

 "Building a Quality Arizona"
Statewide Rail Framework Study

Rail Technical Advisory Team

Statewide Rail Framework Study


June 24, 2009

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Statewide Rail Framework Study

Agenda

- Welcome and Introductions
- Meeting Updates
- Coordination and Related Efforts
- Discussion of Rail Strategic Concepts
 - Freight Rail
 - Passenger Rail
 - Commuter Rail
 - Organizational Development and Support Systems
- Next Steps






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Meeting Updates



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Northern Arizona Focus Group

- Relocation of BNSF mainline through Flagstaff may be required to further capacity enhancements
- Shared right-of-way for freight and passenger services requires careful planning and coordination
- Multistate authority required to plan and implement regional high-speed passenger rail
- Expansion of freight and passenger rail transport can have positive influences on climate change
- Coordination of land use, transportation, and economic development can provide opportunities for expansion of rail
- Preserve existing railroad corridors for future expansion

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Southern Arizona Focus Group

- Rail improvements should minimize impact to critical environmental/conservation areas
- Increased rail traffic from international markets provides economic development opportunities
- Short line railroads can ease Class I operating pressures
- State Trust Land reform could facilitate regional rail improvements by providing rights-of-way
- HURF money not available for rail improvements
- Preserve existing railroad corridors for future expansion
- Tucson streetcar system should be connected to any future intercity/commuter rail passenger systems

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New Mexico Rail Runner

- Planned, designed, and built in 5 years
- Financed by Governor Richardson's Investment Partnership (GRIP)
- Ownership, operating and maintenance agreement with BNSF
- Partnership between NMDOT and MRCOG
- Serves both commuter rail and intercity rail functions
- Utilizes I-25 freeway right-of-way for a segment south of Santa Fe
- Average trip length=43 miles; 4,000 riders/day



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Arizona/Mexico Border Commission

- Port of Guaymas improvements underway
- Foreign Trade Zone proposed for development at Ciudad Obregon, north of Guaymas
- Railroad issues in Nogales, Arizona and Mexico must be addressed (potential eastern bypass of cities)
- Proposed RFP for Port of Punta Colonet on hold due to economic conditions (still a federal priority)





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Short Line Railroad Operators

- Lack of funding for safety improvements at state highway grade crossings
- Characterized by aging infrastructure that requires investment
- Looking for opportunities to serve other types of economic development besides typical product base
- Support in Yuma for reopening of Wellton Branch



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Trucking Company Input


- Rail may become more competitive with trucking if shipping pricing moves to a carbon footprint-based system
- Arizona international border currently served by only one Class I railroad
- Reliable rail service required to move more freight to rail for long hauls
- Trucking still important for final destination delivery and "just in time" shipping



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Coordination and Related Efforts

- MAG – Kevin Wallace
- PAG – Jeremy Papuga, Al Altuna
- ADOT – Mike Normand





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Rail Strategic Concepts

- Freight Rail
- Passenger Rail
- Commuter Rail
- Organizational Development



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Freight Rail Strategic Concepts

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Class I Railroad System Development/ Operation in Phoenix Metropolitan Area

- Phoenix is currently in a cul-de-sac situation between two Class I railroads
- Choke point issues
- Interface between two Class I RRs
- Fluctuating customer base
- Grade crossing, safety and traffic interface issues
- Potential relocation of rail classification activities from downtown area



Freight Rail

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Class I Railroad System Development/ Operation in Tucson Metropolitan Area

- Potential redefinition of rail activities in downtown area
- Choke point issues
- Fluctuating customer base
- Grade crossing, safety and traffic interface issues
- Port of Tucson (inland port) could be a model for such facilities elsewhere



Freight Rail

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Class I Railroad System Development/ Operation Statewide

- Grade crossing, safety and traffic interface issues
- Capacity enhancements underway
- Choke point issues
- Movements through local downtown areas is a growing issue
- Potential reopening of Wellton Branch




Freight Rail

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Mexican Deepwater Ports Enhancement/ Development

- Provides relief to congested California ports
- Port of Guaymas improvements underway
- New mega-port anticipated at Punta Colonet
- Requires enhancement of existing Mexican rail corridors, and potential new rail corridors to the U.S.
- Could spur new rail corridors in U.S.



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Inland Ports/Logistics Facilities Enhancement/Development

- Excellent private sector example at Port of Tucson
- Inland port discussions at three locations:
 - Flagstaff Regional Study (Camp Navajo)
 - Logistics study underway in Yuma
 - Discussions for potential port in Kingman



Freight Rail

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Potential New Rail Corridors or Relocations

- Hassayampa Corridor
- Flagstaff and Tucson bypasses
- Nogales East Bypass
- Reopening of Wellton Branch
- Tucson, Cornelia & Gila Bend Railroad
- Corridor preservation issues



Freight Rail

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Short Line Railroad Development/ Expansion

- Need for financing for infrastructure improvements
- Economic development opportunities
- Shared use opportunities
- Challenges working with Class I railroads



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Passenger Rail Strategic Concepts

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High-Speed Rail

- National priority
- Lack of potential projects identified in the Intermountain West region
- Major system to evolve in California over the next 20 years
- Potential for connecting the megapolitan areas




Passenger Rail

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Intercity Rail

- Successes in surrounding states (NM, UT, CA)
- Potential backbone of the Sun Corridor Megapolitan
- Seed money committed to ADOT from FRA Grant for AA/Environmental Analysis in Phoenix-Tucson corridor
- Potential to evolve from commuter rail system





Passenger Rail

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Enhancement and Utilization of Amtrak Services in Arizona

- Currently used as interstate passenger service for non-time sensitive travel
- Could utilize as an interim commuter rail operator
- Phoenix is the largest city in the U.S. without Amtrak service



Passenger Rail

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Commuter Rail Strategic Concepts

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Coordination with MAG Commuter Rail Planning

- Systems Plan underway for the Phoenix Metropolitan Area
- Two corridor feasibility studies underway (Grand Avenue, Yuma West)
- Ongoing discussions of commuter rail interface with intercity rail
- Could serve northern half of Sun Corridor Megapolitan
- Could be platform for longer distance passenger rail system



The map shows the Arizona Sun Corridor, a blue-shaded area stretching from Phoenix in the north to Tucson in the south. A dashed line indicates the corridor's extent. The text "Arizona Sun Corridor" is prominently displayed in the center of the map.


Commuter Rail

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Coordination with PAG Commuter Rail Planning

- Commuter rail corridors identified in the PAG High Capacity Transit Study (I-10 and I-19)
- Could serve southern half of Sun Corridor Megapolitan
- Could be platform for longer distance passenger rail system



A photograph showing a train platform with several people waiting. A yellow and white train is visible on the left side of the platform. The scene is brightly lit, suggesting a sunny day.


Commuter Rail



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Organizational Development



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Identification and Evaluation of Alternative Rail Organizational Structures for Arizona

- State
- Regional
- Rail Authority
- Non-Profit Organization
- Private Corporation
- Public Private Partnership (PPP)

Organizational Development

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Statewide Interagency Rail Coordination

- Arizona Corporation Commission
- Department of Commerce
- Regional planning and development agencies
- Public transportation authorities
- Federal agencies




Organizational Development


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Next Steps

- Develop rail strategic concepts
- Formulate implementation program
- Integrate rail strategic concepts into Statewide Transportation Planning Program
- Ongoing coordination with stakeholders







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Thank You!

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