

CITY COUNCIL AGENDA

CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS . 11465 WEST CIVIC CENTER DRIVE . AVONDALE, AZ 85323

WORK SESSION
May 17, 2010
6:00 PM

CALL TO ORDER BY MAYOR ROGERS

1 ROLL CALL BY THE CITY CLERK

2 CIRCULATOR STUDY

City Council will receive information regarding a feasibility study conducted by the Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG), on behalf of the City of Avondale to determine whether operation of a local circulator would benefit the community. For information, review and discussion.

3 YOUTH SERVICES UPDATE

Staff will update the Council on the youth development programs and participation in those programs and the impact Kids at Hope has had on the students at Canyon Breeze Elementary School. For information and discussion only.

4 ADJOURNMENT

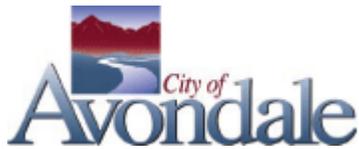
Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Carmen Martinez".

Carmen Martinez
City Clerk

Individuals with special accessibility needs, including sight or hearing impaired, large print, or interpreter, should contact the City Clerk at 623-333-1200 or TDD 623-333-0010 at least two business days prior to the Council Meeting.

Personas con necesidades especiales de accesibilidad, incluyendo personas con impedimentos de vista u oído, o con necesidad de impresión grande o interprete, deben comunicarse con la Secretaria de la Ciudad at 623-333-1200 o TDD 623-333-0010 cuando menos dos días hábiles antes de la junta del Concejo.



CITY COUNCIL REPORT

SUBJECT:
Circulator Study

MEETING DATE:
May 17, 2010

TO: Mayor and Council
FROM: Rogene Hill, Assistant City Manager (623)333-1012
THROUGH: Charlie McClendon, City Manager

PURPOSE:

The Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG), on behalf of the City of Avondale conducted a feasibility study to determine whether operation of a local circulator would benefit the community.

BACKGROUND:

While population continues to increase in Avondale, existing transit options and services provided by Valley Metro/RPTA continue to be reduced or eliminated due to budget cuts by the Arizona State Legislature and the reduction of sales tax collections. As staff sought other transit alternatives, MAG Region Councils offered the City the opportunity to conduct a circulator study to help determine the feasibility of circulator bus service in Avondale.

DISCUSSION:

Circulator Study

A project management team was established in support of the Avondale Circulator Study that included Avondale staff, and representatives from MAG, Valley Metro/RPTA and the consultant team from URS. Five objectives were developed during the initial planning stages of this study to guide the development of alternatives and help determine one pilot route for recommendation to the City Council. These five objectives were:

1. Conduct a comprehensive, market-based evaluation of transit circulator needs in Avondale.
2. Ensure the study results are coordinated with on-going regional transit plans and studies.
3. Define a phased implementation plan that allows Avondale to expand transit circulator service over time, in coordination with development trends and available revenues.
4. Develop a sound financial plan that identifies capital and operating costs and potential sources of revenue.
5. Foster widespread community support for transit circulator service through an effective public involvement program.

Existing and planned residential neighborhoods were identified to determine prominent residential areas that could generate ridership for a local transit circulator. Also, the largest employment and activity centers were identified for the development of conceptual routes. Responses from the Avondale Transit Survey completed by residents in early 2010 assisted with identification of the major activity centers in the city.

The recommended pilot route is a modification to the existing route 131. The recommended pilot route is consistent with input received from local jurisdictions that currently operate circulator service, public input received during the public involvement process, and feedback from the Project Management Team.

BUDGETARY IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact for City Council to review and accept this study. This study will provide guidance for Avondale staff when pursuing funding opportunities that would provide capital, operating and maintenance funds for a circulator.

RECOMMENDATION:

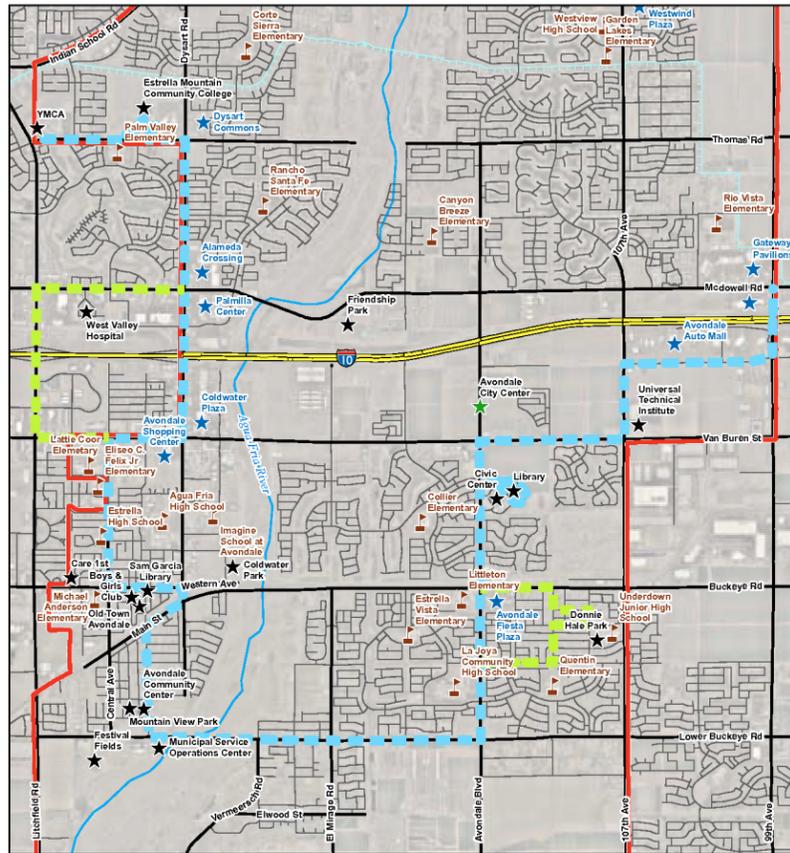
For information, review and discussion

ATTACHMENTS:

Click to download

- 📄 [Executive Summary](#)
- 📄 [Transit Circulator Plan](#)

Recommended Pilot Route Map



Issues Warranting Further Consideration

- Identification of a sustainable funding source
- Location of bus stops
- Circulator Service Operator (public sector contractor, private entity, or city-operated)
- Identification of a bus maintenance facility
- Future service expansion



Transit Circulator Study Overview

The Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG), on behalf of the City of Avondale (Avondale), conducted a feasibility study to determine whether a local circulator would benefit the community. With transit services in Maricopa County currently being reduced due to budget shortfalls and uncertainty facing routes planned to serve Avondale in the voter-approved 2007 MAG Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), it benefits the community to examine alternate transit modes.

The following five objectives guided the study process, as the ultimate goal was to identify a starter, or "pilot" route for recommendation to the Avondale City Council:

1. Conduct a comprehensive, market-based evaluation of transit circulator needs in Avondale.
2. Ensure the study results are coordinated with on-going regional transit plans and studies.
3. Define a phased implementation plan that allows Avondale to expand transit circulator service over time, in coordination with development trends and available revenues.
4. Develop a sound financial plan that identifies capital and operating costs and potential sources of revenue.
5. Foster widespread community support for transit circulator service through an effective public involvement program.

Study Process

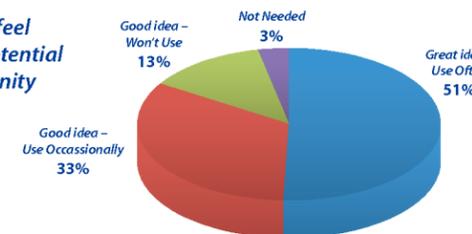
In support of the final recommendation presented in the Transit Circulator Service Plan, the study focused on identifying existing characteristics of Avondale and circulator peer city operating systems. Background research conducted in support of the study included:

- Existing and future population
- Major employers
- Key Avondale destinations
- Existing and planned transit service
- Operating characteristics of circulator systems in the MAG Region

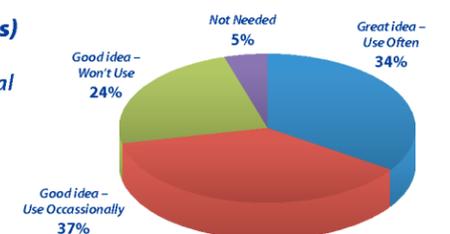
Public Input

Success of the transit study warranted a strong public outreach component; therefore a survey was distributed to the community to determine whether there was interest in bringing circulator service to Avondale. The following graphics show the results of the survey, with numbers distinguishing current bus-riders from non-bus users provided where responders were generally asked about their opinion of a city circulator. It was important to show this distinction to gauge non-transit riders interest in bringing a local circulator transit option to Avondale.

How do you feel about the potential for a community shuttle?



(Non-Bus Riders) How do you feel about the potential for a community shuttle?



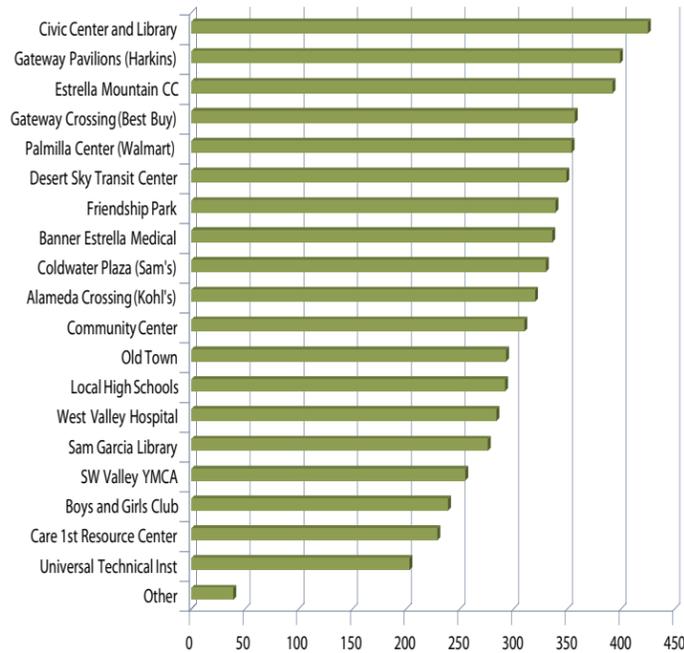
Funding Strategy

Pilot Route capital and operating costs were estimated for a twenty year period. The estimated capital costs can likely be funded from a combination of federal and local sources. The estimated annual operating costs are \$1,030,000 in 2010 dollars.

A reliable and sustainable funding source for these operating costs is needed to ensure the success and continuity of a local transit circulator system. After a comprehensive review of federal, state, regional, and existing local sources, no sustainable source was identified. Consequently, a new or incremental city transit sales tax was analyzed. Based on the estimated operating costs for the Recommended Pilot Route including a prudent reserve of 25 percent, a city sales tax rate of between 0.09 and 0.14 percent would be required to fund the system based on the current city tax collections outlook.

Approximately 95 percent of all respondents showed support of a local circulator. Survey respondents were also asked to provide feedback on key destinations potentially served by a circulator, and desirable operating standards (days and hours of service). When asked whether a fare should be allocated with the service, only 18 percent felt it should be free, with the rest willing to pay a fee. Some of the results from the survey that contributed to the development of the conceptual routes included:

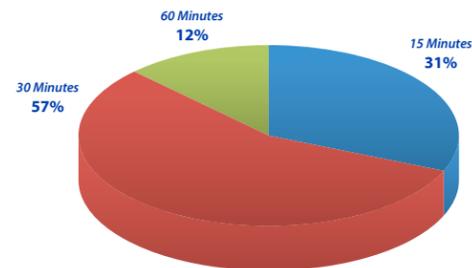
Of the following activity centers, which do you think would benefit from shuttle service?



On which days of the week should residents be able to use a community shuttle?



How often should the shuttle bus pickup/drop off passengers at each stop?



Alternatives Development

The first step in developing transit circulator alternatives is to create a broad range of conceptual options. Using input received from the public survey results and ideas provided from peer cities in the MAG region, five conceptual alternative routes were developed for evaluation. The conceptual routes represented various functions in terms of how they served different purposes, communities, and activity centers in Avondale. The conceptual alternatives were focused primarily north of Lower Buckeye Road where most of Avondale's development is currently located.

Per direction of Avondale each of the alternatives shared a common destination, the proposed City Center development along Avondale Boulevard, just north of the Civic Center. This is a key destination which also includes the development of a future transit center for Avondale. Ideally, the transit circulator could connect with regional or local bus routes provided by Valley Metro / RPTA currently serving Avondale and possible future connecting service.

The five conceptual routes examined during the study included:

- Alternative 1 – Expanded Loop Service**
Intended to serve a large portion of Avondale, Alternative 1 was designed as a loop service intended to use major roads along the perimeter of the Northern Avondale Planning Area.
- Alternatives 2A and 2B – Single-Line Service**
Designed as point-to-point alternatives, Alternatives 2A and 2B connect several activity centers using major roads. The destinations served by these two alternatives were based on results of the community survey, with Alternative 2B a variation of the Route 131, or START Route, currently serving Avondale and a small portion of Goodyear.

- Alternative 3 – North Loop**
Alternative 3 was designed as a destination and community driven route focused on serving several neighborhoods north of I-10 within Avondale city limits and a limited number of activity centers south of I-10.

