

State Route 347 at Union Pacific Railroad

November 2012

Prepared by
Arizona Department of Transportation
206 S. 17th Ave.
Phoenix, AZ 85007

In cooperation with
City of Maricopa
Federal Highway Administration



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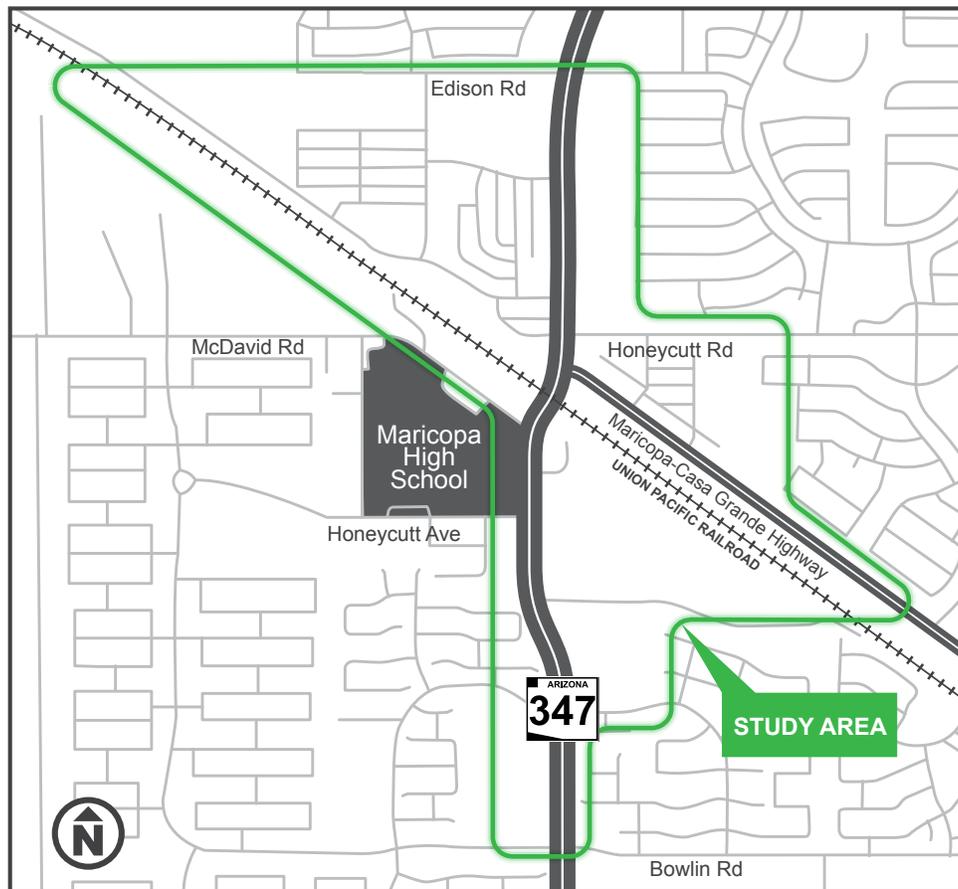
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1.0 Introduction

The Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT), in conjunction with the City of Maricopa and the Federal Highway Administration, initiated a study of the SR 347 at Union Pacific Railroad (see figure 1). This study will evaluate alternatives and improvements that would improve safety, access, and capacity and traffic operations through 2040.

Figure 1: Study Area Map



The first formal step in the design concept report and environmental study process is the scoping phase, the results of which are summarized in this report. Scoping is a process initiated early in a study that is open to agencies and the public to identify the range, or scope, of issues to be addressed during the development of engineering, planning and environmental studies.

The agency and public scoping meetings occurred on Tuesday, July 10, 2012, with the official scoping comment period from July 1 to August 30, 2012. The following scoping summary includes the information and presentations provided during the public scoping meetings, as well as a summation of comments received from participants and responses from the study team.

2.0 Agency Scoping

2.1 Scoping Letter

The study team prepared and distributed a scoping letter to agency representatives who may have an interest in the study. The letters were mailed on May 23, 2012, to 88 representatives. A copy of the agency scoping letter is attached (Appendix A).

