

3.8 CONCEPTUAL OVERVIEW OF LONG-RANGE SCENARIOS

Background and Approach

In the fall of 2008, the Statewide Framework study team identified three scenarios for the long-term evolution of Arizona and its transportation system. The scenarios were further developed after thirteen community workshops held in November 2008 throughout the four Arizona regions (Central, Eastern, Northern and Western) that collectively encompass the entire state except Maricopa County, Pima County and western Pinal County. Each scenario reflects a different transportation future for Arizona. The following characteristics apply to all three scenarios:

- All look ahead to 2050 and beyond.
- All assume that the future of transportation will be substantially different from present conditions.
- All are multimodal, incorporating both roadways and public transportation.
- They include the principal locally controlled transportation facilities and services, as well as those for which ADOT is responsible.
- Each has its own set of proposed improvement projects and programs within each region.
- Each Regional Consultant team identified the improvements for all scenarios within its framework region.
- Each regional team made extensive use of community input—especially from the stakeholder interviews and the two sets of public workshops held in 2008—to select the proposed improvements.
- In each region, some projects are common to two or more scenarios, while others are unique to one scenario.
- Proposed projects in each regional scenario include selected improvements from the Statewide Transportation Investment Strategy developed for ADOT and the Governor's Office in 2008.
- All scenarios involve phased implementation of the transportation improvements over several decades.
- To show a seamless transportation system, the statewide Management Consultant and the four Regional Consultants coordinated the elements of each scenario across regional boundaries.

Scenario A (Personal Vehicle Mobility)

This scenario is the closest to the status quo, insofar as it assumes that personal vehicles will continue to be used for most trips in 2050 and beyond. It assumes that alternative vehicle technologies (i.e., fuels and engines other than traditional gasoline and diesel) will be further developed and will gradually become pervasive in the fleet. This technological progress will enable people to continue driving their own vehicles affordably, with minimal harm to the environment and without excessive emission of greenhouse gases. However, recognizing that existing public services are inadequate, especially in rural areas of the state, the scenario calls for significant transit investments beyond existing levels. Scenario A also assumes that long-range land use and development patterns will be consistent with adopted local plans, such as city and town general plans and county comprehensive plans.

Scenario B (Transit Mobility)

In contrast with Scenario A, this scenario assumes that automobiles and trucks will continue to rely on fuels whose prices will continue to increase in the long run, making personal vehicle use less affordable for many. While some technological progress will occur, it will not counterbalance the rising cost of vehicle use and ownership. As a result, demand for public transportation will increase dramatically, so this scenario emphasizes extensive transit improvements to meet the growing demand. Local, regional, and intercity services and facilities are included. It is recognized; however, that under any scenario private vehicles will remain the predominant form of transportation, especially in rural and small urban areas. Like Scenario A, Scenario B assumes future consistency with existing local and community plans. Unlike Scenario A, Scenario B envisions a notable reduction in vehicle miles traveled.

Scenario C (Focused Growth)

Like Scenario B, this third scenario assumes a mix of increased public transit use and technological progress. Scenario C differs from the others in assuming that, *where appropriate*, existing long-range plans will be modified to encourage and support more intense land use in urban areas, with more compact development patterns and greater emphasis on mixing compatible land uses. Current land use plans would not change in many smaller and more rural communities.

These land use changes in some communities will cause not only a reduction in the number of vehicle trips, but also a decline in average trip length. Some trips that otherwise would have been made by motor vehicle will instead be accomplished by walking or bicycling. This scenario envisions that cities, towns and counties will gradually embrace Smart Growth principles. According to "This Is Smart Growth," published by the Smart Growth Network, these principles are:

- Mixed land uses.
- Take advantage of compact building design.
- Create a range of housing opportunities and choices.
- Create walkable neighborhoods.
- Foster distinctive, attractive communities with a strong sense of place.
- Preserve open space, farmland, natural beauty, and critical environmental areas.
- Strengthen and direct development toward existing communities.
- Provide a variety of transportation choices.
- Make development decisions predictable, fair, and cost-effective.
- Encourage community and stakeholder collaboration in development decisions.