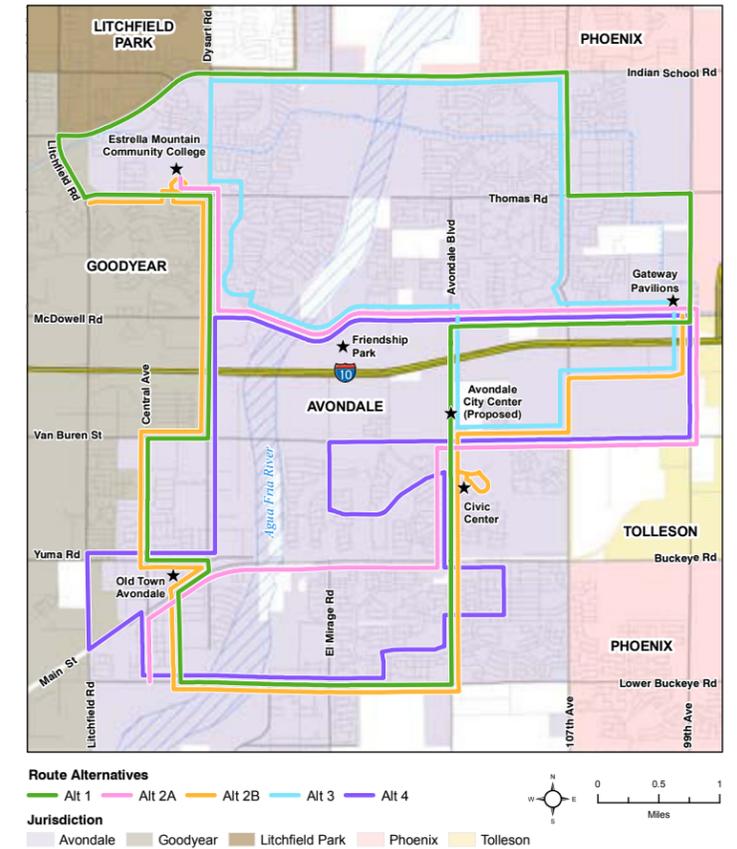
- Alternative 4 – South Loop**
Similar to Alternative 3, the South Loop Alternative was designed to serve a concentrated area within Avondale, with the focus on destinations south of I-10. The South Loop Alternative was designed to access activity centers while interconnecting several neighborhoods, utilizing local roads.

Alternatives Evaluation

Each of the conceptual alternatives were compared against each other based on a qualitative evaluation. Ratings of "Good," "Fair," and "Poor" were used to indicate the relative performance of the alternatives to the specific criterion. The following table presents the results of the alternatives evaluation.

Evaluation Criteria	Alternatives				
	1	2A	2B	3	4
Consistency with Community Survey Responses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poor = < 5 Activity Centers Served Fair = 6-10 Activity Centers Served Good = > 10 Activity Centers Served 	Good	Good	Good	Fair	Good
Potential Impact to Service due to School Traffic <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poor = Within 2 blocks of > 7 schools Fair = Within 2 blocks of 4-7 schools Good = Within 2 blocks of < 4 schools 	Poor	Good	Fair	Good	Poor
Impact to Residential Neighborhoods <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poor = Neighborhood Street Based Service Good = Arterial Based Service 	Poor	Good	Good	Poor	Poor
Route Length <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poor = > 20 miles Fair = 15-20 miles Good = < 15 miles 	Poor	Good	Good	Good	Fair
Annual Operation and Maintenance Cost <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poor = > \$1.25 Million Fair = \$1 Million - \$1.25 Million Good = < \$1 Million 	Poor	Good	Fair	Fair	Poor
Number of Vehicles for 30-minute Service <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poor = > 5 Vehicles Fair = 5 Vehicles Good = < 5 Vehicles 	Fair	Good	Good	Good	Fair
JARC Funding Eligibility <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poor = Not eligible Good = Eligible 	Good	Good	Good	Poor	Good
Consistency with 2006 Avondale Transportation Plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poor = Not Consistent Good = Consistent 	Good	Poor	Good	Good	Poor

Source: Avondale TCS Team, 2010



Recommended Pilot Route

Alternative 2B, or the modification of Route 131, was selected as the Recommended Pilot Route based on the evaluation.

The recommended route includes the following components:

- 14-mile single line service
- Daily Service
- 30-Minute Frequency
- Operating hours of 5:30 am to 8:30 pm on weekdays; 8:00 am and 8:00 pm on weekends and holidays
- Serves destinations including schools, shopping, parks/recreational facilities, and residential neighborhoods
- Transit connections to Valley Metro routes 131, 17A, 3A, 560 (Avondale Express)

Avondale

Transit Circulator Study

Transit Circulator Service Plan



May 11, 2010

CITY OF AVONDALE TRANSIT CIRCULATOR STUDY

TRANSIT CIRCULATOR SERVICE PLAN

Prepared for:

Maricopa Association of Governments

Prepared by:



May 11, 2010

Note: The contents of this report reflect the views of the Licensee who is responsible for the facts and accuracy of the data presented herein. The contents do not necessarily reflect the official views or policies of MAG and have not been approved or endorsed by MAG.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG), on behalf of the City of Avondale (Avondale), conducted a feasibility study to determine whether operation of a local circulator would benefit the community. Avondale, located in Maricopa County, Arizona, is a growing suburban community located approximately 13 miles west of downtown Phoenix (refer to Figure 1-1). With a population that currently exceeds 80,000 people, Avondale has the highest population of any southwest Valley city in the MAG region. Additionally, Avondale is projected to increase in population by approximately 76 percent by the year 2030.

As population continues to grow in Avondale, existing transit services provided by Valley Metro/ Regional Public Transportation Authority (RPTA) have been reduced throughout Maricopa County due to budget shortfalls. Bus service in Avondale is already considered very infrequent and inefficient with typical headways running 60 minutes or greater. Economic uncertainties faced in the upcoming years due to the sales tax shortfall create a shortage of dedicated transit funds that were originally provided for in the voter-approved 2007 MAG Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). This study has considered current conditions regarding funding and has also highlighted funding opportunities that may be available in the near term for the provision of local circulator service in Avondale.

A Project Management Team (PMT) was established in support of the Avondale Transit Circulator Study (TCS) that included representatives from Avondale, MAG, Valley Metro/ RPTA, and the consultant team. Five objectives were developed during the initial planning stages of this study to guide the development of alternatives and help determine one starter, or “pilot” route for recommendation to Avondale City Council. These five objectives include:

1. Conduct a comprehensive, market-based evaluation of transit circulator needs in Avondale.
2. Ensure the study results are coordinated with on-going regional transit plans and studies (e.g., MAG Regional Transportation Plan Update, 2007; MAG Regional Transit Framework Study, 2009).
3. Define a phased implementation plan that allows Avondale to expand transit circulator service over time, in coordination with development trends and available revenues.
4. Develop a sound financial plan that identifies capital and operating costs and potential sources of revenue.
5. Foster widespread community support for transit circulator service through an effective public involvement program.

In support of this *Transit Circulator Service Plan*, supporting documentation was completed that describes the existing and future conditions in Avondale. This information includes Avondale population, employment, and activity centers and identifies proposed circulator route options. Also included in this study are the possible funding strategies related to capital and operating costs. The following supporting working papers are included as appendices to this report:

- *Working Paper #1 – Existing and Future Conditions Report*
- *Working Paper #2 – Service Options Report*
- *Working Paper #3 – Financial Plan*

Avondale staff from the PMT requested that the Study Area, for purposes of this Study, be defined as the city limits north of Lower Buckeye Road, which is designated as Avondale’s Northern Municipal Planning Area. Although Avondale has several planned developments south of Lower Buckeye Road, construction of proposed subdivisions in this area is uncertain based on current economic conditions and the adverse effect on new development. Further, the sparse population in this area of Avondale limits potential transit ridership.

As part of *Working Paper #1 – Existing and Future Conditions*, existing and planned residential neighborhoods were identified to determine prominent residential areas that could generate ridership for a local transit circulator. Since high-density residential communities are sparsely located within the city limits, the proposed conceptual routes were designed to serve medium-density residential neighborhoods currently occupied. Approximately 35 existing housing communities are located within the Northern Municipal Planning Area, about two-thirds of which are thought to be most prominent in terms of ridership potential for this study based on their proximity to major roads, activity centers, and existing transit routes.



Avondale Civic Center

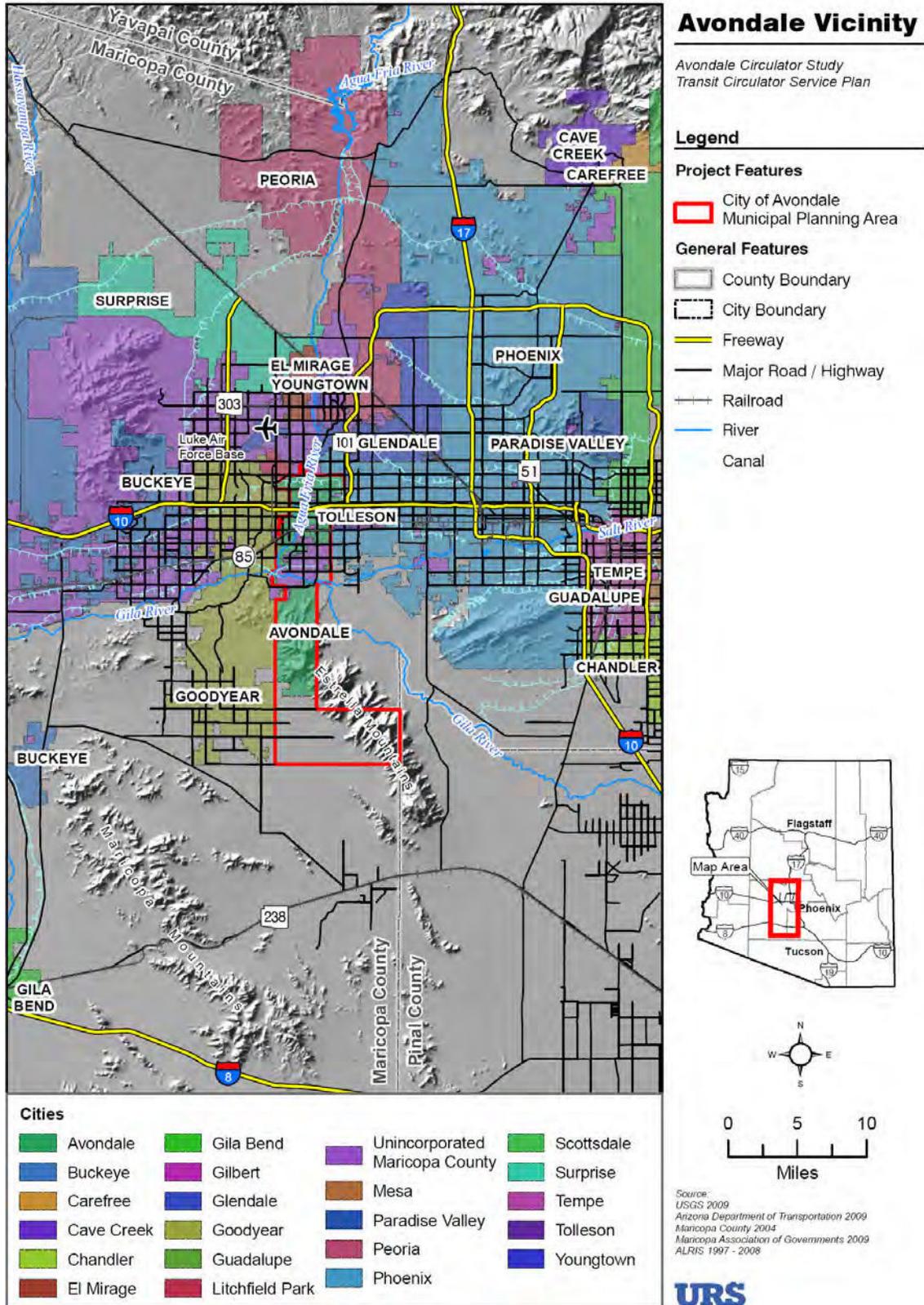
Finally, the largest employment and activity centers were identified for development of conceptual routes. Responses from the Avondale Transit Survey completed by residents in early 2010 assisted with identification of the major activity centers in the City. The activity centers identified primarily consisted of shopping centers located throughout Avondale. The City of Avondale’s Economic Development Department identified the major employers, which are all located in the Northern Municipal Planning Area. Table 1-1 lists the major activity and employment centers.

Table 1-1 Major Activity Centers and Employers in Avondale

Major Activity Centers	Major Employers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avondale Civic Center and Library • Avondale Community Center • Boys and Girls Club • Care 1st Avondale Resource Center • Estrella Mountain Community College • Friendship Park • Old Town Avondale • Sam Garcia Library • Universal Technical Institute • Alameda Crossing Shopping Center • Coldwater Plaza Shopping Center • Gateway Crossing Shopping Center • Gateway Pavilions Shopping Center • Palmilla Shopping Center 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avondale Auto Mall • Avondale Integrated Medical Services • City of Avondale • Costco Wholesale • Education/School Districts • Home Depot • Sam’s Club • Universal Technical Institute • Wal-Mart Stores, Inc.

Source: City of Avondale, 2010.