2.2 Agency Scoping Meeting

ADOT and the City of Maricopa held an agency scoping meeting on July 10, 2012, at the Maricopa Unified School District Administrative Offices, 44150 W. Maricopa-Casa Grande Hwy, Maricopa, AZ 85138. The purpose of this meeting was to provide agency representatives with preliminary study information and to receive input regarding any issues that they feel should be evaluated. Individuals representing the following agencies attended this meeting:

- Arizona Department of Transportation
- City of Maricopa
- Amtrak
- Century Link
- Electric District #3
- EPS Group
- Federal Highway Administration
- Logan Simpson Design
- MSIDD
- Pinal County
- Southwest Gas

The agency scoping meeting began at 2:00 p.m. and included a formal presentation, followed by a discussion session. The presentation provided an overview of the study purpose and objectives, engineering and environmental elements, study schedule and process, as well as an overview of the existing study area.

During the discussion session, agency representatives were able to comment on the study and the information presented. In addition, contact information was provided for agency representatives to continue providing input.

2.3 Discussion Session

Following the presentation, each agency representative was asked for input on the study during the discussion session. The comments and responses are documented below in Table 1.

Table 1: Comments and responses.

Agency	Comment	Response
Pinal County - Greg Stanley	Noted that the “Previous Studies” slide in the presentation did not include Pinal County’s ongoing East/West Corridor Study. This project is evaluating potential alignments for a new Arizona Parkway to improve connectivity through western Pinal County (between SR 347 and I-10 south).	An Arizona Parkway is an arterial roadway that prohibits direct left-turns to enhance the capacity of the road (similar to a Michigan Left-turn roadway). Meeting participants were directed to MCDOT’s website and the BQAZ webpage (http://www.bqaz.org/azparkway/index.asp) for additional information on the AZ parkway concept.
Pinal County - Celeste Pemberton	Wanted to know which of the three alignment concepts recommended in the 2007 Feasibility Study would have the greatest community impact.	It was noted that all of the previously recommended alignments will be reevaluated and refined as a part of this study. Concept one was developed prior to construction of the new MUSD Administration Offices/ City Council Chambers. This alignment concept will have to be revised to avoid impacts to these new facilities. Concept two (as it was originally proposed) would impact the largest number of existing residential properties.
Arizona Department of Transportation -Ralph Ellis	Noted that historical properties and buildings will need to be evaluated early on, rather than in the middle of the environmental document.	Thus far the only known historical properties/features are SR 347 and the UPRR. More research is needed to determine if there are any historic buildings in the study area.

Agency and Public Scoping Summary

Agency	Comment	Response
Federal Highways Administration - Meesa Otani	Are other potential routes/potential crossings being considered? Inquired as to what the maximum population projection for the City of Maricopa was.	Yes, previous studies considered rerouting SR 347 around the City of Maricopa. However, no viable options were identified. The City is bordered to the north and south by the Gila River and Ak-Chin Indian Communities, which constrain available areas for new transportation corridors. A bridge under the UPRR was also considered to minimize impacts to the existing developed areas. This option was considered less feasible primarily because the current at-grade crossing is located within an existing floodplain. It depends on the study – The 2008 regional transportation plan (RTP) projected a population of 520,000 in the proposed design year. There are approximately ~12,000 entitled lots within the City limits.
Arizona Department of Transportation - Pete Mayne	Stated that ADOT ROW will be heavily involved in this project when it goes to construction (unless the no-build alternative is recommended).	No response required.
Arizona Department of Transportation - Danny Granillo	States that he is curious to see how many concepts will be considered. He felt that Concept 1 from the 2007 study is really not feasible in its current form.	WAPA facilities traverse east and west along the north side of the river and do not traverse north and south as APS, SRP and TEP currently do. The SR303L corridors will cross under their facilities as the freeway heads to the south. Future coordination will further identify any impacts to their current and future facilities.
Arizona Department of Transportation - Dana Chamberlin	Reiterated the need to keep 347 open during construction.	No response required.

