 3	Bald Eagle - Sonoran Desert Population	SC, BGA	S	S	WSC

 APPLICATION INITIALS: _____

Please review the entire receipt for project type recommendations and/or species or location information and retain a copy for future reference. If any of the information you provided did not accurately reflect this project, or if project plans change, another review should be conducted, as this determination may not be valid.

Arizona's On-line Environmental Review Tool:

1. This On-line Environmental Review Tool inquiry has generated recommendations regarding the potential impacts of your project on Special Status Species (SSS) and other wildlife of Arizona. SSS include all U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service federally listed, U.S. Bureau of Land Management sensitive, U.S. Forest Service sensitive, and Arizona Game and Fish Department (Department) recognized species of concern.
2. These recommendations have been made by the Department, under authority of Arizona Revised Statutes Title 5 (Amusements and Sports), 17 (Game and Fish), and 28 (Transportation). These recommendations are preliminary in scope, designed to provide early considerations for all species of wildlife, pertinent to the project type you entered.
3. This receipt, generated by the automated On-line Environmental Review Tool does not constitute an official project review by Department biologists and planners. Further coordination may be necessary as appropriate under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and/or the Endangered Species Act (ESA).

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) has regulatory authority over all federally listed species under the ESA. Contact USFWS Ecological Services Offices: http://arizonaes.fws.gov/.

Phoenix Main Office
2321 W. Royal Palm Road, Suite 103
Phoenix, AZ 85021
Phone 602-242-0210
Fax 602-242-2513

Tucson Sub-Office
201 North Bonita, Suite 141
Tucson, AZ 85745
Phone 520-670-6144
Fax 520-670-6154

Flagstaff Sub-Office
323 N. Leroux Street, Suite 101
Flagstaff, AZ 86001
Phone 928-226-0614
Fax 928-226-1099

Disclaimer:

1. This is a preliminary environmental screening tool. It is not a substitute for the potential knowledge gained by having a biologist conduct a field survey of the project area.
2. The Department's Heritage Data Management System (HDMS) data is not intended to include potential distribution of special status species. Arizona is large and diverse with plants, animals, and environmental conditions that are ever changing. Consequently, many areas may contain species that biologists do not know about or species previously noted in a particular area may no longer occur there.
3. Not all of Arizona has been surveyed for special status species, and surveys that have been conducted have varied greatly in scope and intensity. Such surveys may reveal previously undocumented population of species of special concern.
4. HDMS data contains information about species occurrences that have actually been reported to the Department.

Arizona Game and Fish Department Mission

To conserve, enhance, and restore Arizona's diverse wildlife resources and habitats through aggressive protection and

 APPLICATION INITIALS: _____

management programs, and to provide wildlife resources and safe watercraft and off-highway vehicle recreation for the enjoyment, appreciation, and use by present and future generations.

Project Category: Development Within Municipalities (Urban Growth),Public & Community Facilities (school, library, church) and associated infrastructure,New construction

Project Type Recommendations:

Based on the project type entered; coordination with Arizona Department of Environmental Quality may be required (http://www.azdeq.gov/).

Based on the project type entered; coordination with Arizona Department of Water Resources may be required (http://www.water.az.gov/adwr/)

Based on the project type entered; coordination with County Flood Control districts may be required.

Based on the project type entered; coordination with State Historic Preservation Office may be required http://azstateparks.com/SHPO/index.html

Based on the project type entered; coordination with U.S. Army Corps of Engineers may be required (http://www.spl.usace.army.mil/regulatory/phonedir.html)

Communities can actively support the sustainability and mobility of wildlife by incorporating wildlife planning into their regional/comprehensive plans, their regional transportation plans, and their open space/conservation land system programs. An effective approach to wildlife planning begins with the identification of the wildlife resources in need of protection, an assessment of important habitat blocks and connective corridors, and the incorporation of these critical wildlife components into the community plans and programs. Community planners should identify open spaces and habitat blocks that can be maintained in their area, and the necessary connections between those blocks to be preserved or protected. Community planners should also work with State and local transportation planning entities, and planners from other communities, to foster coordination and cooperation in developing compatible development plans to ensure wildlife habitat connectivity. The Department's guidelines for incorporating wildlife considerations into community planning and developments can be found at http://www.azgfd.gov/hgis/guidelines.aspx.

Development plans should provide for open natural space for wildlife movement, while also minimizing the potential for wildlife-human interactions through design features. Please contact Project Evaluation Program for more information on living with urban wildlife.

During planning and construction, minimize potential introduction or spread of exotic invasive species. Invasive species can be plants, animals (exotic snails), and other organisms (e.g. microbes), which may cause alteration to ecological functions or compete with or prey upon native species and can cause social impacts (e.g. livestock forage reduction, increase wildfire risk). The terms noxious weed or invasive plants are often used interchangeably. Precautions should be taken to wash all equipment utilized in the project activities before and after project activities to reduce the spread of invasive species. Arizona has noxious weed regulations (Arizona Revised Statutes, Rules

 APPLICATION INITIALS: _____

R3-4-244 and R3-4-245). See Arizona Department of Agriculture website for restricted plants http://www.azda.gov/PSD/quarantine5.htm. Additionally, the U.S. Department of Agriculture has information regarding pest and invasive plant control methods including: pesticide, herbicide, biological control agents, and mechanical control: http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usdahome. The Department regulates the importation, purchasing, and transportation of wildlife and fish (Restricted Live Wildlife), please refer to the hunting regulations for further information http://www.azgfd.gov/h_f/hunting_rules.shtml.

During the planning stages of your project, please consider the local or regional needs of wildlife in regards to movement, connectivity, and access to habitat needs. Loss of this permeability prevents wildlife from accessing resources, finding mates, reduces gene flow, prevents wildlife from re-colonizing areas where local extirpations may have occurred, and ultimately prevents wildlife from contributing to ecosystem functions, such as pollination, seed dispersal, control of prey numbers, and resistance to invasive species. In many cases, streams and washes provide natural movement corridors for wildlife and should be maintained in their natural state. Uplands also support a large diversity of species, and should be contained within important wildlife movement corridors. In addition, maintaining biodiversity and ecosystem functions can be facilitated through improving designs of structures, fences, roadways, and culverts to promote passage for a variety of wildlife.