Figure 1-1 Vicinity Map



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2.0 EVALUATION OF CONCEPTUAL TRANSIT CIRCULATOR ALTERNATIVES

2.1 ALTERNATIVES DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

The first step in developing transit circulator alternatives is to create a broad range of conceptual options. One of the primary recommendations suggested by peer cities in the Valley that successfully operate circulators is that they must receive strong support from the communities they serve. Therefore, in conjunction with this study, a public survey was distributed and completed by the community in January 2010. The intent of the survey was to determine the popular destinations in Avondale, also known as activity centers, to assist with the development of alternatives. Essentially, the key activity centers identified by residents provided the connection points throughout Avondale as the basis for each of the alternatives. The results of the public survey are provided in the *Transit Survey Report*, attached as an appendix to *Working Paper #2 – Service Options Report*.

As the outcome of the study is to present one recommended one Pilot Route based on several factors, the five conceptual route alternatives were created to give the public and PMT an opportunity to provide feedback. The public survey was intended to solicit feedback to help establish conceptual alternative routes, and ultimately a recommended Pilot Route. Additionally, public feedback helped identify possible future connections, or route extensions, that could eventually serve a larger portion of the Avondale population. Successful ridership, vehicle availability, and funding would all contribute to the likelihood of expanding service.

The conceptual alternative route configurations presented in this Chapter identify how routes were proposed to serve different purposes, communities, and activity centers within Avondale. For example, routes were developed that connected popular activity centers and some were designed with the intent of serving specific housing communities by traveling through various neighborhoods. Further planning would be necessary to determine whether the circulators should operate clockwise, counter-clockwise, or a combination of both. The proposed routes were presented to the PMT for review before the evaluation process to make sure that the routes met the objectives of the Transit Circulator Study. Once the PMT agreed with the conceptual routes presented, they were evaluated based on the criteria described in Section 2.3.

2.2 TRANSIT CIRCULATOR ALTERNATIVES

Transit circulator alternatives were developed with the intent of presenting a broad range of options that could be further refined. Each alternative route has unique characteristics specifically designed to cater to community needs and wants. These routes were developed as part of *Working Paper #2 – Service Options Report* that provides a summary of the five conceptual alternatives presented to Avondale staff and includes the following:

- **Alternative 1 – Expanded Loop Service**
- **Alternatives 2A and 2B – Single-Line Service**
- **Alternative 3 – North Loop**
- **Alternative 4 – South Loop**

A key consideration for this study was to gauge community interest in operating a transit circulator and to identify potential activity centers to be served. Avondale is unique in that many popular activity centers are dispersed throughout Avondale, which affects route planning and development. In addition to

connecting activity centers, the circulator should also connect residential housing communities where feasible in Avondale.

The alternative routes were evaluated in comparison to each other to determine which would most benefit Avondale by:

- Complementing existing transit service that operates in Avondale;
- Contributing to the overall goal of community growth and sustainability by offering intra-city trips that could reduce dependency on automobiles which in turn could result in lowered congestion, improved air quality, and connections throughout Avondale; and
- Offering a safe and dependable alternate mode of transportation.

The following are descriptions of each transit circulator alternative as presented to the Avondale Transit Circulator Study PMT. Figures 2-1 through 2-5 represent the conceptual alignments for each of the five proposed transit circulator routes.

2.2.1 Alternative 1 – Expanded Loop Service

Alternative 1 provides service to the developed areas within Avondale connecting major activity centers via major arterial rights-of-way. This alternative connects destinations in the northern Avondale planning area and extends along the perimeter of Avondale’s Northern Municipal Planning Area, Indian School Road. Alternative 1 would access destinations currently served by the START route including Estrella Community College, Old Town Avondale, and the Avondale Civic Center. Should service be warranted, future expansion of this route could also directly serve the Cashion Neighborhood, identified as one of the original communities in Avondale, located at the southeast corner of Buckeye Road and Avondale Boulevard.

2.2.2 Alternatives 2A and 2B – Single-Line Service

Single-Line service connects residential communities and activity centers throughout Avondale and operates as a point-to-point service along major arterial roads. Alternative 2A would operate between Estrella Community College and Festival Fields serving destinations to the north and south. Alternative 2B is an extension of the current START route, serving Gateway Pavilions which was identified as a popular activity center through a community survey. This alternative could also be expanded further in the future to serve the Cashion Community as well as West Valley Hospital along McDowell Road if warranted. Both alternatives utilize major arterial roads which would require passengers to travel greater distances to access service. These alternatives serve the core areas of Avondale and connect activity centers north and south of I-10.

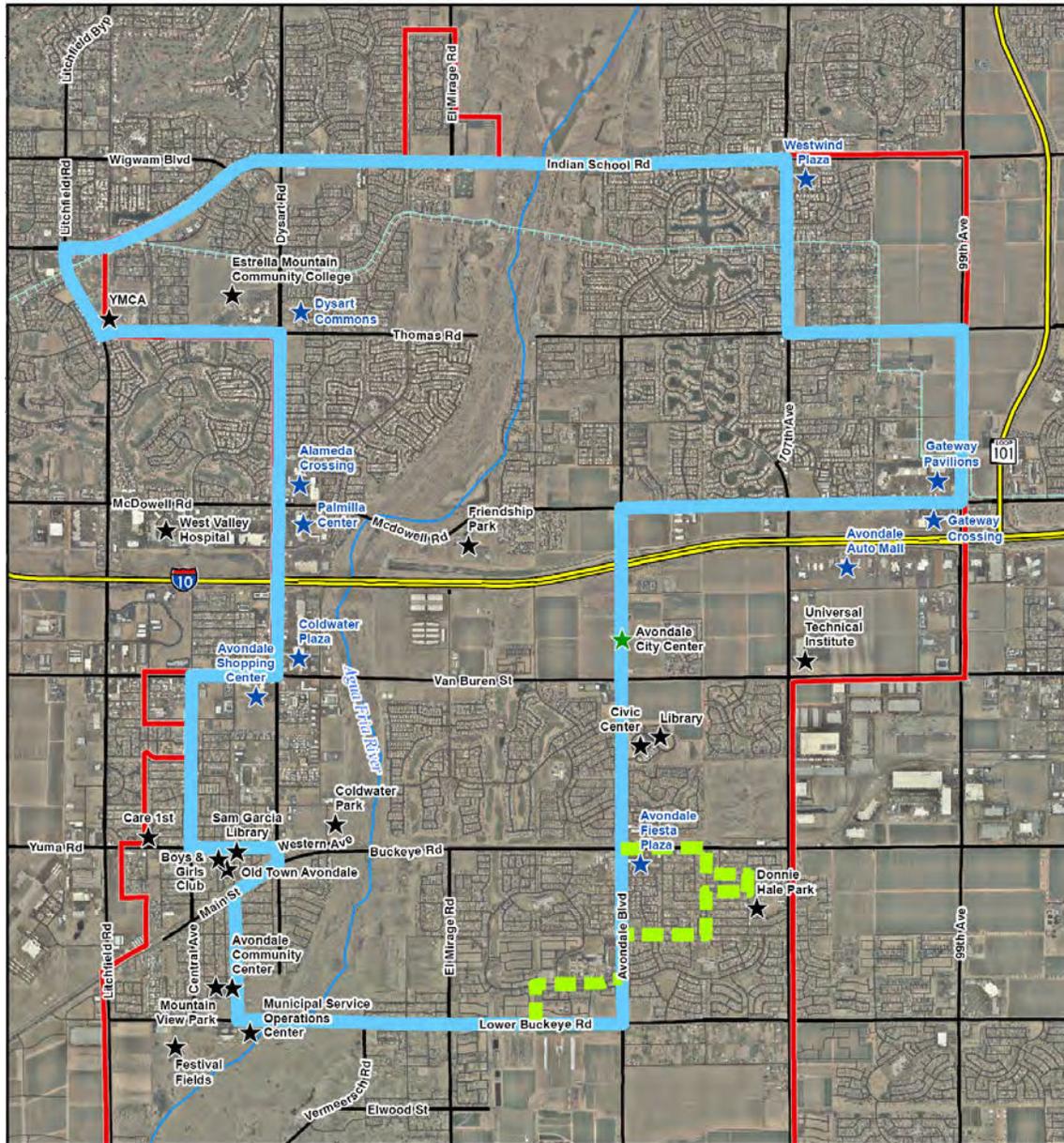
2.2.3 Alternative 3 – North Loop

The North Loop is proposed as a smaller route to accommodate a more traditional circulator operation. By providing direct access to residential communities and connections to local activity centers, a shorter and more cost-effective route can also offer more frequent service. The alternative can be expanded and/or modified in the future based on community needs. The North Loop is designed to access areas north of Van Buren Street and provide a connection to high-use areas as identified by residents, residential communities, and the proposed transit center located in the future Avondale City Center.

2.2.4 Alternative 4 – South Loop

Similar to Alternative 3, the South Loop is designed to provide service to multiple destinations south of McDowell Road. This alternative would provide a connection to Old Town Avondale and could promote economic development opportunities to this centrally located area of Avondale. As currently developed, the South Loop would partially overlap with Alternative 3 to ensure that activity centers such as the Avondale Civic Center and Gateway Pavilions are served.

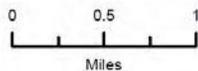
Figure 2-1 Alternative 1 – Expanded Loop Service



Expanded Circulator Service Option Alternative 1

Avondale Circulator Study
Transit Circulator Service Plan

Source:
City of Avondale 2009
Arizona Department of Transportation 2009
Maricopa County 2004
Maricopa Association of Governments 2009
ALRIS 1997 - 2008



Legend

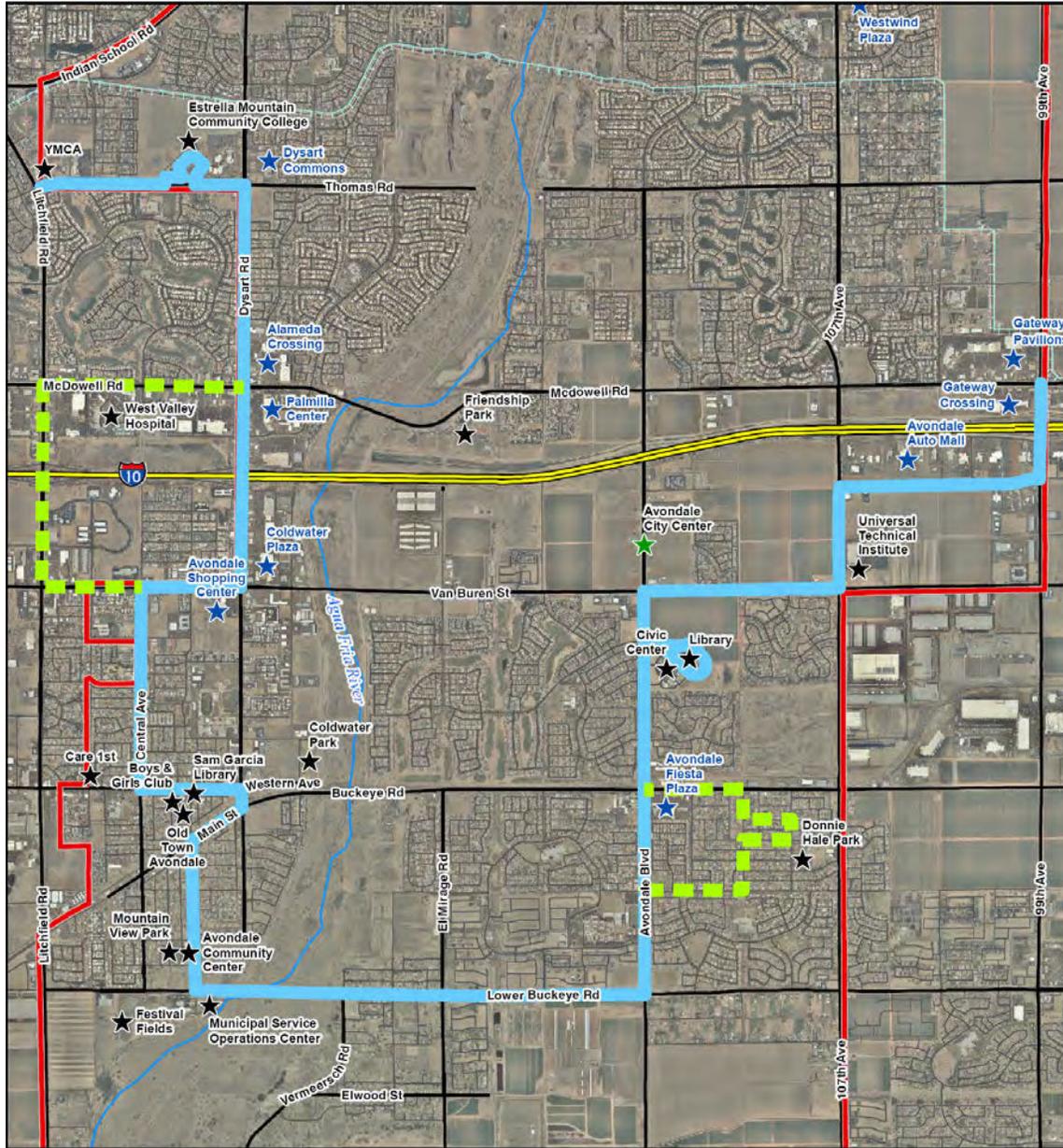
- ★ Existing Activity Center
- ★ Planned Activity Center
- ★ Shopping Center
- City of Avondale Municipal Planning Area
- Freeway
- Major Road
- Minor Road
- River
- Canal

Conceptual Route

- 21 Mile Loop (approx.)
- Potential Route Extension



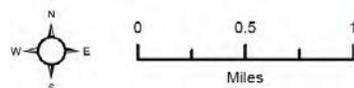
Figure 2-3 Alternative 2B – Single-Line Service