Agency and Public Scoping Summary

Agency	Comment	Response
Arizona Department of Transportation - Tim Wilson	Suggested that the design team consider phasing opportunities that might include multiple bridge structures to help create smaller and more easily funded projects. (i.e. Initially construct a narrow, more cost effective bridge that would allow one lane of traffic in each direction to handle the existing traffic flows until the time that a second structure is needed.) This might open some options with funding, so that one could be built now, one later as capacity demands. He also counseled the design team to get detailed feedback from existing utility providers and the UPRR to make sure that their access needs are incorporated into the proposed design alternatives.	No response required.
Arizona Department of Transportation - Asadul Karim	Stated that the team will need to specifically reach out to the Ak Chin community to get information to them and hear their concerns.	No response required.
Arizona Department of Transportation - Lev Dertzhavets	Noted that SR 347 will still be elevated at Honeycutt road and asked if the team considered a bridge over Honeycutt Rd. This would require a corresponding loop access ramp for Honeycutt Rd. to tie into SR 347.	This concept had been considered and will likely be looked at during the DCR.
Federal Highways Administration - Aryan Lirange	Asked if a bridge 23'-4" clearance will be required over the entire width of the UPRR ROW (which is approximately 360' wide near SR 347). Reiterated the requirement that prevents FHWA from signing/ approving an environmental decision document without funds programmed into the Statewide Transportation Improvement Plan (STIP).	Robert Travis met with the UPRR to discuss this topic. The UPRR has tentatively approved a concept that includes a 200' span (with piers) over their existing/ proposed tracks and would allow some fill within their right-of-way near SR 347 (outside of 100' buffer from their existing tracks). This project is currently in the STIP but does not have any allocated funds. The City of Maricopa is confident that some funds will be allocated to the project in the STIP (for an initial phase of construction) before it comes time to sign the Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) and that the project will be ready to meet the FHWA requirements.

Agency and Public Scoping Summary

Agency	Comment	Response
Amtrak - Harry Steelman	<p>Amtrak recognizes that there is a problem at this site. However, there is currently no Federal or Amtrak money available to invest at this time. (This may change depending on the results of the November election.)</p> <p>Also mentioned that the Maricopa station is up for an accessible stations development plan (ASDP) review next summer. The purpose of this review is to determine if an existing station is ADA compliant and to make recommendations to upgrade a facility as needed. This review could lead to future funds allocated towards improvements to the Maricopa station. (It was estimated that the current passenger platform is too short.)</p>	Some of the alignment alternatives may require construction of a temporary Amtrak facility as a part of the interim solution.
Electrical District #3 - Derek Eastman	Stated that they are willing to meet any power needs that this project may have during construction. As a citizen, he was concerned about community access during construction of future improvements and wondered if this project could include other smaller at-grade crossings to alleviate congestion.	Additional at-grade crossings will not be proposed with this project.
Century Link - Ron Sprague	Until construction plans are final Century Link cannot really comment. They do have fiber optic lines within the study area.	No response required.
Southwest Gas - Jesse Gonzales	Stated that SWG has a gas line crossing the UPRR at SR 347. He was curious to know if there was an opportunity to add additional utility easements across the UPRR with this project. (At this time no.) He also wanted to know if there would be a plan to provide a utility corridor along 347.	Pete Mayne stated that utility corridors are common, and therefore it would be possible to add one in the future.
MSIDD - Brian Betcher	<p>Felt that Option 3 seemed like the best alternative to handle higher traffic volumes and wanted to know if that was a correct assessment.</p> <p>He also wanted to know if the Honeycutt Rd. /UPRR crossing illustrated in Option 1 was an at-grade crossing or another bridge?</p>	<p>While it was agreed that Option 3 would likely have the most efficient traffic operations and that this would be considered when evaluating alignment alternatives, it was noted that other factors will also influence the selection of a recommended alternative.</p> <p>UPRR and AZ Corporation Commission are not likely to allow an at-grade crossing. In fact the at grade crossings are being closed nationwide.</p>