Minimization and mitigation of impacts to wildlife and fish species due to changes in water quality, quantity, chemistry, temperature, and alteration to flow regimes (timing, magnitude, duration, and frequency of floods) should be evaluated. Minimize impacts to springs, in-stream flow, and consider irrigation improvements to decrease water use. If dredging is a project component, consider timing of the project in order to minimize impacts to spawning fish and other aquatic species (including spawning seasons), and to reduce spread of exotic invasive species. We recommend early direct coordination with Project Evaluation Program for projects that could impact water resources, wetlands, streams, springs, and/or riparian habitats.

Planning: consider impacts of lighting intensity on mammals and birds and develop measures or alternatives that can be taken to increase human safety while minimizing potential impacts to wildlife. Conduct wildlife surveys to determine species within project area, and evaluate proposed activities based on species biology and natural history to determine if artificial lighting may disrupt behavior patterns or habitat use.

The Department recommends that wildlife surveys are conducted to determine if noise-sensitive species occur within the project area. Avoidance or minimization measures could include conducting project activities outside of breeding seasons.

Trenches should be covered or back-filled as soon as possible. Incorporate escape ramps in ditches or fencing along the perimeter to deter small mammals and herptefauna (snakes, lizards, tortoise) from entering ditches.

Project Location and/or Species recommendations:

Heritage Data Management System records indicate that one or more listed, proposed, or candidate species or Critical Habitat (Designated or Proposed) have been documented in the vicinity of your project (refer to page 1 of the receipt). Please contact:
Ecological Services Office
US Fish and Wildlife Service
2321 W. Royal Palm Rd.
Phoenix, AZ 85021-4951
Phone: 602-242-0210
Fax: 602-242-2513

 APPLICATION INITIALS: _____

Recommendations Disclaimer:

1. Potential impacts to fish and wildlife resources may be minimized or avoided by the recommendations generated from information submitted for your proposed project.
2. These recommendations are proposed actions or guidelines to be considered during **preliminary project development**.
3. Additional site specific recommendations may be proposed during further NEPA/ESA analysis or through coordination with affected agencies.
4. Making this information directly available does not substitute for the Department's review of project proposals, and should not decrease our opportunity to review and evaluate additional project information and/or new project proposals.
5. The Department is interested in the conservation of all fish and wildlife resources, including those Special Status Species listed on this receipt, and those that may have not been documented within the project vicinity as well as other game and nongame wildlife.
6. **Further coordination requires the submittal of this initialed and signed Environmental Review Receipt with a cover letter and project plans or documentation that includes project narrative, acreage to be impacted, how construction or project activity(s) are to be accomplished, and project locality information (including site map).**
7. Upon receiving information by AZGFD, please allow 30 days for completion of project reviews. Mail requests to:

Project Evaluation Program, Habitat Branch
Arizona Game and Fish Department
5000 West Carefree Highway
Phoenix, Arizona 85086-5000
Phone Number: (623) 236-7600
Fax Number: (623) 236-7366

Terms of Use

By using this site, you acknowledge that you have read and understand the terms of use. Department staff may revise these terms periodically. If you continue to use our website after we post changes to these terms, it will mean that you accept such changes. If at any time you do not wish to accept the Terms, you may choose not to use the website.

1. This Environmental Review and project planning website was developed and intended for the purpose of screening projects for potential impacts on resources of special concern. By indicating your agreement to the terms of use for this website, you warrant that you will not use this website for any other purpose.
2. Unauthorized attempts to upload information or change information on this website are strictly prohibited and may be punishable under the Computer Fraud and Abuse Act of 1986 and/or the National Information Infrastructure Protection Act .
3. The Department reserves the right at any time, without notice, to enhance, modify, alter, or suspend the website and to terminate or restrict your access to the website.
4. This Environmental Review is based on the project study area that was entered. The review must be redone if the project study area, location, or the type of project changes. If additional information becomes available, this review may need to be reconsidered.
5. A signed and initialed copy of the Environmental Review Receipt indicates that the entire receipt has been read by the signer of the Environmental Review Receipt.

Security:

The Environmental Review and project planning web application operates on a complex State computer system. This system is monitored to ensure proper operation, to verify the functioning of applicable security features, and for other like purposes. Anyone using this system expressly consents to such monitoring and is advised that if such monitoring reveals possible evidence of criminal activity, system

 APPLICATION INITIALS: _____

personnel may provide the evidence of such monitoring to law enforcement officials. Unauthorized attempts to upload or change information; to defeat or circumvent security measures; or to utilize this system for other than its intended purposes are prohibited.

This website maintains a record of each environmental review search result as well as all contact information. This information is maintained for internal tracking purposes. Information collected in this application will not be shared outside of the purposes of the Department.

If the Environmental Review Receipt and supporting material are not mailed to the Department or other appropriate agencies within six (6) months of the Project Review Receipt date, the receipt is considered to be null and void, and a new review must be initiated.

Print this Environmental Review Receipt using your Internet browser's print function and keep it for your records. Signature of this receipt indicates the signer has read and understands the information provided.

Signature:_____

Date: _____

Proposed Date of Implementation: _____

Please provide point of contact information regarding this Environmental Review.

Application or organization responsible for project implementation

Agency/organization:_____

Contact Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

Person Conducting Search (if not applicant)

Agency/organization:_____

Contact Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

 APPLICATION INITIALS: _____

Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

 APPLICATION INITIALS: _____

EXHIBIT G

Letter from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

United States Department of the Interior

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Arizona Ecological Services Office
2321 West Royal Palm Road, Suite 103
Phoenix, Arizona 85021-4951
Telephone: (602) 242-0210 Fax: (602) 242-2513

In reply refer to:
AESO/SE
02EAAZ00-2012-SL-0271 June 29, 2012

Mr. Mark Melnychenko, AICP, Principle Planner
City of Phoenix
Public Transit Department
302 North First Avenue, Suite 900
Phoenix, Arizona 85003

RE: Construction and Operation of the Desert Sky Transit Center, Located on the Southeast Corner of 79th Avenue and Thomas Road in Phoenix, Maricopa County, Arizona
(City of Phoenix Project Number PT001 70005-1)

Dear Mr. Melnychenko:

Thank you for your recent request for information on threatened or endangered species, or those that are proposed to be listed as such under the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (ESA), which may occur in your project area. The Arizona Ecological Service Field Office has posted lists of the endangered, threatened, proposed, and candidate species occurring in each of Arizona's 15 counties on the Internet. Please refer to the following web page for species information in the county where your project occurs:
http://www.fws.gov/southwest/es/arizona

If you do not have access to the Internet or have difficulty obtaining a list, please contact our office and we will mail or fax you a list as soon as possible.