Single Line Service Option Alternative 2B

Avondale Circulator Study
Transit Circulator Service Plan

Source:
City of Avondale 2009
Arizona Department of Transportation 2009
Maricopa County 2004
Maricopa Association of Governments 2009
ALRIS 1997 - 2008



Legend

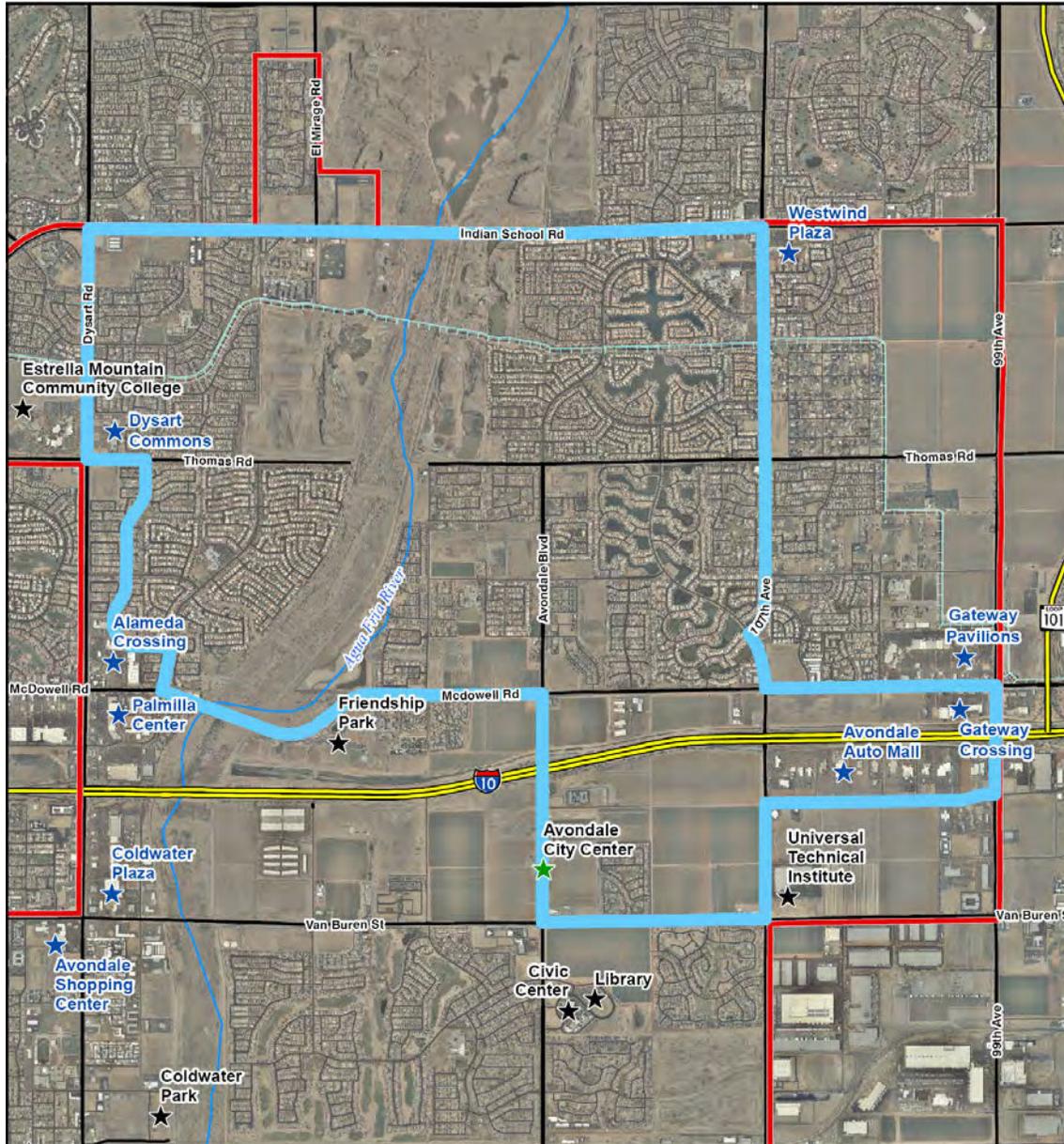
- ★ Existing Activity Center
- ★ Planned Activity Center
- ★ Shopping Center
- City of Avondale (Red outline)
- Municipal Planning Area (Red outline)
- Freeway (Yellow line)
- Major Road (Black line)
- Minor Road (Grey line)
- River (Blue line)
- Canal (Light blue dashed line)

Conceptual Route

- 14 Mile Route (approx.) (Blue line)
- Potential Route Extension (Green dashed line)



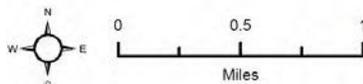
Figure 2-4 Alternative 3 – North Loop



North Loop Service Option Alternative 3

Avondale Circulator Study
Transit Circulator Service Plan

Source:
City of Avondale 2009
Arizona Department of Transportation 2009
Maricopa County 2004
Maricopa Association of Governments 2009
ALRIS 1997 - 2008



Legend

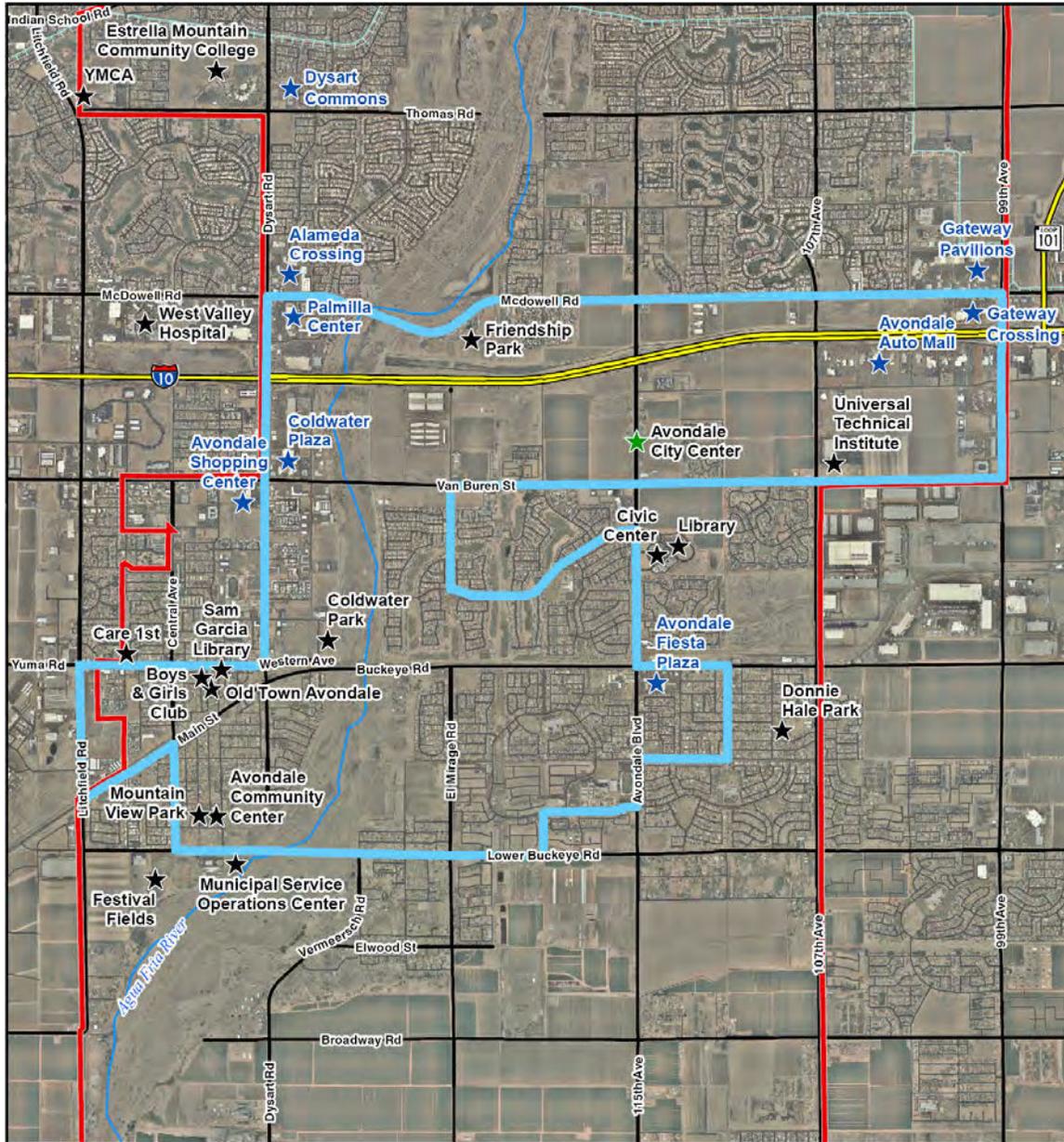
- ★ Existing Activity Center
- ★ Planned Activity Center
- ★ Shopping Center
- City of Avondale Municipal Planning Area
- Freeway
- Major Road
- Minor Road
- River
- Canal

Conceptual Route

- 14 Mile Loop (approx.)



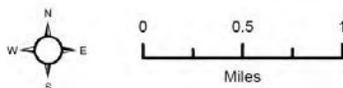
Figure 2-5 Alternative 4 – South Loop



South Loop Service Option Alternative 4

Avondale Circulator Study
Transit Circulator Service Plan

Source:
City of Avondale 2009
Arizona Department of Transportation 2009
Maricopa County 2004
Maricopa Association of Governments 2009
ALRIS 1997 - 2008



Legend

- ★ Existing Activity Center
- ★ Planned Activity Center
- ★ Shopping Center
- City of Avondale Municipal Planning Area
- Freeway
- Major Road
- Minor Road
- River
- Canal

Conceptual Route

20 Mile Loop (approx.)



2.3 SCREENING CRITERIA AND ANALYSIS

The conceptual alternatives were compared against each other using qualitative evaluation criteria established to determine which of the routes performed favorably based on certain issues. A ranking of “Good,” “Fair,” and “Poor” was used to indicate the relative performance of the alternative to the specific criterion. The evaluation criteria used for this evaluation include:

- Community Survey Responses
- Potential Impact to Service due to School Traffic
- Impact to Residential Neighborhoods
- Route Length
- Operations and Maintenance Cost
- Number of Vehicles
- JARC Funding Requirements
- Consistency with 2006 Avondale Transportation Plan

The following describes the evaluation methodology and analysis for each of the screening criteria.

2.3.1 Community Survey Responses

Results of the Avondale Transit Survey conducted in January 2010 identify popular activity centers throughout Avondale. In order to successfully implement circulator service, it is important to serve popular community destinations. Each alternative was rated based on the number of activity centers it serves as identified through survey results.

- Poor = < 5 Activity Centers Served
- Fair = 6-10 Activity Centers Served
- Good = > 10 Activity Centers Served

Screening Analysis

Alternatives	Number of Activity Centers Served	Rating
1 – Extended Loop	13	Good
2A – Single Line	12	Good
2B – Single Line	15	Good
3 – North Loop	8	Fair
4 – South Loop	14	Good

Source: Avondale TCS Team, 2010

2.3.2 Potential Impact to Service due to School Traffic

The impact a circulator service has on a community can affect safety and traffic issues in proximity to neighborhood schools. Traffic associated with morning drop-off and afternoon pick-up around schools has a tendency to impede traffic flow. As a result, without proper planning, circulator buses could be delayed. In addition, special safety provisions should be implemented in school zones. Each alternative was rated based on the number of schools located along each route within two neighborhood blocks.

- Poor = Within 2 blocks of > 7 Schools
- Fair = Within 2 blocks of 4-7 Schools
- Good = Within 2 blocks of < 4 Schools

Screening Analysis

Alternatives	Number of Schools within 2 blocks	Rating
1 – Extended Loop	8	Poor
2A – Single Line	2	Good
2B – Single Line	7	Fair
3 – North Loop	3	Good
4 – South Loop	9	Poor

Source: Avondale TCS Team, 2010

2.3.3 Impact to Residential Neighborhoods

While it is important to serve residential neighborhoods to attract maximum ridership, circulator vehicles can be imposing to neighborhood streets, especially to those adjacent to schools where traffic safety issues exist. Arterial based service can indirectly serve residential neighborhoods while lessening the overall impact to the community. Each alternative was rated based on arterial versus neighborhood street based service.

- Poor = Neighborhood Street Based Service
- Good = Arterial Based Service

Screening Analysis

Alternatives	Service Type	Rating
1 – Extended Loop	Neighborhood Street	Poor
2A – Single Line	Arterial Street	Good
2B – Single Line	Arterial Street	Good
3 – North Loop	Neighborhood Street	Poor
4 – South Loop	Neighborhood Street	Poor

Source: Avondale TCS Team, 2010

2.3.4 Route Length

The length of a circulator route can impact the ridership of a system. Most successful circulator routes average between 10 to 12 miles one way. Each alternative was rated based on the length of the proposed route.

- Poor = > 20 miles
- Fair = 15-20 miles
- Good = < 15 miles

Screening Analysis

Alternatives	Route Length	Rating
1 – Extended Loop	21 miles	Poor
2A – Single Line	12 miles	Good
2B – Single Line	14 miles	Good
3 – North Loop	14 miles	Good
4 – South Loop	20 miles	Fair

Source: Avondale TCS Team, 2010

2.3.5 Operations and Maintenance Cost

Operations and maintenance costs include costs associated with the daily operation of the circulator service, such as vehicle operation, vehicle maintenance, employee wages, and liability insurance. These typical costs are generally described in terms of operating expenses per revenue hour or operating expenses per revenue mile. Each alternative was rated based on the average of the low and high estimated total annualized cost per route provided listed in Table 3-3.