Agency and Public Scoping Summary

Agency	Comment	Response
City of Maricopa - Steve Stahl	Stated that emergency response providers already have a difficult time getting through the existing UPRR/ SR 347 intersection. He strongly emphasized the need to preserve SR 347 access across the UPRR during construction as the public safety needs rely heavily on this roadway.	No response required.
Electrical District #3 - Kerry Umsted	Indicated that ED3 currently is working on a 69 KV project along Honeycutt Rd. and wanted to know what the proposed schedule for this project was. The improvements that they are getting ready to construct may need to be revised based on the recommended design concept.	It will be many years (±10 yrs.) before this grade separation is constructed.
Arizona Department of Transportation - Patrick Griffin	Noted that utility relocations take a lot of time for all of the agreement to be executed. The earlier ADOT can begin those coordination efforts the better.	No response required.
Arizona Department of Transportation - Mike Keys	<p>Suggested that this project may be a good candidate for the Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) project flow path. This allows a project to go forward and make decisions outside the NEPA process.</p> <p>When the funding becomes available, the NEPA process is ready to go.</p>	<p>Within the PEL process, an environmental document and corresponding decision is made with the NEPA process in mind. When funding becomes available, the documents generated during the PEL are used to “inform” the NEPA process of the results and none of the effort is lost.</p> <p>Brent Billingsley stated that the City of Maricopa has \$6 million in the budget for future improvements associated with this project. They should have funds available to go into the STIP in the future for the initial phases of construction and satisfy FHWA funding requirements.</p>

3.0 Public Scoping

3.1 Informational Newsletter

The study team prepared and distributed an informational newsletter introducing the study and inviting the public to provide comments. The newsletter was mailed the week of July 23, 2012, to 19,000 property owners, occupants and businesses within the study area. The newsletter was printed in both English and Spanish in order to meet the needs of the community. A copy of the informational newsletter (Appendix B) is included.

3.2 Newspaper Display Notices

Newspaper display notices announcing the public scoping meeting were published in the Maricopa Monitor (newspaper and online) and InMaricopa magazine. A copy of the newspaper display notices (Appendix C) is included.

Figure 2: Publication of Newspaper Display Notices

Publication	Date Published
Maricopa Monitor (newspaper)	June 26, 2012, July 3, 10 2012
Maricopa Monitor (online)	June 18 through July 10, 2012
InMaricopa magazine	July 2012 edition

3.3 Public Scoping Meeting

The purpose of the public scoping meeting was to provide an introduction to the study and preliminary information regarding the study process, as well as provide the opportunity for attendees to ask questions and submit comments. A total of 52 people attended the public scoping meeting.

The meeting was held on July 10, 2012, from 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. The meetings included display boards providing an overview of the study area, study background, engineering elements, environmental elements, and study process and schedule. At 6:20 p.m. the project team gave a presentation about the study. There was also an area for meeting attendees to submit comments. A copy of the display boards (Appendix D) and presentation (Appendix E) are included.

3.4 Website

The project website was developed and the web address was published on all informational materials. Public meeting information and project details were provided on the website: azdot.gov/347GS.

3.5 Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

The communications team developed an FAQ to provide general information about the project. This handout was provided at the public scoping meeting and placed on the project website. A copy of the FAQ (Appendix F) is included.

4.0 Scoping Comment Summary

During the scoping comment period, comments could be submitted in a variety of ways, by mail, telephone, e-mail, and online. A total of 195 comments were received as of August 30, 2012. A copy of the comment form (Appendix G) is included.

4.1 Comments Received

The newsletter contained a return form whereby citizens could write a comment and provide personal contact information to be added to the project database. Comment forms were also distributed to meeting attendees at the public scoping meeting. Meeting attendees were encouraged to complete and submit comments to the study team by August 30, 2012. There was a total of 111 mailed comment forms, 63 online comment forms, one comment form from the public scoping meeting and 21 e-mails.

4.2 Summary of Comments Received

Of the 195 comments received 164 (83 percent) requested to be added to the project mailing list. All comments were coded by topic and added to an interactive database. A quantification of comments by issue is provided below in Figure 3 with a summary of issues and responses followed below.

Figure 3: Comments received by issue

Issue	Comments Received*
Comments applied to areas outside the study limits	5%
Relocate Amtrak Station	23%
General Comments	30%
Supportive of a Grade Separation	65%
No-Build	4%
Environmental Issues	1%

**Responses may have included more than one issue*

Possible Options Outside the Study Area

Comments in this category generally focused on areas outside of the study limits. The response given generally stated that while there are other UPRR crossing locations for the City to consider in the future, this current study addresses the need for a bridge at ADOT's crossing of the UPRR tracks at SR 347. The goal is to develop concepts that maintain traffic on SR 347 during construction for the benefit of both local businesses and the traveling public.