After opening the web page, find County Species Lists on the main page. Then click on the county of interest. The arrows on the left will guide you through information on species that are listed, proposed, candidates, or have conservation agreements. Here you will find information on the species' status, a physical description, all counties where the species occurs, habitat, elevation, and some general comments. Additional information can be obtained by going back to the main page. On the left side of the screen, click on Document Library, then click on Documents by Species, then click on the name of the species of interest to obtain General Species Information, or other documents that may be available. Click on the "Cactus" icon to view the desired document.

Please note that your project area may not necessarily include all or any of these species. The information provided includes general descriptions, habitat requirements, and other information for each species on the list. Under the General Species Information, citations for the Federal Register (FR) are included for each listed and proposed species. The FR is available at most Federal depository libraries. This information should assist you in determining which species may or may not occur within your project area. Site-specific surveys could also be helpful and

may be needed to verify the presence or absence of a species or its habitat as required for the evaluation of proposed project-related impacts.

Endangered and threatened species are protected by Federal law and must be considered prior to project development. If the action agency determines that listed species or critical habitat may be adversely affected by a federally funded, permitted, or authorized activity, the action agency will need to request formal consultation with us. If the action agency determines that the planned action may jeopardize a proposed species or destroy or adversely modify proposed critical habitat, the action agency will need to enter into a section 7 conference. The county list may also contain candidate or conservation agreement species. Candidate species are those for which there is sufficient information to support a proposal for listing; conservation agreement species are those for which we have entered into an agreement to protect the species and its habitat. Although candidate and conservation agreement species have no legal protection under the Act, we recommend that they be considered in the planning process in the event that they become listed or proposed for listing prior to project completion.

If any proposed action occurs in or near areas with trees and shrubs growing along watercourses, known as riparian habitat, we recommend the protection of these areas. Riparian areas are critical to biological community diversity and provide linear corridors important to migratory species. In addition, if the project will result in the deposition of dredged or fill materials into waterways, we recommend you contact the Army Corps of Engineers which regulates these activities under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act.

The State of Arizona and some of the Native American Tribes protect some plant and animal species not protected by Federal law. We recommend you contact the Arizona Game and Fish Department and the Arizona Department of Agriculture for State-listed or sensitive species, or contact the appropriate Native American Tribe to determine if sensitive species are protected by Tribal governments in your project area. We further recommend that you invite the Arizona Game and Fish Department and any Native American Tribes in or near your project area to participate in your informal or formal Section 7 Consultation process.

Some projects may potentially impact species that are protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) of 1918, as amended (16 U.S.C. sec. 703-712) and/or bald and golden eagles protected under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act (BEGPA). Prohibitions under the MBTA include the taking, killing, possession, transportation, and importation of migratory birds, their eggs, parts, and nests, except as specifically authorized by the FWS. If you believe migratory birds will be affected by the project, we recommend you contact our Migratory Bird Permit Office, P.O. Box 709, Albuquerque, NM 87103, (505) 248-7882 or by email *FW2_birdpermits@fws.gov*. For more information regarding the MBTA and permitting process, please visit the following web site: *http://www.fws.gov/migratorybirds/mbpermits.html*. For information on protections for bald eagles under the BEGPA, please refer to the FWS's National Bald Eagle Management Guidelines (72 FR 31156) and regulatory definition of the term "disturb" (72 FR 31132) that were published in the Federal Register on June 5, 2007. Existing take authorizations for bald eagles issued under the ESA became covered under the BEGPA via a final rule published in the Federal Register on May 20, 2008 (73 FR 29075).

Mr. Mark Melnychenko, AICP, Principle Planner

For additional communications regarding this project, please refer to consultation number 02EAAZ00-2012-SL-0271. We appreciate your efforts to identify and avoid impacts to listed and sensitive species in your project area. If we may be of further assistance, please feel free to contact Brenda Smith (928) 556-2157 for projects in Northern Arizona, Debra Bills (602) 242-0210 (x239) for projects in central Arizona and along the Lower Colorado River, and Jean Calhoun (520) 670-6150 (x223) for projects in southern Arizona.

Sincerely,

for Steven L. Spangle
Field Supervisor

cc: Josh Avey, Chief, Habitat Branch, Arizona Game and Fish Department, Phoenix, AZ

W:\Cathy Gordon\administration\species ltrs\complete\City of Phoenix Desert Sky Transit Center.docx:cgg

EXHIBIT H

Traffic Impact Study:

Desert Sky Transit Center

Prepared by URS Corporation

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

URS Corporation (URS) was retained by the City of Phoenix to conduct a Traffic Impact Study (TIS) for the proposed Desert Sky Transit Center located at the southeast corner of Thomas Road and 79th Avenue in Phoenix, Maricopa County, Arizona. This TIS was prepared in conjunction with the City of Phoenix Traffic Impact Study Procedures and in accordance with URS' proposal to the City of Phoenix dated April 6, 2012 and Notice to Proceed dated April 10, 2012.

The purpose of this study is to address traffic and transportation impacts of the proposed development on the surrounding streets and intersections. This study analyzes the traffic impact due to the proposed Desert Sky Transit Center on the surrounding street network and has been prepared per the requirements of the City of Phoenix. The study requirements reflect those discussed per the coordination meetings at the City of Phoenix.

The specific objectives of the study are:

1. To evaluate lane requirements on all existing and proposed roadways and at all existing and future signalized intersections within the study area.
2. To estimate ultimate level of service for all existing and future signalized intersections within the study area and recommend any capacity related improvements.
3. To evaluate the need for future traffic control changes within the proposed study area.
4. To evaluate the queue storage needs at intersections within the study area.

Per discussions with the City of Phoenix, a single horizon year of 2015 was identified for analysis and documentation. In addition, to meet the Federal Transit Administration guidance, supported by the Federal Highway Administration *Interim Guidance on the Application of Travel and Land Use Forecasting in NEPA*, the planning horizon year 2031 was also analyzed. For purposes of this analysis, it is assumed that the Desert Sky Transit Center would be built and operational by the horizon year 2015.