- Poor = > \$1.25 Million
- Fair = \$1 Million-\$1.25 Million
- Good = < \$1 Million

Screening Analysis

Alternatives	Average Estimated Total Annualized Cost	Rating
1 – Extended Loop	\$1,290,000	Poor
2A – Single Line	\$770,000	Good
2B – Single Line	\$1,030,000	Fair
3 – North Loop	\$1,030,000	Fair
4 – South Loop	\$1,290,000	Poor

Source: Avondale TCS Team, 2010

2.3.6 Number of Vehicles

The number of vehicles needed to effectively operate a transit circulator system depends on the frequency of service. For the purposes of this evaluation, to maximize efficiency 30-minute service is assumed. Each alternative was rated based on the number of vehicles required to operate 30-minute service.

- Poor = > 5 Vehicles
- Fair = 5 Vehicles
- Good = < 5 Vehicles

Screening Analysis

Alternatives	Number of Vehicles (30 minute service)	Rating
1 – Extended Loop	5	Fair
2A – Single Line	3	Good
2B – Single Line	4	Good
3 – North Loop	4	Good
4 – South Loop	5	Fair

Source: Avondale TCS Team, 2010

2.3.7 JARC Funding Requirements

FTA Section 5316 is the Job Access and Reverse Commute Program (JARC). This program provides funding to develop and maintain transportation services that provide for the transportation of welfare recipients and other low-income individuals to and from employment centers, job training, and child care facilities. Based on conversations with Avondale staff from the PMT, JARC funds are provided for operation of local bus operations that provide service to communities in the southwest portion of the Northern Planning Area. Each alternative was rated based on its eligibility to receive JARC funding.

- Poor = Not eligible
- Good = Eligible

Screening Analysis

Alternatives	JARC Eligibility	Rating
1 – Extended Loop	Eligible	Good
2A – Single Line	Eligible	Good
2B – Single Line	Eligible	Good
3 – North Loop	Not Eligible	Poor
4 – South Loop	Eligible	Good

Source: Avondale TCS Team, 2010

2.3.8 Consistency with 2006 Avondale Transportation Plan

While support and input from the community is important in planning a transit circulator system, consistency with the previously adopted Avondale Transportation Plan is also vital to the success of the system. The 2006 plan recommends two looped bus routes for implementation to serve as circulators in Avondale. Although the City is currently in the process of updating the 2006 Transportation Plan, each alternative was rated based on its consistency with the previously proposed circulator routes from the 2006 version.

- Poor = Not Consistent
- Good = Consistent

Screening Analysis

Alternatives	Consistency with 2006 Transportation Plan	Rating
1 – Extended Loop	Consistent	Good
2A – Single Line	Not Consistent	Poor
2B – Single Line	Consistent	Good
3 – North Loop	Consistent	Good
4 – South Loop	Not Consistent	Poor

Source: Avondale TCS Team, 2010

2.4 EVALUATION OF ALTERNATIVES

Table 2-1 provides the results of the evaluation of each of the five conceptual route alternatives based on the aforementioned screening criteria methodology.

Table 2-1 Conceptual Alternatives Evaluation

Evaluation Criteria	Alternatives				
	1	2A	2B	3	4
Consistency with Community Survey Responses	Good	Good	Good	Fair	Good
Potential Impact to Service due to School Traffic	Poor	Good	Fair	Good	Poor
Impact to Residential Neighborhoods	Poor	Good	Good	Poor	Poor
Route Length	Poor	Good	Good	Good	Fair
Annual Operation and Maintenance Cost	Poor	Good	Fair	Fair	Poor
Number of Vehicles for 30-minute Service	Fair	Good	Good	Good	Fair
JARC Funding Eligibility	Good	Good	Good	Poor	Good
Consistency with 2006 Avondale Transportation Plan	Good	Poor	Good	Good	Poor

Source: Avondale TCS Team, 2010

Table 2-2 Benefits and Disadvantages of Conceptual Alternatives

Conceptual Alternative	Assumptions	Benefits	Disadvantages
Alternative 1 Expanded City Loop 21-mile loop	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Bus remains on periphery of neighborhoods and stays along major roads. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Service to multiple activity centers. ▪ Arterial travel would provide increased travel speed of the transit circulator. ▪ One city loop would prohibit the need for connecting circulator routes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Many neighborhoods may not be served directly as service is limited to the perimeter of Avondale city limits. ▪ Frequency may potentially decrease due to route length. ▪ The system would be more costly due to route length. ▪ More buses are needed to maintain efficient headways. ▪ May cause additional traffic safety issues adjacent to school sites. ▪ May adversely affect school transportation funding and operations.
Alternatives 2A and 2B Single-Line Service Alternative 2A – 12-mile route Alternative 2B – 14-mile route	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Bus remains on periphery of neighborhoods and stays along major roads. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Service to multiple activity centers. ▪ Arterial travel would provide increased travel speed of the transit circulator. ▪ Serve developed areas with one route. ▪ A single-line option would prohibit the need for connecting circulator routes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Many neighborhoods may not be served directly creating longer walk distances. ▪ Arterial travel makes travel less accessible and farther for many residents. ▪ May cause additional traffic safety issues adjacent to school sites. ▪ May adversely affect school transportation funding and operations.
Alternative 3 – North Loop 14-mile loop	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Route would be designed to travel along neighborhood thoroughfares to directly serve residents. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Shorter loop could result in increased frequency. ▪ Potential to efficiently serve neighborhoods via local roads is increased. ▪ Multiple buses provide greater access to destinations. ▪ Individual routes may be phased depending on success of “pilot” route. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Transfers may be necessary within the service area with a multiple loop system to access multiple activity centers. ▪ Coordinating bus transfer schedules could be difficult. ▪ May cause additional traffic safety issues adjacent to school sites. ▪ May adversely affect school transportation funding and operations.
Alternative 4 – South Loop 20-mile loop	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Route would be designed to travel along neighborhood thoroughfares to directly serve residents. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Potential to efficiently serve neighborhoods via local roads is increased. ▪ Multiple buses provide greater access to destinations. ▪ Individual routes may be phased depending on success of “pilot” route. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Potentially more costly due to increased number of vehicles. ▪ Transfers may be necessary within the service area with a multiple loop system to access multiple activity centers. ▪ Coordinating bus transfer schedules could be difficult. ▪ Would not provide access Estrella Mountain Community College, a major destination. ▪ May cause additional traffic safety issues adjacent to school sites. ▪ May adversely affect school transportation funding and operations.

Source: Avondale TCS Team, 2010.

2.5 ALTERNATIVE EVALUATION RESULTS – RECOMMENDED PILOT ROUTE

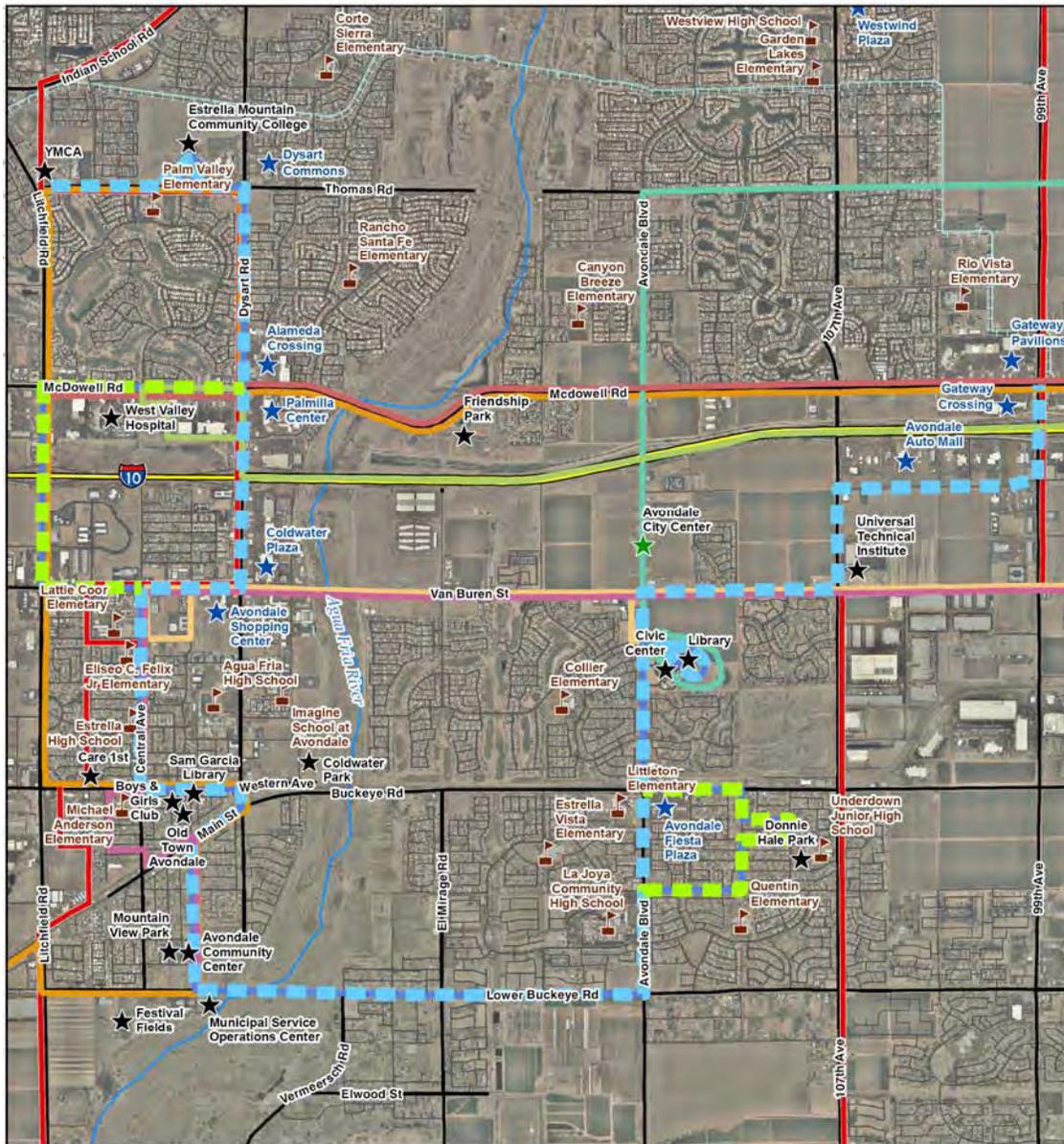
Evaluation results showed favorable ratings for Alternative 2B, making it the preferred alternative and the recommended Pilot Route. The Pilot Route, representing a modification of the existing START route, is projected to adequately serve destinations identified through the public survey results, and is also a small enough route, making it a more cost-effective capital investment.

As noted, the recommended Pilot Route shown in Figure 2-6 is a modification to the existing Route 131, also known as the START route. The recommended Pilot Route is consistent with input received from local jurisdictions that currently operate circulator service, public input received during the public involvement process, and feedback received from the PMT. The benefit of establishing a local circulator route based on the existing Route 131 is that the community has familiarity with the service and there is already a base ridership population. Additionally, the route is proposed in a manner that serves several destinations throughout the Northern Avondale Planning Area which currently includes most of the residential and employment concentrations.

Consistent with the desires of the majority of public survey participants, the recommended Pilot Route would operate seven days a week (Monday through Sunday) at a frequency of 30-minute service. For purposes of estimating the number of vehicles and cost estimates, the hours of operation were assumed between the hours of 5:30 a.m. and 8:30 p.m. during the weekdays and between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. on Saturday, Sunday, and holidays. The 15-hour service span on weekdays takes into account peak a.m. commuter hours and the evening hours extend to 8:30 p.m. for service to dining, shopping, and other activity center destinations. Weekend service hours begin later in the morning, consistent with local circulators that operate throughout the MAG region. The proposed Pilot Route is approximately 14 miles in length, with proposed extensions to additional service area shown in Figure 2-6. In discussions with Valley Metro/RPTA staff, it was recommended that circulator service routes begin small and expand based on successful ridership and allocation of available funding.

In addition, if funding and rider support encourages this expansion of the system, possible extended service could include the portion of Litchfield Road that is partially within Goodyear and also the Cashion Neighborhood within Avondale city limits. These route expansions could be implemented as part of a phased approach as identified in Figure 2-6. The success of the ridership would dictate where the appropriate expansion should occur and the expansion to Litchfield Road would require coordination with the City of Goodyear. However, since the existing Route 131 serves essentially the same extent along Litchfield Road expansion of the Avondale transit circulator route should be straightforward.