Relocate the Amtrak Station

23 percent of respondents focused their comments on relocating the Amtrak Station. Responses thanked the commenter and noted that the location of the station is being evaluated as part of this project.

General Comments

Comments categorized as general included requests for information about other freeway projects, comments about the study in general or comments discouraging any study of freeway improvements. Responses generally thanked the commenter and provided a link to more information when appropriate.

Supportive of the Project

65 percent of respondents voiced their support of the need for a grade separation in Maricopa. Comments focused on economic development, population growth and general approval. Comments were noted by the study team.

No Build Alternative

Comments categorized as no build concentrated on loss of property and environmental concerns.

Responses to comments concerning the no build option thanked the commenter for their input and stated that the study team would be considering all options that were reasonable and feasible and this includes a no-build option.

Environmental Concerns

Of the comments regarding environmental issues, the majority were concerned with air quality and noise, particularly from residents who stated they are in close proximity to the railroad.

Responses to comments concerning air quality and noise stated that ADOT understands that these environmental issues are important and they will be thoroughly looked at in future phases of this project. For this study, environmental issues being evaluated include the potential displacement of residential and commercial properties, along with potential impacts to historic sites, traditional cultural properties, and floodplains.

Appendix A: Agency Scoping Letter



Janice K. Brewer
Governor

John S. Halikowski
Director

Arizona Department of Transportation
Intermodal Transportation Division
206 South Seventeenth Avenue Phoenix, Arizona 85007-3213

Jennifer Toth
State Engineer

May 23, 2012

<First> <Last>
<Title>
<Agency>
<Address>
<City>, <ST> <Zip>

Re: Federal Aid No. 347-A(204)A
ADOT Project No. 347 PN 172 H7007 01L
SR 347 at Union Pacific Railroad Crossing

Dear <M> <Last>:

The Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) is conducting a study to evaluate the siting of a grade separated railroad crossing of State Route (SR) 347 at the Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) in the City of Maricopa (City), Pinal County, Arizona (Figure 1). The study area is approximately 1.5 miles long and varies in width (Figures 1 and 2). The study area is bound on the top by Edison Road at approximately SR 347 milepost (MP) 174.0 and on the south by Bowlin Road at approximately MP 172.5.

SR 347 is a main thoroughfare for the City and provides access to the Phoenix Metropolitan area to and is a primary route from the Phoenix area to San Diego and Yuma. The UPRR currently operates two tracks through the City. In addition to the freight operations of the UPRR, the Amtrak Maricopa Station is located at the SR 347 – UPRR intersection.

The City is one of the fastest growing communities in the nation. As the community grows, localized traffic increases causing stress on the local infrastructure, especially roadways. Similar to SR 347, the UPRR corridor is one of the busiest trans-continental freight routes in the United States and is growing. The UPRR has recently added a second track, and up to two more tracks may be constructed in the future. In addition to the UPRR freight activities, Amtrak passenger trains stop at the Maricopa Station six times per week. When trains pass through or stop in the City, SR 347 is temporarily blocked. There are no alternate grade-separated crossings of the UPRR.

Appendix A: Agency Scoping Letters

Page 2

This letter serves as our agency's invitation to review the proposed project based on the scope of work outlined above. If you or others in your agency have any specific concerns, suggestions or recommendations pertaining to this specific project, please let us know. This may include information on future development, general plans, or capital improvement projects that would be affected, to name a few.

Please submit your comments or concerns by **June 25, 2012**, to ADOT in care of Nancy Shelton at Logan Simpson Design Inc. (51 West Third Street, Suite 450, Tempe, Arizona 85281; phone: 480-967-1343; fax: 480-966-9232; nshelton@logansimpson.com). Thank you for your time and continued assistance.

Sincerely,



Shannon Ford
Arizona Department of Transportation
Environmental Planning Group

Enclosures: Figure 1. State Map
Figure 2. Project Vicinity Map

c: Nancy Shelton, Logan Simpson Design Inc.