The study area has been identified as the following arterial/arterial and arterial/collector intersections:

1. 79th Avenue and Thomas Road
2. 79th Avenue and School Driveway
3. 79th Avenue and Encanto Boulevard
4. 79th Avenue and McDowell Road
5. 76th Avenue and Thomas Road

The proposed Desert Sky Transit Center is in the preliminary planning phase. Site access would be obtained directly from the loop road that serves the Desert Sky Mall. It is believed that two (2) access points can be obtained from this loop road to serve the transit center.

The existing facility currently generates approximately 1,152 daily bus trips, with approximately 88 occurring during the AM peak hour, 80 occurring during the School Release peak hour, and 92 occurring during the PM peak hour. The proposed Desert Sky Transit Center would not be adding any new bus routes or changing the headway timings; therefore, the existing trip generation is used for the proposed site.

The following conclusions and recommendations have been resulted from the study.

- All study intersections operate with an overall acceptable level of service (LOS B or better) during the existing peak hours.
- Although the overall intersection operates acceptable, the westbound left-turn movement at the intersection of 79th Avenue and Thomas Road operates poorly during the AM peak hour. This movement is permissive only, and the poor LOS indicates that available gaps may not be present to make this maneuver without substantial delay. It is recommended that the westbound left-turn movement be considered for protected-permissive operation to improve the operation and be included as part of this project.
- The purpose of the proposed Desert Sky Transit Center is to relocate the existing transit services currently operating in the north parking lot of the Desert Sky Mall to a new location with a fixed facility near the southeast corner of 79th Avenue and Thomas Road. The site is anticipated to be located at the southeast corner of 79th Avenue and Thomas Road.
- The existing Desert Sky Transit Center accommodates 10 bus routes, which generates approximately 1,152 daily trips. Eighty-eight of the daily trips occur during the AM peak hour. Eighty of the daily trips occur during the School release peak hour and 92 occur during the PM peak hour. It is estimated that a maximum of 46 buses enter the site during the busiest peak hour.
- This analysis included a conservative estimate of background traffic volumes using the citywide historic average growth rate of 2 percent. Based on modeling obtained from the Maricopa Association of Governments, the average growth rate on adjacent arterials is less than the historic growth rate.
- All study intersections are projected to operate with acceptable levels of service (LOS C or better) during the study peak hours in both the 2015 and 2031 horizon years with the development of the proposed Desert Sky Transit Center. It is assumed that the westbound

left-turn movement at the intersection of 79th Avenue and Thomas Road is upgraded to protected-permissive operation by others.

- No additional turn lanes are required based on the projected traffic volumes and guidelines established by the City of Phoenix, the Institute of Transportation Engineers, and the Maricopa County Department of Transportation. The existing turn lanes at the study intersections provide adequate intersection capacity and queue storage to accommodate the projected traffic volumes.
- It is recommended that the City of Phoenix monitor the intersection of 76th Avenue and Thomas Road. As future development occurs on the north side of Thomas Road, a driveway may be aligned with the existing traffic signal and may impact the queue storage needs.
- It is recommended that the City of Phoenix monitor the intersection of 79th Avenue and McDowell Road as the northbound left-turn movement is large and may require additional queue storage length depending on the traffic signal operation. This is primarily due to the park-and-ride and vehicles exiting the parking lot to McDowell Road at the traffic signal.
- The Desert Sky Transit Center site plan is still in the conceptual stages of development. It is recommended that the internal bus routing accommodate approximately 600 feet of internal queue storage. This length is projected to accommodate the likely number of buses that would queue at any given time based on the current routes, current bus traffic volumes, and a conservative assumption of 10 minute headways.
- Based on the 2009 *Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices*, a traffic signal should be considered based on Warrant 5, School Crossing. However, the schools and the City have implemented both school speed limit signs and crossing guards to assist the school children across 79th Avenue.
- It is recommended that the City of Phoenix carefully consider school access routes as the Maryvale Village Core Plan is implemented. Upon extension and realignment of Cartwright Avenue, it is recommended that a traffic signal warrant study be completed at the intersection of Cartwright Avenue and 79th Avenue and include school crossing warrants to determine the need for a traffic signal.

EXHIBIT I

Archaeology Assessment Result Form

Submitted by the Archaeology Section of the City of Phoenix Parks and Recreation Department

City of Phoenix
PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT

Archaeology Section
Pueblo Grande Museum
4619 E. Washington St.
Phoenix, AZ 85034

Archaeology Assessment Result

Project Name: Desert Sky Transit Center **PT00170005-1**

Project Location: SEC of 79th Avenue and Thomas Road

Project Sponsor: Public Transit (Connie Randall/Mark Melnychenko)

Review Agencies: City of Phoenix

Survey **Monitoring** **Testing** **Data Recovery**

Comments:

This project is being reassessed now that more information is available about ground disturbance in the project area. Since this project has federal (FTA) involvement, it is a federal undertaking subject to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. No known archaeological sites are located within this project area. Information recently provided about ground disturbance within the project area documents historic disturbances and grading throughout the property.

Recommendations:

No archaeological work is necessary for this project area. However, if any archaeological materials are encountered during construction, all ground-disturbing activities must cease within 10 meters of the discovery and the City of Phoenix Archaeology Office must be notified immediately and allowed time to properly assess the materials.

The FTA will need to consult with the Arizona State Historic Preservation Office in compliance with the Arizona State Historic Preservation Act or the National Historic Preservation Act, as appropriate. This consultation must be conducted prior to any ground-disturbing activities, and ideally as soon as possible in the planning process.

Reviewed By: April Carroll for
Laurene Montero, M.A.

Date: 6/6/12

EXHIBIT J

Federal Transit Administration Recommendation to the Arizona State Historic Preservation Office for an Endorsement of No Impact on Historic Properties

2012-0438(106409)

RECEIVED
JUL 27 2012
ARIZONA STATE PARKS S.H.P.O.

U.S. Department
of Transportation
**Federal Transit
Administration**

REGION IX
Arizona, California,
Hawaii, Nevada, Guam
American Samoa,
Northern Mariana Islands

201 Mission Street
Suite 1650
San Francisco, CA 94105-1839
415-744-3133
415-744-2726 (fax)

JUL 18 2012

Mr. James Garrison
State Historic Preservation Office
1300 W. Washington St.
Phoenix, AZ 85007

Re: Desert Sky Transit Center, Phoenix, AZ.
effect determination

Dear Mr. Garrison:

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) is considering the funding of the City of Phoenix's Desert Sky Transit Center Desert Sky Transit Center relocation and expansion. To comply with the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (as amended), we are requesting your concurrence that the proposed construction of the above-referenced transit center in Phoenix, Arizona will result in a determination of "no historic properties affected." The location of the proposed transit center is shown on the attached map.