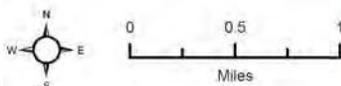
Figure 2-6 Recommended Pilot Route (Alternative 2B)



Recommended Pilot Route

Avondale Circulator Study
Transit Circulator Service Plan

Source:
City of Avondale 2009
Valley Metro 2009
Arizona Department of Transportation 2009
Maricopa County 2004
Maricopa Association of Governments 2009
ALRIS 1997 - 2008



Legend

- | | | |
|--|--------------------|------------|
| School | Existing Bus Route | Freeway |
| Existing Activity Center | Route 131 | Major Road |
| Planned Activity Center | Route 17A | Minor Road |
| Shopping Center | Route 29A | River |
| City of Avondale Municipal Planning Area | Route 3A | Canal |
| Conceptual Route | Route 560 | |
| 14 Mile Route (approx.) | Route 562 | |
| Potential Route Extension | Route 685 | |



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3.0 DESCRIPTION OF RECOMMENDED PILOT ROUTE

3.1 CONSISTENCY WITH PLANS AND POLICIES

3.1.1 Regional Plans

In order for a circulator service to be successful, it must be consistent with long-range transportation and transit planning documents to ensure regional support. Several regional transportation planning documents completed by MAG relate to transportation and transit improvements were examined as part of this study, including:

- Regional Transit Framework Study (RTFS)
- Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)
- Yuma West Commuter Rail Study
- Phoenix West AA/EIS

Although these long-range planning studies did not specifically identify implementation of a circulator service exclusive to Avondale, the regional plans were considered to determine how a circulator service could connect to existing and planned transit modes. For example, the RTFS and RTP identify proposed Supergrid bus routes intended to provide service along major arterials throughout the Valley. Although Supergrid service is identified to serve Avondale, with the recent budget shortcomings, there is uncertainty as to whether Supergrid routes identified to serve the community will actually be implemented. Additionally, for those Supergrid routes and transportation improvements identified in the long-range planning documents, there is uncertainty as to when improvements could be implemented with the shortcomings in regional funding.

The Yuma West Commuter Rail Study describes potential implementation of commuter rail service to serve the West Valley using the existing Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) right-of-way. The proposed commuter rail line would pass through Avondale, with a passenger station proposed within Avondale city limits. With the railroad right-of-way paralleling Buckeye Road, which is the southern extent of the proposed Pilot Route, there is opportunity to provide interconnected service between the local circulator and the regional passenger service provided by commuter rail. No scheduled or programmed funding sources are currently identified for commuter rail service.

The Phoenix West Alternatives Analysis/Environmental Impact Statement in progress by Valley Metro Rail, Inc. (METRO) is evaluating high-capacity transit modes that would connect the 79th Avenue Park-and-Ride located along I-10 to downtown Phoenix. Either a light rail or bus rapid transit extension of the Central Phoenix/East Valley (CP/EV) Light Rail system is proposed in this corridor. Although the Phoenix West corridor falls short of Avondale's city limits, the prospective transit improvement would play a key role in providing connectivity to the West Valley and the rest of the MAG region. A local circulator could ultimately connect transit patrons to the Phoenix West Extension via regional bus service that would operate from the proposed City Center Transit Facility. Conversely, a circulator would offer transit patrons that connect to Avondale via regional bus service from the 79th Avenue Park-and-Ride a transit option to access local destinations.

3.1.2 Local Plans

While the support and input from the community is important in the planning of a circulator system, the Study Team also examined recommendations from Chapter 5 (Transit Plan) of the *Avondale Transportation Plan* adopted in October 2006, which is currently being updated by the City with an expected completion date in 2011. The recommendations listed in the Transit Plan section are described as consistent with Avondale City Council’s desire for a “transit system that provides adequate mode choice and alternate options for transportation to its citizens, and reduces congestion” (City of Avondale 2006). The Transit Improvement Plan section of Chapter 5 in the *Avondale Transportation Plan* references local transit improvement projects recommended beyond the proposed bus routes identified in the MAG RTP. The document recommends implementation of two “loop bus routes” that would serve destinations in Avondale as described in Table 3-1 and shown in Figure 3-1:

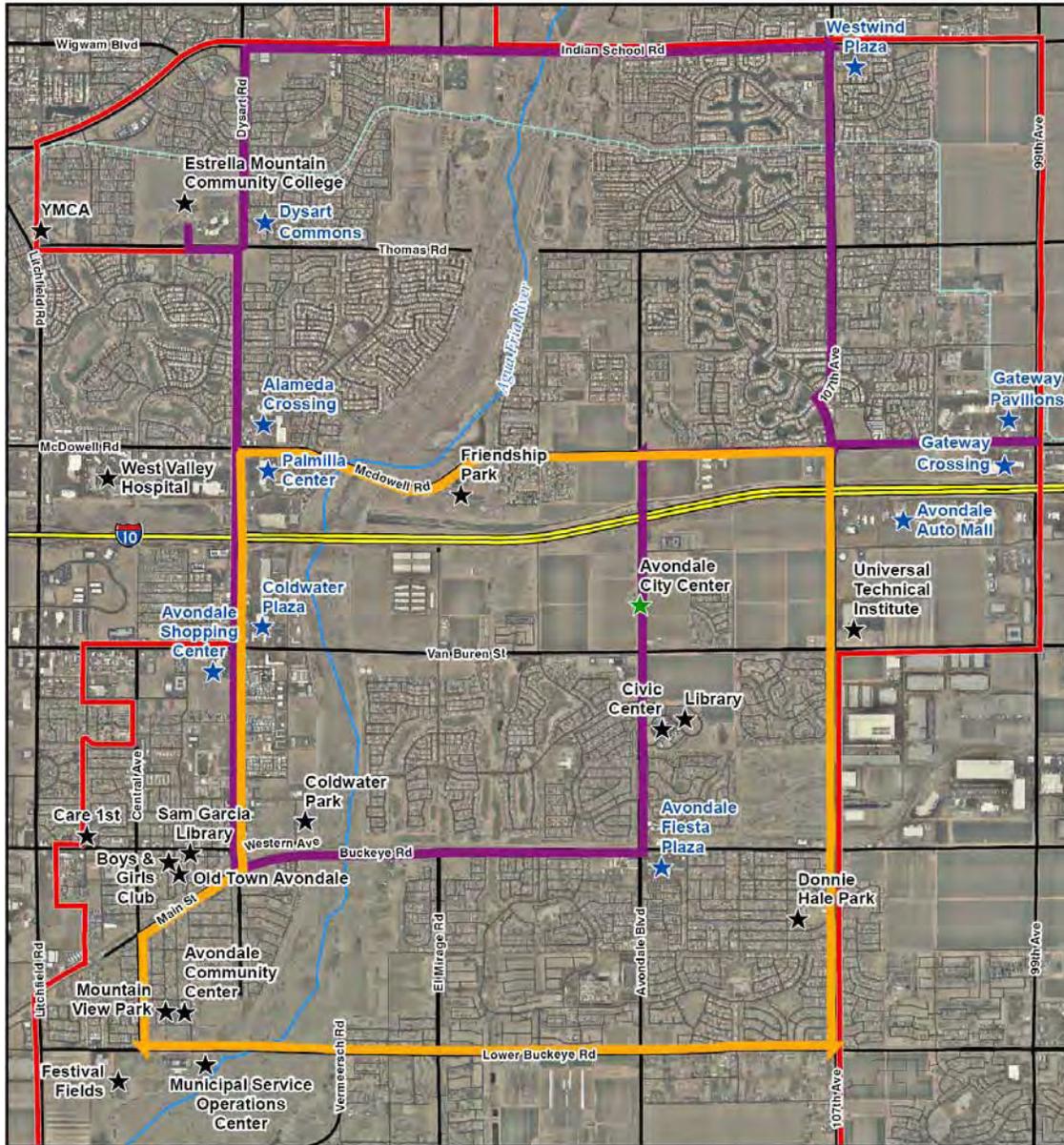
Table 3-1 Recommended Loop Bus Routes Identified in the *Avondale Transportation Plan*

Proposed Loop Bus Routes	Implementation Phase
A Loop Bus Route that travels on Dysart Road starting at Estrella Community College to Buckeye Road (MC-85), Civic Center on Avondale Boulevard, Gateway Pavilions on McDowell Road, West View High School on 107 th Avenue, Indian School Road/Dysart Road intersection and back to Estrella Community College	2006-2010
A Loop Bus Route that starts at Park-and-Ride facility at Van Buren Street and Dysart Road and travel along Dysart Road south to Lower Buckeye Road, to 107 th Avenue, on 107 th Avenue to McDowell Road, on McDowell Road to Dysart Road and back to the intersection of Dysart Road and Van Buren Street	2011-2015

Source: City of Avondale, 2006

As shown in Figure 3-1, the recommended Pilot Route falls within the Northern Avondale Planning Area, consistent with the Proposed Loop Bus Routes service area. The Proposed Loop Bus Routes would operate two separate circulators in Avondale, whereas the proposed Pilot Route combines the two routes into one single-line service. The Pilot Route would serve most of the destinations identified along the Loop Bus Route systems and it would also operate along arterial streets, consistent with the proposed loop routes identified in the *2006 Avondale Transportation Plan*. With transportation funding shortcomings currently experienced by Avondale, the likelihood of implementing either of the Loop Bus Routes is minimal; however, the Pilot Route would allow Avondale to implement a circulator service that combines the most frequented destinations within the community.

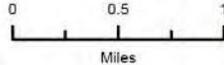
Figure 3-1 Proposed Loop Bus Routes Identified in the 2006 Avondale Transportation Plan



Loop Bus Routes Identified in the Avondale Transportation Plan (2006)

Avondale Circulator Study
Transit Circulator Service Plan

Source:
City of Avondale 2009
Arizona Department of Transportation 2009
Maricopa County 2004
Maricopa Association of Governments 2009
ALRIS 1997 - 2008



- ★ Existing Activity Center
- ★ Planned Activity Center
- ★ Shopping Center
- City of Avondale Municipal Planning Area
- Freeway
- Major Road
- Minor Road
- River
- Canal

Proposed Loop Bus Routes

- 15 Mile (approx.) Implementation Phase 2006-2010
- 13 Mile (approx.) Implementation Phase 2011-2015



3.2 RIDERSHIP POTENTIAL

Fiscal year 2008-2009 average monthly ridership for peer city circulators is documented in the *Avondale Transit Circulator Study Working Paper #2 – Service Options Report*. Ridership for each circulator route varies considerably by jurisdiction due to several reasons including the length of each route, service hours, and adjacent land uses. The recommended Pilot Route is intended to provide service to existing activity centers throughout Avondale that could benefit from a transit circulator. Section 3.3 lists several destinations and residential neighborhoods along the Pilot Route that could contribute to a successful transit service.



Sam Garcia Library

The proposed route, frequency of stops, and daily service span recommended for the Pilot Route are designed to maximize ridership potential throughout Avondale. The service modification to Route 131 in terms of additional destinations served and improved frequency of stops could attract a greater number of transit riders. Additionally, the proposed mixed-use City Center development that will provide a high-density residential population would add to the ridership base for the transit circulator.

3.3 DESTINATIONS SERVED

As shown in Figure 2-6, the Pilot Route would serve several activity centers within the Northern Planning Area of Avondale including schools, parks, shopping, and residential neighborhoods. Table 3-2 lists the destinations served by the recommended Pilot Route.

Table 3-2 Destinations Served by Recommended Pilot Route

Schools	Shopping	Residential Neighborhoods	Other
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Estrella Community College • Palm Valley Elementary • Lattie Coor Elementary • Eliseo C. Felix Jr. Elementary • Estrella Vista Elementary • Avondale High School • Estrella High School • La Joya High School 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dysart Commons • Alameda Crossing • Palmilla Center • Coldwater Plaza • Avondale Shopping Center • Avondale Auto Mall • Gateway Crossing • Gateway Pavilions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fulton Estates • Rancho Santa Fe • Diamond Ridge • Coldwater Springs • Glenhurst • Starlight Trail • Roosevelt Park Phase II 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avondale Civic Center • Old Town Avondale • Sam Garcia Library • Southwest Valley YMCA • Avondale Community Center • Festival Fields

Source: Avondale TCS Team, 2010.

3.4 ECONOMIC AND TRANSIT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL

As described in *Working Paper #1 – Existing and Future Conditions*, Avondale envisions employment and industrial clusters near I-10 (south to Van Buren), a higher-density “South Core” area south of Broadway Road between Avondale Boulevard and 119th Avenue. Additionally, Avondale has plans for a prominent development known as Avondale City Center that presents a vision for the central area of Avondale immediately south of I-10 along Avondale Boulevard. The City Center will represent a traditional Central Business District form with mixed use development and incorporation of an urban

street grid system. The 402-acre site is planned as an easily accessible, diverse (in terms of land use) focal point for the community.

As part of the City Center development, Avondale is proposing construction of a centrally located transit center intended to be a joint-use parking facility for the residential and retail development and also for transit riders. Circulator services are not generally attractions or causes of economic development, rather, they operate to provide occupants and employees of high-density areas a transit option to link to other areas of a community. Avondale’s City Center would benefit from a circulator route that accesses the development by bringing not only residents to the proposed residential and retail development, but also the circulator could connect riders with other future transit routes that would connect to the new transit facility.

3.5 REGIONAL AND LOCAL TRANSIT CONNECTIONS

3.5.1 Existing Bus Service

Avondale is currently served by six Valley Metro transit routes, including a combination of weekday, Saturday, express, and regional service. Typical daily service hours range from 5:00 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. with the majority of existing service operating Monday through Saturday at hourly frequencies. Hourly frequencies are considered low in comparison to other Valley Metro routes and have adversely impacted ridership. All but one route serves the Desert Sky Mall Transit Center which provides connections to other regional routes via transfer. Avondale is served by one express route providing two trips (four total) to and from downtown Phoenix. Recent modifications resulted in the termination of Route 41A that previously served northern Avondale. Additional modifications are expected in the future and will include the elimination of Route 29A which currently connects the Avondale Civic Center to Desert Sky Mall. Current bus routes serving Avondale include:

- Route 131 – START;
- Route 17A;
- Route 29A (to be eliminated in July 2010);
- Route 3A;
- Route 560 – Avondale Express; and
- Route 685 – Gila Bend Regional Connector.