Appendix A: Agency Scoping Letter

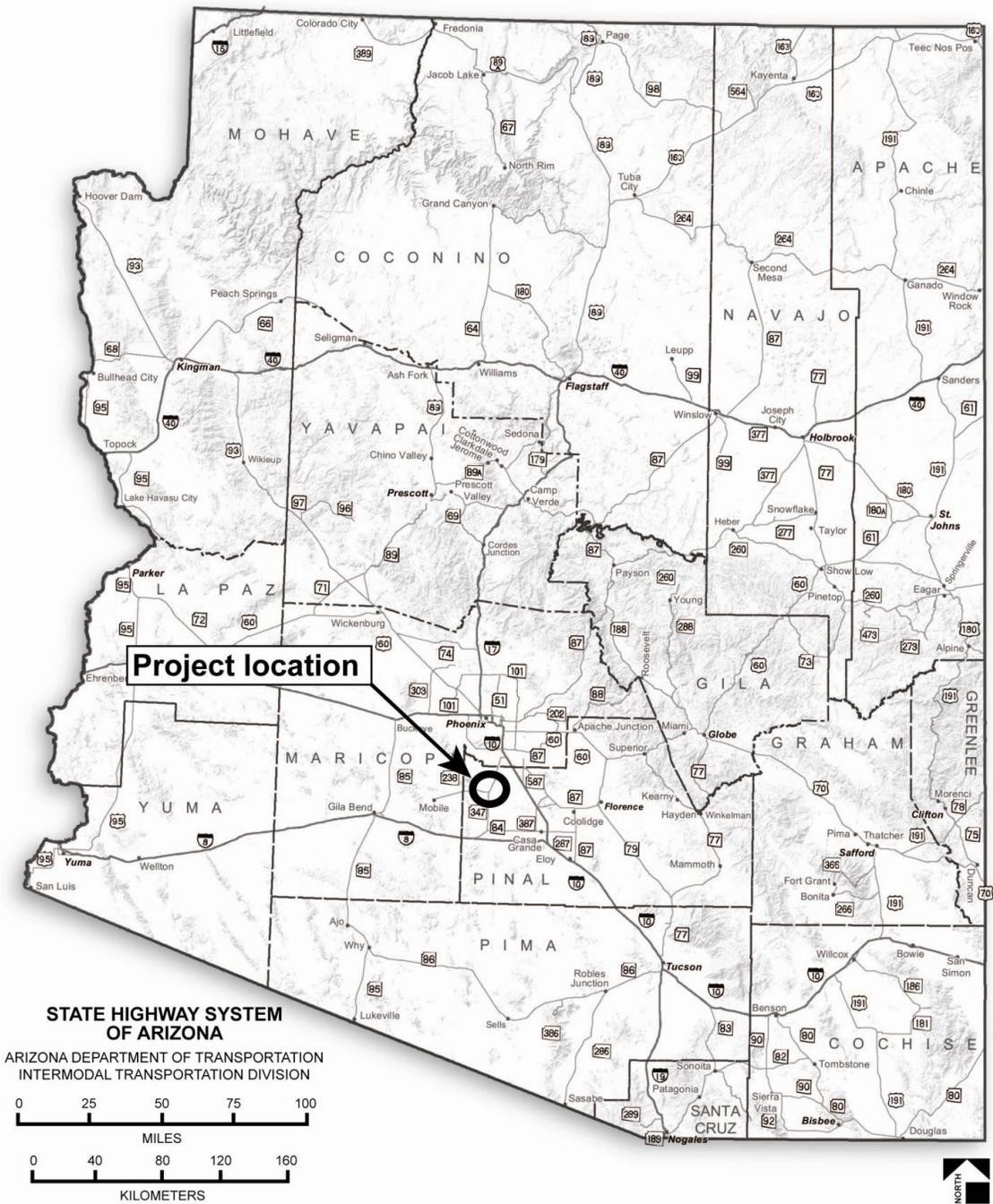


Figure 1. State Location

Federal Aid No. 347-A(204)A
ADOT Project No. 347 PN 172 H7007 01L
SR 347 at Union Pacific Railroad Crossing

Appendix A: Agency Scoping Letter



Source: Land Ownership GIS Coverage provided by Arizona State Land Department
Arizona Transportation Information System GIS Coverage (2007)