The City of Phoenix (COP) Public Transit Department proposes to relocate the current facility to a 4.02 acre vacant parcel at the southeast corner of 79th Avenue and Thomas Road and expand the amenities to meet the needs of increased ridership within the transit system. The property is currently privately-owned but the Phoenix Public Transit Department intends to purchase the property prior to development. The project will be completed by July 2015. Federal Transit funds will be used for this project.

The scope of work for this project has not been finalized, but proposed construction is anticipated to result in ground disturbance across the site as deep as six feet in some locations. The project will result in construction of the following amenities:

- Designated bus staging and layover area
- Security guard building with on-site customer service staff and security guards
- Closed-circuit television security cameras
- Bicycle lockers
- Up to 50 covered parking spaces
- Solar panels
- Shaded passenger seating
- Drinking fountains
- Restrooms
- Ticket vending machines
- Landscaping

The Phoenix Historic Preservation Office and Office of the City Archaeologist have both evaluated the undertaking. The undertaking's area of potential effects (APE) is limited to the boundaries of the project limits due to the location and project scope. The site is adjacent to two roadways (including a busy arterial), commercial and educational properties constructed after 1980, and a residential subdivision constructed in 1969. The site is not located near known above-ground historic properties.

As indicated in the attached archaeological assessment, there are no known archaeological sites located within the APE and therefore no archaeological work is recommended for this project. If any archaeological materials are encountered during construction, all ground disturbing activities will cease within 10 meters of the discovery and the City of Phoenix Archaeology Office will be notified immediately and afforded an opportunity to properly assess the materials.

Based on the above, FTA determines that a finding of "no historic properties affected" is appropriate for this project. If any pre-historic or historic archeological properties are discovered during construction, additional consultation with the State Historic Preservation Office will be initiated. If you need assistance, please contact Paul Page, at 415-744-2734.

Sincerely,

Raymond Sukys for

Leslie T. Rogers
Regional Administrator

Attachments

By Email: Liz Wilson, Historic Preservation Office, City of Phoenix,
elizabeth.wilson@phoenix.gov
Laurene Montero, Office of the City Archaeologist, City of Phoenix,
laurene.montero@phoenix.gov
Mark Melnychenko, Public Transit Department, City of Phoenix,
mark.melnychenko@phoenix.gov

David Kaber

SHPO Concurrence

31 JULY 12

Date

EXHIBIT K

Correspondence from Cartwright School District regarding the use of Recreational Fields

Horne, Kammy

From: connie.randall@phoenix.gov
Sent: Monday, July 16, 2012 7:48 AM
To: Horne, Kammy
Cc: mark.melnychenko@phoenix.gov
Subject: Fw: Desert Sky Transit Center Follow-Up - Peña Elementary and Castro Middle

Good Morning Kammy,

Here is the response I received from Ms. Spitzer regarding the use of playgrounds and recreational fields at the schools.

Thanks,
Connie

Connie Randall, AICP
Planner III
City of Phoenix Public Transit Department
302 N 1st Ave, Suite 900
Phoenix, AZ 85003
(602) 534-9233
connie.randall@phoenix.gov

----- Forwarded by Connie Randall/PTD/PHX on 07/16/2012 07:46 AM -----

"Tammy Spitzer" <tspitzer@mail.cartwright.k12.az.us>

07/16/2012 07:42 AM

To Connie Randall/PTD/PHX@PHXENT
cc Mark Melnychenko/PTD/PHX@PHXENT, kammy.horne@urs.com, lmaloney@mail.cartwright.k12.az.us, zojeh@mail.cartwright.k12.az.us, "Sarah Hernandez" <Sarah_Hernandez@cast.cartwright.k12.az.us>, "Cecilia Sanchez" <Cecilia_Sanchez@mail.cartwright.k12.az.us>, "Tracy Baker" <Tracy_Baker@mail.cartwright.k12.az.us>
Subject Re: Fw: Desert Sky Transit Center Follow-Up - Peña Elementary and Castro Middle

Yes, that is an accurate statement.

There are no current agreements for use of the fields at either Castro or Pena.

Castro's cafeteria and gym are used after school and on weekends by outside organizations, but not the fields.

Thank you.

connie.randall@phoenix.gov writes:
>Good Afternoon Ms. Spitzer,
>
>Mr. Maloney suggested that I contact you regarding the use of the
>playground and fields at Peña Elementary and Castro Middle schools (see
>correspondence below).
>
>The Phoenix Public Transit Department needs to discuss public parks and
>recreational areas surrounding the proposed Desert Sky Transit Center

>site located at the southeast corner of 79th Avenue and Thomas Road in
>the environmental documents for the Federal Transit Administration (FTA).
> Based on the discussions during our meeting with Assistant
>Superintendent Ojeh, District staff, and the school principals on May 14,
>2012, as well as the subsequent information provided by Mr. Maloney, we
>propose to include the following statement in our documentation for the
>FTA:
>
>Playgrounds and recreational fields at both Manuel Peña Jr. Elementary
>School and Raul H. Castro Middle School are available for outside/public
>purposes after school hours by application only.
>
>Is this an accurate statement? If so, are you comfortable with the
>proposed language? If not, could you please provide alternate language
>that accurately reflects the public's ability to utilize the school
>grounds outside of school hours?
>
>Thank you in advance for your assistance.
>
>Sincerely,
>
>Connie Randall, AICP
>Planner III
>City of Phoenix Public Transit Department
>302 N 1st Ave, Suite 900
>Phoenix, AZ 85003
>(602) 534-9233
>connie.randall@phoenix.gov
>
>----- Forwarded by Connie Randall/PTD/PHX on 07/10/2012 02:15 PM -----
>
>
>
>"Larry Maloney" <[mailto:lmaloney@mail.cartwright.k12.az.us
>]lmaloney@mail.cartwright.k12.az.us>
>
>07/07/2012 04:31 PM
>
>
>To Connie Randall/PTD/PHX@PHXENT
>cc
>Subject Re: Desert Sky Transit Center Follow-Up - Peña Elementary and
>Castro Middle Scho
>
>
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>The grounds are open by application only. I don't believe they are being
>used at this time but yuou can check with Mr. Ojeh's office and talk to
>Tammy and she can give you that information.
>
>
>