Gila Bend Regional Connector Bus

3.5.2 Future Bus Service

The MAG RTP identifies a series of “Supergrid” routes that would operate along major arterials through Avondale. With the sales tax shortfall, implementation of Supergrid routes planned through the RTP intended to serve Avondale may be postponed. Valley Metro/RPTA is currently evaluating how regional bus routes may be modified, including those that currently serve Avondale. No other local bus routes are currently planned to serve Avondale at this time.

3.6 ESTIMATED COSTS AND FUNDING STRATEGY

3.6.1 Capital Costs

Transit circulator service requires a series of initial financial capital investments. These capital investments are typically significant at the beginning, with moderate to low annual costs throughout the life of the transit circulator program.

Prior to implementing a circulator service program, the following initial capital expenses should be addressed:

- Vehicle fleet acquisition
- Vehicle stops and/or shelters
- Storage facility or property for vehicles
- Maintenance facility for vehicles

3.6.2 Operating Costs

Operations and maintenance costs include costs associated with the daily operation of the circulator service, such as the following:

- Vehicle operation, including fuel
- Vehicle preventative maintenance, including tires, brakes, oil, etc.
- Employee wages and benefits package
- Liability insurance
- Dispatch
- Security

3.6.3 Existing Transit Funding Sources and Funding Strategies

If Avondale were to pursue a transit circulator program, its success would rely on a sustainable funding source, among other factors. The following section discusses potential funding strategies to provide a sustainable funding approach for such a transit circulator program. In addition to the recommended Pilot Route, the funding strategies provided in this section applies to all conceptual alternative routes in the event additional funding become available to implement one or more additional routes.

3.6.3.1 Estimated Annualized Operating Costs for Transit Circulator Alternatives

As described in Section 2.2, Avondale has several possible alternative approaches to providing transit circulator services within its community. Table 3-3 summarizes the estimated annualized operating costs associated with those alternatives (as further discussed in the preceding sections), with the modified START route (Alternative 2B) representing the recommended Pilot Route.

Table 3-3 Estimated Annualized Operating Costs for Transit Circulator Alternatives

Alternative	Total Annualized Cost (Low Estimate)	Total Annualized Cost (High Estimate)	Mid-Point of Annualized Cost Range
1	\$1,032,600	\$1,548,900	\$1,290,000
2a	\$619,560	\$929,340	\$770,000
2b	\$826,080	\$1,239,120	\$1,030,000
3	\$826,080	\$1,239,120	\$1,030,000
4	\$1,032,600	\$1,548,900	\$1,290,000

Source: Avondale TCS Team, 2010.

For the purposes of this analysis, the capital costs associated with all of the proposed circulator alternatives are assumed to be met with various federal and state sources. Avondale anticipates a potential source of vehicles for this service through Valley Metro/RPTA. Federal funding would include Section 5307 grant funding, which would require local match and Avondale’s ability to fund the capital local match, as well as operating costs. Based on the information presented in Table 3-3, the mid-points of the estimated annualized operating costs for the various transit circulator alternatives range between \$0.77 million and \$1.29 million. This section provides a discussion of possible funding strategies to meet those estimated expenses.

3.6.3.2 Estimated 20-Year Operating and Capital Costs

Table 3-4 shows the estimated 20-year operating costs of the recommended Pilot Route using the mid-point of the annualized cost range in Table 3-3. Capital costs presented are based on current year dollars.

**Table 3-4 Estimated 20-Year Operating and Capital Costs for
Recommended Pilot Route**

Year	Operating Costs	Capital Costs (Vehicles)	Total
1	\$1,030,000	\$480,000*	\$1,510,000
2	\$1,030,000	-	\$1,030,000
3	\$1,030,000	-	\$1,030,000
4	\$1,030,000	-	\$1,030,000
5	\$1,030,000	-	\$1,030,000
6	\$1,030,000	-	\$1,030,000
7	\$1,030,000	-	\$1,030,000
8	\$1,030,000	-	\$1,030,000
9	\$1,030,000	-	\$1,030,000
10	\$1,030,000	-	\$1,030,000
11	\$1,030,000	-	\$1,030,000
12	\$1,030,000	\$480,000*	\$1,510,000
13	\$1,030,000	-	\$1,030,000
14	\$1,030,000	-	\$1,030,000
15	\$1,030,000	-	\$1,030,000
16	\$1,030,000	-	\$1,030,000
17	\$1,030,000	-	\$1,030,000
18	\$1,030,000	-	\$1,030,000
19	\$1,030,000	-	\$1,030,000
20	\$1,030,000	-	\$1,030,000
TOTAL	\$20,600,000	\$960,000	\$21,560,000

*Note: Assumes 4 new vehicles at a cost of \$120,000 each
Source: Avondale TCS Team, 2010.

3.6.3.3 Availability of Federal, State, and Regional Funding from Existing Sources

This section discusses the availability of federal and state funding sources to support the estimated annualized operating costs of a transit circulator. These sources include:

- Federal JARC program monies;
- Federal urban area transit program monies;
- State Local Transportation Assistance Fund (LTAF) II monies; and
- Regional transportation excise tax monies.

FTA Section 5316 – Job Access and Reverse Commute Program

By demonstrating appropriate need and meeting Federal requirements, Avondale has received some JARC program (FTA Section 5316) federal funding for transit services. Historically, Avondale has utilized its share of JARC funding for Valley Metro's START Route (Route 131), serving Avondale, Goodyear, Tolleson, and Litchfield Park. Avondale received JARC funding in 2007 in the amount of \$130,000, in 2008 it received \$150,000, and in 2009, \$145,000.

Additionally, the START Route has been supported by Avondale's General Fund and in the future, would likely require funding from sales tax revenue. The availability of any JARC monies for a transit circulator would depend on the revisions to the existing transit routes as well as changes in the availability of funding for those routes.

FTA Section 5307 –Urban Area Transit Program

Federal Section 5307 program funding provides monies for capital, operating, and administrative transit expenses in cities with a population exceeding 50,000. The permitted uses include planning, engineering design, technical studies, and bus and rail capital investments.

Following the 2000 Census, Avondale was designated as a distinct, Small Urbanized Area (UZA) (along with neighboring communities) as its population exceeded 50,000 residents. As such, the new Small UZA became eligible for its own share of Section 5307 funding, directly from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). As a Small UZA, Avondale is able to expend Section 5307 funding for service operating costs. Since shortly after Census 2000, the UZA has worked in partnership with City of Phoenix to expend its eligible Section 5307 funding, primarily for funding regional bus service to the West Valley, including service to Avondale.

With the coming revisions following the 2010 Census, it is likely that Avondale will become a part of the larger Phoenix Urbanized Area, rather than a separate smaller urbanized area. If this change occurs, the small UZA that includes Avondale would no longer receive its own Section 5307 apportionment. If this were to occur, Avondale would no longer be able to use Section 5307 funding for operations, per current regulations. Instead any city program would have to compete for funding among all eligible programs in the entire Phoenix UZA. Consequently, it is unlikely that any monies from this source would be available to contribute significantly to a sustainable funding approach for a transit circulator program.

In an effort to avoid interruption of transit services, Avondale has requested transitional operating funding from FTA for three years worth of service. This request is based on the time anticipated for the 2010 Census to be completed and Avondale to determine other sources for operating funds.

Local Transportation Assistance Fund II Funding

Avondale has historically received LTAF II funding from the State of Arizona. Jurisdictions receiving \$2,500 or more must use the funding for public transportation purposes only, and must provide a documented, 25 percent local match contribution. In the current fiscal year, Avondale received over \$106,000 in LTAF II funding.

With the recent elimination of LTAF II distribution the by the State of Arizona, Avondale will no longer have the over \$100,000 it received in past years available to support transit services. If and when LTAF II monies are again available, Avondale could consider using all or part of such monies to fund transit circulator operational costs.

Regional Transportation Excise (Sales) Tax Monies

The passage of the Proposition 400 (Prop 400) in 2004 authorized a 20-year extension of the region's existing half-cent sales tax for regional, multimodal transportation improvements. Revenues collected from the half-cent sales tax are deposited into the Regional Area Road Fund (RARF) for freeway/highway and arterial street projects and into the Public Transportation Fund (PTF) for public transit programs and projects. However, Prop 400 monies are fully allocated at this time. Additional revenue would have to be generated to allow for additional programs to receive funding.

The downturn of the economy has resulted in a reduction of revenues and has affected the amount of funding deposited into the RARF and PTF. Consequently, it is unlikely that any monies from this source will be available to contribute significantly to a sustainable funding approach for a transit circulator program.

3.6.3.4 Availability of Local Funding from Existing Sources

This section discusses the availability of existing local funding sources to support the estimated annualized operating costs of a transit circulator. These sources include:

- a share of the 0.5 percent Dedicated Sales Tax monies
- local General Fund transfers; and
- miscellaneous other local sources.

Avondale 0.5 Percent Dedicated Sales Tax

Like most cities in Arizona (and the State as well), Avondale has experienced a significant slowing of revenue collections, especially revenues that reflect economic activity, such as the sales tax. The estimated levels of city sales tax collections for the current fiscal year (FY 2009-10) are substantially lower than the collections a few years ago.

Actual collections in FY 2006-07 from the 0.5 percent Dedicated Sales Tax were over \$7 million. The projected level of collections from that same tax in the current year is only \$5.7 million. Furthermore, the City is projecting that collections will remain at about the current levels for several years to come. The existing cap that limits the imposition of the sales tax to only the first \$5,000 of any single purchase also constrains the amount of collections.

Although the revenues collected from the 0.5 percent Dedicated Sales Tax can be used for Transportation Purposes, including transit expenses, a substantial portion of those revenues are transferred to the Debt Service funds and used to repay previously incurred obligations. As such, those amounts are currently not available and can not be used to fund new initiatives, at least until the obligations are completely repaid, or other sources are identified for such repayments. Additionally, it is anticipated that approximately \$480,000 of the revenues from the 0.5 percent Dedicated Sales Tax will have to be transferred to the Transit Fund to offset the loss of previous General Fund transfers.

In summary, given current and expected collections from the 0.5 percent Dedicated Sales Tax, it is unlikely that any monies from this source would be available to contribute significantly to a sustainable funding approach for a transit circulator program.

Avondale General Fund Transfers

Similar slowing in revenues from the Avondale's general sales tax that supports the General Fund have forced strict budgetary constraints and limit funding of new initiatives. Given the current economic forecast for the region, such budgetary constraints are also likely to continue for several years to come.

The situation in the General Fund directly impacts the availability of funding for transit operations, including a potential circulator, as previous transfers from the Avondale's General Fund to the Transit Fund will likely be eliminated as those funds are required to preserve necessary General Fund activities. In the current fiscal year, over \$481,000 was transferred from the General Fund to the Transit Fund.

In summary, given current and expected tax collections for the City's General Fund, it is not expected that any monies from this source would be available to contribute significantly to a sustainable funding approach for a transit circulator program. Additionally, removing the existing sales tax cap from purchased items over \$5,000 would likely help to provide increased revenue to the General Fund.

Miscellaneous other Local Sources

Several other locally generated sources of revenue may be able to make a small contribution toward funding the operating costs of a transit circulator. These include advertising revenues from signage on vehicles, shelters, and benches and fare box revenues from the circulator itself. It is unlikely that any such sources would make a significant contribution to a sustainable funding approach for a transit circulator program.

3.6.4 Funding Strategy

Given the constraints of federal, state, and local funding from existing sources, it is likely that a new tax source would need to be identified to provide the desired sustainable funding approach for a transit circulator program. The most likely source of sustainable funding is a dedicated local sales tax, either as a stand alone tax or as a component of an increased 0.5 percent Dedicated Sales Tax.

3.6.4.1 Dedicated Sales Tax

Several other cities in Arizona have successfully enacted dedicated sales taxes to support local transit programs. Table 3-5 illustrates the estimated range of local sales tax rates required to fund each of the conceptual transit circulator alternatives, with Alternative 2B selected as the recommended Pilot Route.

The high and low mid-points of the range of the costs of the alternative circulator routes described in the preceding sections are illustrated.

Additionally, the sales tax rates required to provide collections 25 percent greater than the estimated midpoints are also included. The estimated rates are based on the projected FY 2009/10 collections of the Dedicated 0.5 percent Sales Tax listed in the City's published "Annual Budget and Financial Plan for Fiscal Year 2009 – 2010." The tax rates estimates will require updating as economic conditions and the consequent changes in taxable sales occur.

Table 3-5 Estimated Required Local Sales Tax Rates to Fund Annualized Operating Costs for Transit Circulator Alternatives

Alternative	Mid-Point of Annualized Cost Range	Required Sales Tax Rate Range	Mid-Point of Annualized Cost Range PLUS 25%	Required Sales Tax Rate Range
1	\$1,290,000	0.09 - 0.14%	\$1,612,500	0.11 - 0.17%
2a	\$770,000	0.05 - 0.09%	\$962,500	0.07 - 0.11%
2b	\$1,030,000	0.07 - 0.11%	\$1,287,500	0.09 - 0.14%
3	\$1,030,000	0.07 - 0.11%	\$1,287,500	0.09 - 0.14%
4	\$1,290,000	0.09 - 0.14%	\$1,612,500	0.11 - 0.17%

Source: Avondale TCS Team, 2010.