Key

- Ak-Chin Indian Reservation
- Arizona State Land Department
- Private Land



Figure 2. Study Area Vicinity

Federal Aid No. 347-A(204)A
 ADOT Project No. 347 PN 172 H7007 01L
 SR 347 at Union Pacific Railroad Crossing

Appendix B: Informational Newsletter

State Route 347 at Union Pacific Railroad
DESIGN, CONCEPT REPORT AND ENVIRONMENTAL STUDY

The Arizona Department of Transportation, in conjunction with the Federal Highway Administration and the City of Maricopa, has initiated a study to evaluate alternatives and identify improvements that would improve safety, access, capacity and traffic operations through 2040. The study will evaluate alternatives, including a grade separation, to replace the existing at-grade intersection of SR 347 at the Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) track.

PROJECT INFORMATION: The SR 347 Maricopa's main transportation corridor through the community, serving as a regional connector to major employment and recreation areas. Traffic averages over 69,000 vehicles per day. Just south of the Maricopa-Casa Grande intersection, the existing UPRR where there are currently 40-60 trains per day; the UPRR has plans to expand service, which would increase train traffic upwards of 100 trains per day. The existing UPRR station is located just west of the intersection and vehicular traffic is routinely delayed for its passenger operators.

More information, including a FAQ, project presentation and schedule, is available online at adot.gov/347GS. **YOUR INPUT IS IMPORTANT!** Scoping is the first step in the study process and is intended to inform and involve the public, agencies and special interest groups. During the scoping process, information about the project will be shared and the public is given the opportunity to communicate issues and concerns to help develop the project. Please use the comment card or submit comments online at adot.gov/347GS. All comments received by August 30, 2012, will be included in the project record.

SR 347 STUDY AREA / AREA DEL ESTUDIO



Información Sobre el Proyecto
La Ruta Estatal SR 347 es la ruta principal por la comunidad de Maricopa y sirve como una conexión regional hacia las áreas de empleo y recreación. El tráfico promedio diario supera los 69,000 vehículos por día y de acuerdo a un estudio reciente de la Ciudad de Maricopa, se espera que las proyecciones futuras de tráfico en esta zona aumenten a 100 vehículos por día. Al sur de la autopista Maricopa-Casa Grande, la ruta cruza las vías existentes de UPRR donde pasan entre 40 y 60 trenes por día. Los planes de aumentar el servicio por esta zona y se espera hasta 100 trenes por día cruzando en el cruce con SR 347. La estación de Amtrak también está ubicada justo la oeste de la intersección y el tráfico de Amtrak llegan a la estación y se bajan y suben los pasajeros. Para más información, preguntas más

frecuentes, una presentación sobre el proyecto y el programa del estudio, visite adot.gov/347GS. **Sus Comentarios son importantes!** El estudio es de la esfera de acción, cuando se comienza a planificar el estudio y se establece los parámetros. En esta fase, el equipo del estudio notifica y busca la participación del público y los grupos de interés. Durante este proceso, la información sobre el estudio será disponible y el público tiene la oportunidad para comunicar sus preocupaciones y comentarios. Por favor use el formulario de comentarios incluido en este boletín para mandar sus comentarios al equipo del estudio, o envíelos directamente al adot.gov/347GS. Todos los comentarios recibidos para el 30 de agosto de 2012 serán incluidos en el documento oficial del proyecto.

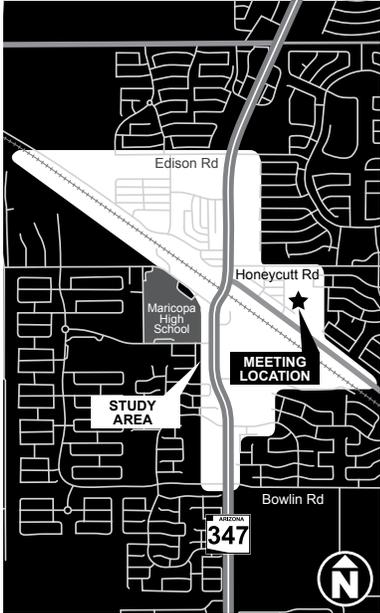


ADOT Project No. 347 PN 172 H7007 01L - Federal Aid No. 347-A(04)A

Appendix C: Newspaper Display Notices



State Route 347 at Union Pacific Railroad



Public Scoping Meeting

The Arizona Department of Transportation, in conjunction with the Federal Highway Administration and the City of Maricopa, is initiating a study to evaluate alternatives and identify improvements that will improve safety, access, capacity and traffic operations through 2040. The study will evaluate a future grade separation to replace the existing at-grade intersection of SR 347 at the Union Pacific Railroad tracks.