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>
>
>
>Connie Randall/PTD/PHX
>
>07/05/2012 12:55 PM
>
>To lmaloney@mail.cartwright.k12.az.us
>cc zojeh@mail.cartwright.k12.az.us, Mark Melnychenko/PTD/PHX@PHXENT,
>kammy.horne@urs.com
>Subject Desert Sky Transit Center Follow-Up - Peña Elementary and Castro
>Middle Schools
>
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>
>Good Afternoon Mr. Maloney,
>
>The Phoenix Public Transit Department is completing the environmental
>documentation for the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) in accordance
>with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) for our Desert Sky
>Transit Center project at the southeast corner of 79th Ave and Thomas Rd.
> During our meeting on May 14, 2012, I recall hearing that the fields and
>playgrounds at Manuel Peña Jr. Elementary School and Raul H. Castro
>Middle School are closed to the public when school is not in session. As
>a result, the City of Phoenix assumes that the playgrounds and
>recreational fields at both Manuel Peña Jr. Elementary School and Raul H.
>Castro Middle School are not used for substantial outside/public purposes
>after school hours. Is this a correct assumption?
>
>Thanks,
>Connie
>
>Connie Randall, AICP
>Planner III
>City of Phoenix Public Transit Department
>302 N 1st Ave, Suite 900
>Phoenix, AZ 85003
>(602) 534-9233
>connie.randall@phoenix.gov

Tammy Spitzer,
Executive Coordinator
Financial & Auxiliary Services
Cartwright School District #83
3401 N. 67th Ave., Phoenix, AZ 85033
Tel: 623-691-4009; Fax: 623-691-5927
tspitzer@mail.cartwright.k12.az.us

While school is on summer break, the District Office is closed on Fridays through July 20, 2012. E-mails received on Fridays will be replied to as quickly as possible the following week. Thank you.

EXHIBIT L

Memorandum from the City of Phoenix Public Transit Department Civil Rights Manager regarding Environmental Justice Findings

City of Phoenix

DATE: June 27, 2012

TO: Mark Melynchenko
Public Transit Department, Facilities

FROM: Reginald Ragland
Public Transit Department (PTD)/Civil Rights Compliance

SUBJECT: **Concurrence with Desert Sky Environmental Justice Review**

Executive Order 12898 requires that FTA funded projects take into account the effect of proposed actions on minority and low-income populations so that those persons are not disproportionately affected. This includes the examination of the racial and ethnic composition as well as income distribution in the area where the project has been proposed. Specifically, recipients and sub-recipients are required to conduct an environmental justice analysis for the project.

The City of Phoenix Public Transit Department Civil Rights Compliance Officer investigates projects of this type to determine if the proposed action would have any adverse effect on minority and low-income populations and businesses. A full review of planning studies, site reviews and minutes from community forums is undertaken to confirm that minority or low income residents have had major input in determining the type of project or service to be provided in the community. The purpose of which is to make certain that the development of the site will have no adverse impact related to the issue of environmental justice.

The development plan study indicates that the Desert Sky Mall Transit Center is located within the Maryvale Village Core, in the north parking lot of the Desert Sky Mall, approximately 1,100 feet south and east of the southeast corner of 79th Avenue and Thomas Road. Maryvale Village is located on the west side of Phoenix and is generally bounded by Interstate 17 (I-17) and Grand Avenue on the east, Interstate 10 (I-10) on the south, 99th Avenue and El Mirage Road on the west and Camelback Road on the north. The Village encompasses 32.5 square miles, approximately 6.3% of the land area in Phoenix.

The plan also specifies that Maryvale is one of the most populous of the 15 urban villages, with approximately 14.1% of Phoenicians residing within the Village. The

Village's 2010 population is 204,560, up 7.6% from the 2000 Census of189,996. Maryvale is expected to grow an additional 10.8% by 2030, accommodating 226,600 people. Maryvale has a population density of 6,296 persons per square mile which is more than double that of Phoenix, 2,785 persons per square mile.

With respect to race, approximately 51% of the Maryvale population reported being non-white or two or more races compared to 34% of all Phoenicians. Further, 88% more Maryvale residents reported being of Hispanic or Latino decent.

A review of the minutes from community meetings held with residents, community stake holders and transportation staff indicate broad based support for the overall project. All reports promote the belief that developing an independent transit facility located apart from the shopping center parking lot would alleviate the disorder, clutter, and confusion that transit riders experience at the existing facility.

More importantly, a new facility will address the problem of the inequitable distribution of amenities at the current facility as compared with other facilities through-out the Phoenix area. The facility study goes into great depth as to why this is a major problem. It specifies that, while there are amenities available at the Desert Sky Transit Center, the variety and quality of amenities, including security, customer service, fare sales, ticket vending machines, restrooms, and covered parking are not available.

A review of minutes from community meetings makes it very clear that residents agree that a new facility would allow for improvements to be made to the public transit infrastructure and level of amenities provided to transit riders in the West Phoenix area that are not currently possible due to the limitations of the current facility size and property lease agreement.

As the Civil Rights compliance officer, my review of the plan, related studies and minutes from community forums involving residents lead to me to conclude that the project has garnered wide spread support from the community and poses no problems relative environmental justice.

EXHIBIT M

Environmental Justice Documentation:

A1 – Percent Minority Map

A2 – Per Capita Income Map

A3 – Percent below the Poverty Level Map

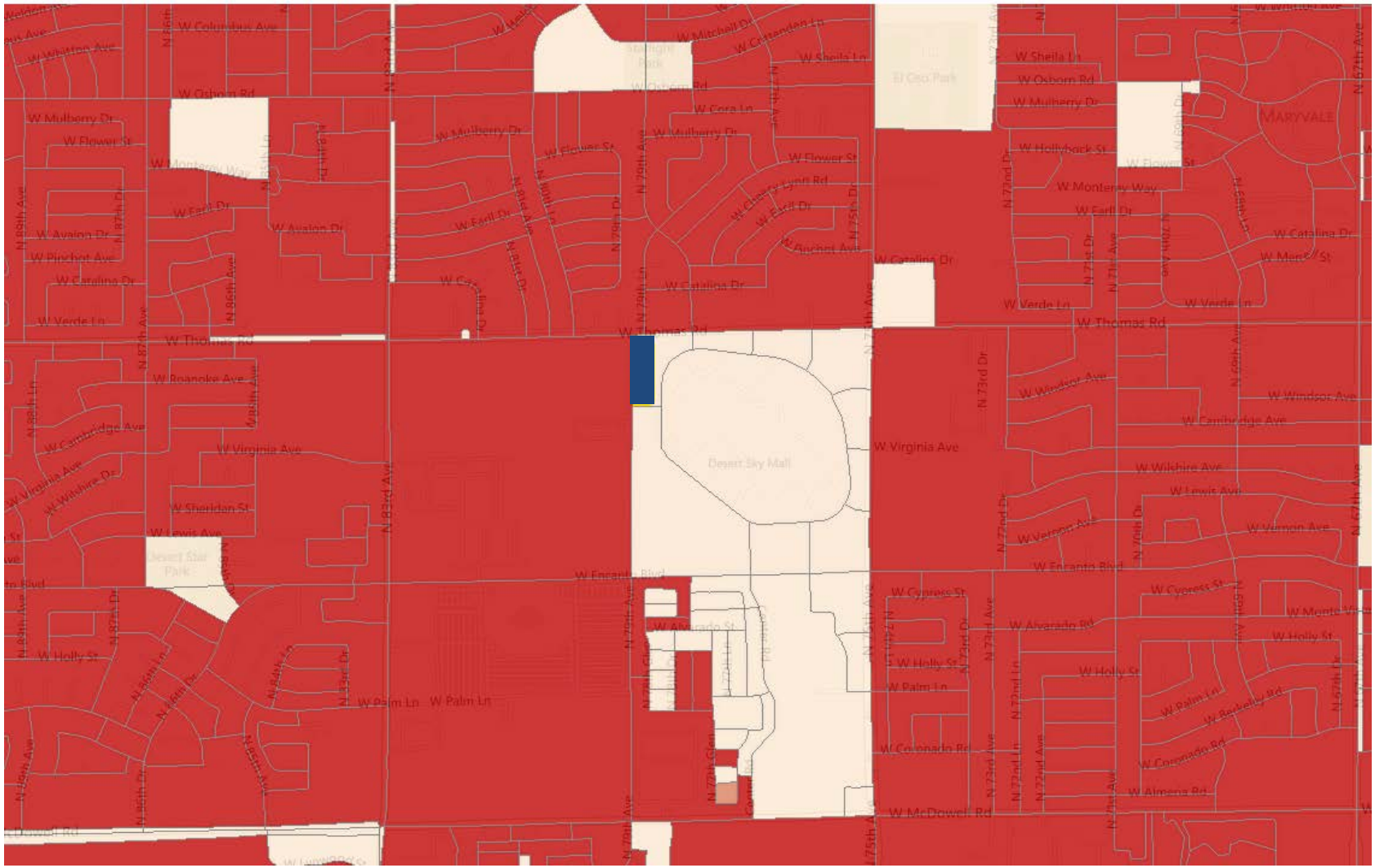

Figure A1 – Percent Minority by Census Block (2010)

Source: EPA EnviroMapper; U.S. Census Bureau's Population and Housing Summary File 1 (SF1), 2010

City of Phoenix
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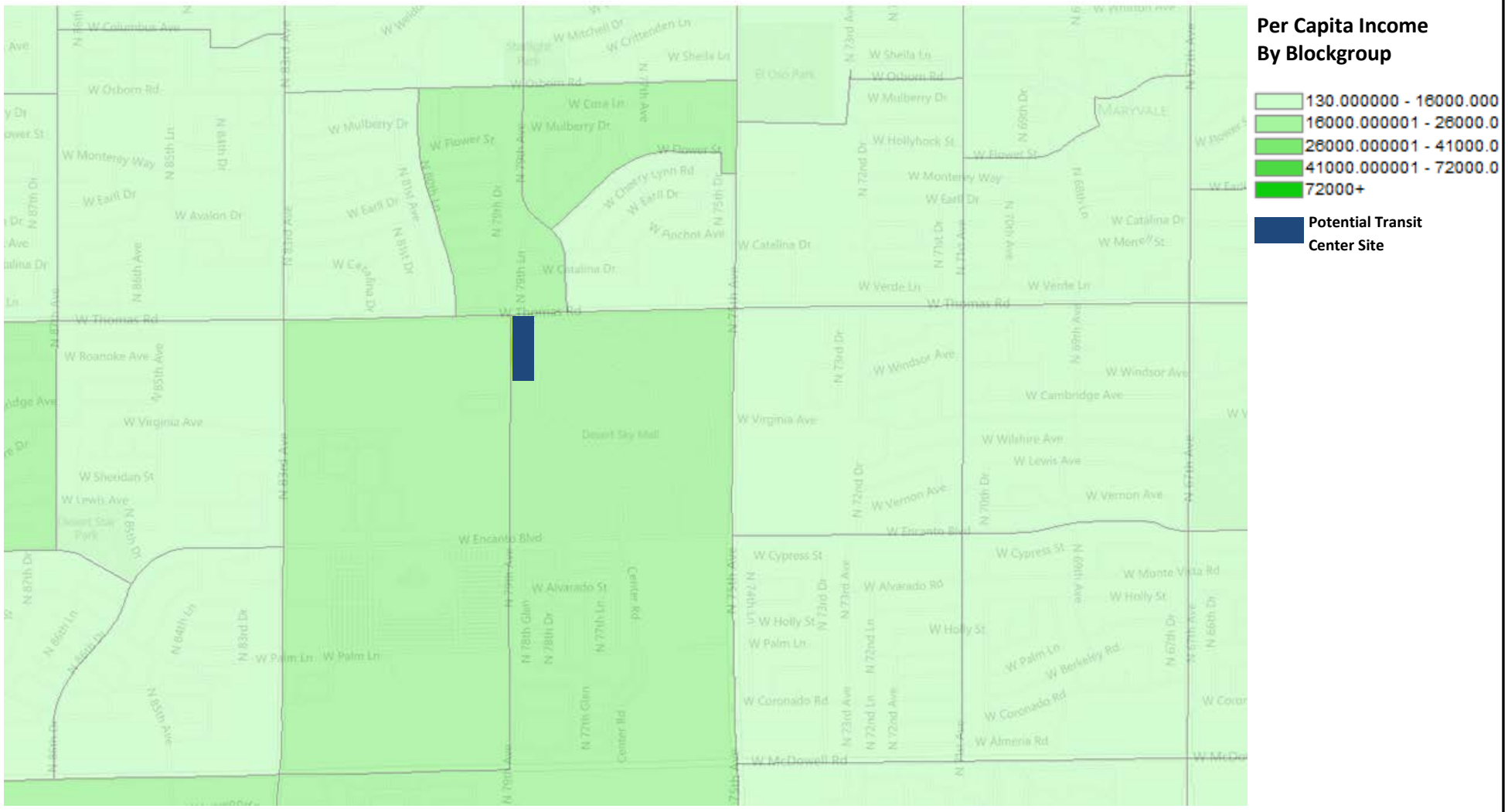