Based on the mid-point of the estimated operating costs for the recommended Pilot Route (Alternative 2B) and the current revenue outlook, Avondale would need an additional local sales tax of between 0.07 and 0.11 percent to meet those expenses.

However, given the uncertainties associated with a start-up service and the revenue outlook, a minimum of a 25 percent surplus of the estimated revenues from an additional local sales tax would seem prudent. Including such a 25 percent surplus, Avondale would need an additional local sales tax of between 0.09 and 0.14 percent.

Other Arizona cities have successfully sought voter approval for a dedicated sales tax for transit purposes. In most instances, a clearly delineated transit proposal and clearly identified costs were presented to voters prior to the vote on the sales tax referendum.

3.6.4.2 Other Sources of Funding Sources

Working Paper #3 – Financial Plan describes several funding sources that could be pursued to fund capital or operational costs associated with a transit circulator. These funding sources are identified in Table 3-6.

Table 3-6 Identified Funding Sources for Local Transit Circulators

Federal	State	Local	Other
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FTA Section 5307 – Large Urban Cities • FTA Section 5309 – Bus and Bus Facilities Discretionary Program • FTA Section 5310 – Transportation for Elderly Persons and Persons with Disabilities • FTA Section 5316 – Job Access Reverse Commute (JARC) Program • FTA Section 5317 – New Freedom Program • Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) • Federal Earmarks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surface Transportation Program (STP) • Flexible Funds • Local Transportation Assistance Fund (LTAF) II* 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dedicated sales tax • Private Sector Contributions (Public/Private Partnerships) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional Sales Tax • Business Improvement Special Service District • Advertising • Fare box Revenue

*Note: On March 18, 2010 LTAF II funds were permanently repealed by State Legislature
Source: Avondale TCS Team (*Working Paper #3 – Financial Plan*)

3.7 TRANSIT CIRCULATOR PROCUREMENT OPTIONS

Various options are available to Avondale for operation of the transit circulator service. Peer cities in the MAG Region operate their circulators using an outside contractor or operate their own service using city resources. Another option for operating the service is through an outside transportation agency such as the City of Phoenix or Valley Metro/RPTA. Table 3-7 presents the pros and cons of each of these options.

Table 3-7 Pros and Cons of Various Types of Transit Circulator Operating Options

Operating Options	Pros	Cons
Operated by a Private Contractor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simplifies city management and administration of the service. • Includes predictable costs. • An established service provider could initiate and operate the service with minimal direction • Puts Avondale directly in charge by dealing directly with the operator. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May result in higher long-term vehicle operating costs. • Procurement of vehicle fleet may take longer to order and implement. • Unless a maintenance and storage facility is provided by Avondale, daily transport of vehicles would add to overall costs.
Operated by Other Transit/Transportation Agency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An established service provider could initiate and operate the service with minimal direction. • Availability of back up vehicles and additional resources in case of service disruption. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Results in Avondale having limited control over the operation of the service. • Likely higher cost associated with this option. • Unless a maintenance and storage facility is provided by Avondale, daily transport of vehicles would add to overall costs.
Operated by Avondale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May result in lesser vehicle operating costs (if operation, administration, and maintenance can be done by existing employees). • Creates employment opportunities for Avondale (e.g., mechanics, vehicle dispatch, etc.). • Allows Avondale to have greater control over the transit circulator service. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initial capital costs and long-term operational costs could be higher unless support staff is in place. • Lack of additional resources and depth of resources if service disruptions occur. • Procurement of vehicle fleet could take longer to order and implement. • If service is unsuccessful, Avondale would need to address the staff and vehicles assigned to the transit program. • Need to implement a maintenance and operation facility, raising the costs of adding a transit circulator service.

Source: Avondale TCS Team, 2010.

4.0 ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

4.1 CONNECTIONS WITH EXISTING TRANSIT SERVICE

As previously expressed in Section 3.5, the recommended Pilot Route has an opportunity to connect to existing transit service, including Valley Metro/RPTA bus routes and, if the proposed expansion to Litchfield Road is considered, regional express bus service.

4.2 PICK-UP/DROP-OFF LOCATIONS

As Avondale designs and selects routes for the transit circulator, consideration should be given to where passengers would access vehicles. Several options are available for local circulators, as demonstrated by peer cities that operate circulators in the MAG Region. Stops may be designated through a typical bus stop shelter or a temporary sign. Avondale would be responsible for installation and maintenance of these facilities. Based on the number of activity centers along the recommended Pilot Route, approximately 15 to 20 designated stops could be implemented along the service line. The Pilot Route could use existing bus stop facilities along the Route 131 service line, which range from bus stop signs to shelters. Generally, installation of signs and benches could cost up to a few hundred dollars, while bus shelters can reach in the thousands.

In addition, rather than a select location where passengers may access the service, a pick-up/drop-off area could be designated where riders could flag vehicle drivers. This area could be designated within residential communities to provide convenient access to passengers, especially during seasons with an extreme climate.



Transit Stop in Old Town Avondale

4.3 INFRASTRUCTURE CONSIDERATIONS

Avondale's current infrastructure ranges from a mix of major and minor roads. Any improvements or route modifications to the recommended Pilot Route should be consistent with roadway improvement projects documented in the Avondale's current and future transportation and capital improvement plans. Safe vehicle, pedestrian, and bicycle access should be a priority when developing modifications or additions to the circulator service. Vehicle turnouts could be implemented with new road projects in anticipation of future circulator route extensions.

4.4 JURISDICTIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

Although this study examines routes primarily with Avondale city limits, additional routes could be established via a partnership with immediately adjacent jurisdictions such as Litchfield Park, Goodyear, and Tolleson, depending on the potential for ridership. This could benefit Avondale residents if the service provides access to destinations outside city limits and allow residents of outlying cities a reliable and readily accessible service to access destinations in Avondale.

4.5 MAINTENANCE FACILITIES

Consideration will need to be given as to where the transit circulator vehicles would be stored and maintained. Valley Metro/RPTA does not currently have any maintenance facilities within close proximity to house circulator vehicles that would operate in Avondale. Because new maintenance and storage facilities are multi-million dollar capital investments, it is recommended that Avondale avoids construction of a new facility specific to the transit circulator vehicles.

One possible solution is for Avondale to maintain and store vehicles in a facility within the city limits, possible sharing a maintenance yard where other Avondale vehicles are serviced and stored such as vehicles used by the Avondale Field Operations Department.

4.6 SERVICE EXPANSION

In addition to the identified Pilot Route expansion areas shown in Figure 2-6, Avondale could also consider establishing separate connecting transit circulator routes to provide service to additional areas within the City. The recommended Pilot Route leaves areas such as the northeastern residential neighborhoods and areas south of Lower Buckeye Road outside of the transit circulator service area; however, future development could warrant additional routes that could connect to the initial transit circulator route.

5.0 NEXT STEPS

The recommended Pilot Route and operational characteristics suggested would be subject to further refinement and approval by the Avondale City Council. The recommendation provided assumes full build-out of proposed activity centers, such as the mixed-use Avondale City Center, and establishes a schedule that presumes a full day of operation throughout the week (5:30 a.m. to 8:30 p.m.) and ideally service during the weekends (8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.). Resident needs and actual operating costs may result in incorporation of only a portion of the Pilot Route recommended in this report. Also, it is anticipated that Avondale will no longer be in a position to expend Section 5307 funding for operations and should consider other funding sources for this purpose. This Study

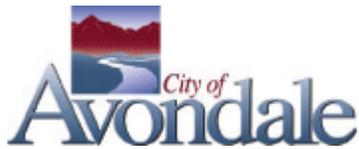


Estrella Mountain Community College Transit Facility

would provide good background and service planning components for eligible federal grant sources and could be included with a federal grant application process. If federal funds are secured for capital and/or operating components of the service, the project would then be included in the MAG TIP. However, it is more typical for local circulator service to be funded through a local funding source.

Once the initial route is agreed upon and Avondale decides to pursue a circulator service, Avondale, along with the City of Phoenix, Valley Metro/RPTA, and MAG, would need to coordinate on the availability and pursuit of federal funding, as well as local or regional opportunities. If Avondale intends to have Valley Metro/RPTA operate the service, the next step would be to coordinate planning efforts to determine appropriate operating and other issues including location of the maintenance facility, vehicle availability, and associated costs. Finally, capital and operating costs should be refined to implement the system based on the desired service level.





CITY COUNCIL REPORT

SUBJECT:
Youth Services Update

MEETING DATE:
May 17, 2010

TO: Mayor and Council
FROM: Gina Montes, Neighborhood & Family Services Director (623)333-2727
THROUGH: Charlie McClendon, City Manager

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this item is to provide an update on youth development programs and participation in those programs, and information regarding the impact Kids at Hope has had on the students at Canyon Breeze Elementary School. Chris Lopez, Youth Development Coordinator will provide a Youth Services Division update and Principal Jeff Byrnes from Canyon Breeze Elementary will provide data and testimonials regarding his campus and Kids at Hope.

BACKGROUND:

One of the goals with the inception of the Neighborhood and Family Services Department was to develop programs for young people in Avondale. The Youth Services Division provides positive development opportunities to youth ages 14 to 21. Numerous programs, events and partnerships have been implemented to provide youth with opportunities to develop critical life skills. All programs are created within a framework developed by experts to support successful youth development.

DISCUSSION:

Each program and event offered by the Youth Services Division is based on a comprehensive youth development strategy. The strategy is designed to assist youth with their development of the internal and external assets that they need to become successful and productive citizens.

Since becoming operational in January 2007, the Youth Services Division has created a broad array of programs and events that address each of Arizona's Five Keys for Youth Success. In the current fiscal year, the Youth Services Division served 1647 youth. The Youth Advisory Commission has assisted with the development of youth programming and outreach. The attached is a summary of programs and events.

BUDGETARY IMPACT:

Currently, salary for one staff person is supported through the General Fund. Other program costs are covered through grants and program sponsorships. During the current fiscal year, the Youth Service Division generated a total of \$294,702 in grants, sponsorships, donations and scholarships.

The cost of adopting Kids at Hope and its initiatives is estimated at \$4,500 per year which has been absorbed by the Neighborhood & Family Services Department existing training and Youth Services budgets.

RECOMMENDATION:

This report is for information and discussion only.

ATTACHMENTS:

Click to download

 [Youth Services Division Program List](#)

Youth Services Division Program List

Avondale Youth Advisory Commission – The Avondale Youth Advisory Commission provides local high school students with an opportunity to develop valuable leadership skills while providing a valuable service to their community. Youth Commission members provided the City of Avondale with input and recommendations regarding issues affecting youth. Members also conduct a number of service learning projects throughout the year. Projects include: The Voice of Youth Teen Summit, Global Youth Service Day and a Holiday Food Drive Challenge. Members also participate in several leadership development conferences each year.

Next STEP (Summer Teen Employment Program) - is a work readiness program for youth ages 16 – 21. This program is supported by Community Development Block Grant public service funds. The program provides work readiness workshops, paid work experience within City departments and up to \$1,500 for college tuition.

Voice of Youth Teen Summit - is a one-day event that provides life-skill workshops to approximately 100 local teens. Each year members of the Avondale Youth Advisory Commission discuss the most current and challenging issues faced by youth. Youth Commission members work together to assess the issues and design an exciting one day event to provide teens with the information needed for success.

Global Youth Service Day - is a project sponsored and steered by the Avondale Youth Advisory Commission that gives students from local high schools an opportunity to serve their community through a clean up project at the Tres Rios Wetlands area. During the event, project participants removed trash, dry brush, tires, scrap metal and graffiti. This project engages over 75 high school students each year.

Avondale Young Families Program - is a comprehensive program designed to improve teen pregnancy outcomes, decrease infant mortality, reduce teen pregnancy rates, and increase father involvement. Participants in this program attend educational workshops and receive case management and referrals to health care programs and much more. Program staff work closely with the high schools and receive the majority of referrals through relationships with school counselors, teachers and principals.

Project REAL - (Recreation, Education, Art and Leadership) is an after school youth development program offered at La Joya Community High School during the school year and the Tri City Boys & Girls Club during the summer. This program offers a safe place where students can develop leadership, social competencies and life skills. The program is geared towards engaging students who do not participate in traditional extracurricular activities. The Youth Services Division is seeking additional grant funds to expand after-school offerings to other high schools.

Avondale Family Education and Resource Program - The Avondale Family Education and Resource Program serves parents with children age birth through five years designed to provide parents with the resources and information needed to promote school readiness

and overall well-being. The Avondale Family Resource program strives to expand parenting skills, fortify the family unit and provide a foundation of early childhood education by working directly with families and connecting them to the resources provided at the Care1st Avondale Resource and Housing Center. This family friendly program includes parenting workshops, early literacy activities and emergency baby boxes.

Remix Mentorship Program - The Youth Services Division has partnered with Arizona State University's Rodel Community Scholars Program and Maricopa County Juvenile Probation to develop and administer a comprehensive youth mentorship program that addresses the needs of delinquent youth. Through this program, youth that are currently on probation are provided an opportunity to participate in a mentorship/service learning activities. The primary object of the program is to provide critical life skills, through positive adult guidance and service learning opportunities to reduce the rate of recidivism by the program's participants.

SPARK Group - SPARK is a free program is open to parents needing a friendly place to discuss the frustrations of parenting, to learn new skills towards effective parenting, and to develop supportive relationships with other parents. Workshops are provided through a partnership with the Maricopa County Juvenile Probation Department.