Figure A2 – Per Capita Income by Census Blockgroup (2006-2010 American Community Survey)

Source: EPA EnviroMapper; U.S. Census Bureau 5-Year Estimates from the American Community Survey (ACS), 2006-2010

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Figure A3 – Percent below the Poverty Level (2006-2010 American Community Survey)

Source: EPA EnviroMapper; U.S. Census Bureau 5-Year Estimates from the American Community Survey (ACS), 2006-2010

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EXHIBIT N

Phase I Environmental Site Assessment:

Desert Sky Transit Center
SEC Thomas Road and 79th Avenue

Prepared by URS Corporation

URS

DRAFT PHASE I ENVIRONMENTAL SITE ASSESSMENT
DESERT SKY TRANSIT CENTER
SEC THOMAS ROAD AND 79TH AVENUE
PHOENIX, ARIZONA 85035
PARCEL NUMBER: 102-38-011M

FOR
CITY OF PHOENIX (EAS #6833)
PROJECT NO. PT00170005-1

URS No. 23446260
AAI DATE: April 27, 2012
FINAL REPORT DATE:

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

URS Corporation (URS) was retained by the City of Phoenix to conduct a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) on the vacant lot located at the southeast corner of Thomas Road and 79th Avenue in Phoenix, Maricopa County, Arizona (the "site" or "subject property"). This Phase I ESA was conducted in conjunction with the City of Phoenix project number PT00170005-1 and in accordance with URS' proposal to the City of Phoenix dated April 6, 2012 and Notice to Proceed dated April 10, 2012.

The Phase I ESA was conducted to identify Recognized Environmental Conditions (RECs) related to past and current land use practices at the site and is consistent with the methods and procedures described in the American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) *Standard Practice for Environmental Site Assessments: Phase I Environmental Site Assessment Process* (Standard Designation E 1527-05) (ASTM, 2005), the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) *Standards and Practices for All Appropriate Inquiry (AAI) Rule* (40 CFR Part 312) (CFR, 2005), and with the City of Phoenix scope of work. ASTM defines RECs as the presence or likely presence of hazardous substances or petroleum products on a property under conditions that indicate an existing release, a past release, or a material threat of a release into structures, ground, groundwater, or surface water on the subject property. The term includes hazardous substances or petroleum products even under conditions in compliance with laws. The term is not intended to include *de minimis* conditions that generally do not present a threat to human health or the environment and that generally would not be the subject of an enforcement action if brought to the attention of appropriate governmental agencies. Conditions determined to be *de minimis* are not RECs.

The site reconnaissance was conducted by Ms. Elizabeth Parker and Ms. Kammy Horne on June 19, 2012 to observe and document present site conditions. URS' site reconnaissance included a walking inspection of areas that were accessible by foot, and a drive-by inspection of surrounding and adjacent properties. URS was unescorted during the site reconnaissance. The subject property is one parcel of land located on the southeast corner of Thomas Road and 79th Avenue. The site consists of an approximately 4-acre vacant lot. A landscaped area is located along the southern boundary of the subject property and concrete sidewalks are located on the southeast and southwest corners and along the western and northern boundaries. Overhead electrical power lines are located along the western site boundary. Light poles, utility vaults or equipment and signage are located along the northern and southern boundaries. The subject property is bordered by Thomas Road, single-family residences, a vacant lot, Ewing Irrigation Products (7920 West Thomas Road) and Regency Beauty Institute (7910 West Thomas Road) to the north; Westridge Mall 79th, a vacant store (formerly Montgomery Ward Auto Express, 7835

West Thomas Road) and vacant land within the Desert Sky Mall to the south; vacant land, Macayo's Mexican Kitchen (7829 West Thomas Road), Westridge Mall Circle and Desert Sky Mall to the east; and 79th Avenue and Raul H. Castro Middle School (2730 North 79th Avenue) to the west.

Historical information indicates that the subject property was primarily agricultural land from at least 1937 until the property was graded as part of the adjacent shopping mall development in the late 1970s. No definitive historical use prior to 1937 was identified. In addition, no previous property owner has been interviewed. Because the subject property appeared to be used for agricultural purposes at that time, it is URS' opinion that no significant data failures that would warrant further investigation were noted during our assessment.

The City of Phoenix provided URS with an archaeology assessment performed by the City of Phoenix Archaeology Section of the Pueblo Grande Museum. According to Laurene Montero, M.A., no known archaeological sites are located within the project area and information about ground disturbance within the project area documents historic disturbances and grading throughout the property. No archaeological work was recommended for the property area. However, if any archaeological materials are encountered during construction, all ground disturbing activities must cease within 10 meters of the discovery and the City of Phoenix Archaeology Office must be notified and allowed time to properly assess the materials. In addition, because the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) is involved in the project, it is a federal undertaking subject to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. The FTA will need to consult with the Arizona State Historic Preservation Office prior to any ground-disturbing activities in compliance with the Arizona State Historic Preservation Act or the National Historic Preservation Act, as appropriate.

The following table summarizes areas addressed within this assessment:

	Assessment Components									Findings			
	Most-recent Use of Subject Property Parcel	Historical Use of Subject Property Parcel	Hazardous Waste Generated / Stored Onsite	Solid Waste Generated Onsite	Onsite Aboveground Storage Tanks or Underground Storage Tanks	Onsite PCB-containing Equipment	Onsite Water, Monitoring, or Drywells	Onsite Refrigerant-containing Appliances	Other Onsite Potential Area of Concern	Significant Data Gap	REC	Historical REC	*De minimis* Condition
Parcel Number	Evaluation Result												
102-38-011M	V	A	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
V = Vacant			A= Agricultural										

Findings and Opinions

Based on our site reconnaissance and a review of historical and regulatory information, no historical, onsite or offsite RECs or *de minimis* conditions were identified for the subject property.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Based on the scope of services performed for this Phase I ESA, URS recommends no further action at this time.