Tuesday, July 10, 2012
6:00 pm – 7:30 pm (presentation will begin at 6:25 pm)
**Maricopa Unified School District
Administration Building**
44150 W. Maricopa-Casa Grande Highway
Maricopa, AZ 85138

Your Input Is Important!

- ▶ Participate in the public meeting
- ▶ Provide your comments
- ▶ Visit the project website:
azdot.gov/347GS

If you require special assistance in order to participate in the public meeting, please contact projects@azdot.gov or 855.712.8530. Requests should be made as soon as possible to allow time to arrange the accommodation.

Si usted necesita ayuda especial para poder participar en la reunión pública, póngase en contacto con projects@azdot.gov o 855.712.8530. Las solicitudes deben hacerse lo más pronto posible para dar tiempo a organizar el alojamiento.

ADOT CITY OF **MARICOPA** PROUD HISTORY - PROSPEROUS FUTURE U.S. Department of Transportation **Federal Highway Administration** 12-160

ADOT Project Number: 347 PN 172 H7007 01L • Federal Aid No. 347-A(204)A

Appendix C: Newspaper Display Notices



State Route 347 at Union Pacific Railroad

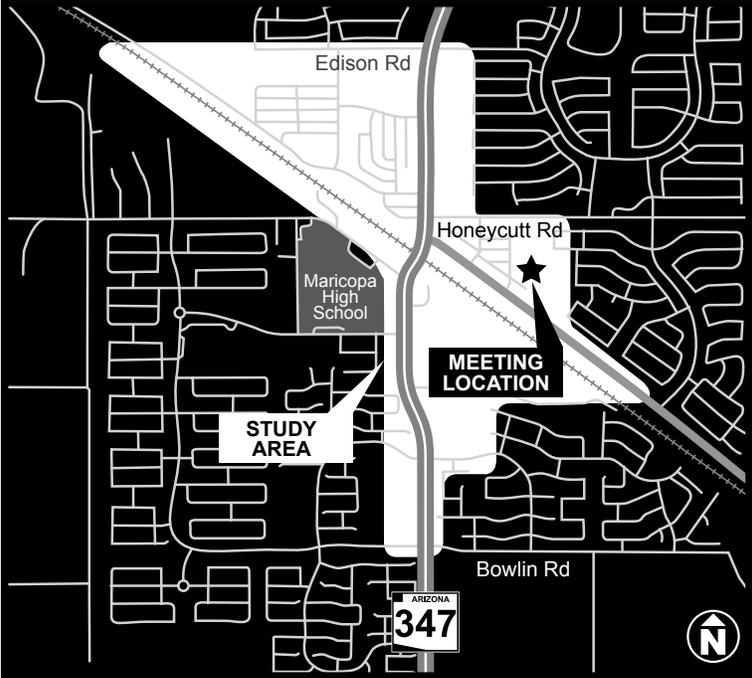
Public Scoping Meeting

The Arizona Department of Transportation, in conjunction with the Federal Highway Administration and the City of Maricopa, is initiating a study to evaluate alternatives and identify improvements that will improve safety, access, capacity and traffic operations through 2040. The study will evaluate a future grade separation to replace the existing at-grade intersection of SR 347 at the Union Pacific Railroad tracks.

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44150 W. Maricopa-Casa Grande Highway
Maricopa, AZ 85138

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12-160

ADOT  

ADOT Project Number: 347 PN 172 H7007 01L • Federal Aid No. 347-A(204)A

Appendix D: Public Meeting Display Boards

ARIZONA
347 | **State Route 347 at
Union Pacific Railroad**

WELCOME
Public Scoping
Meeting

ADOT **CITY OF MARICOPA** **U.S. Department of Transportation**
Arizona Department of Transportation Maricopa County Federal Highway Administration

12-162
ADOT Project No. **347 PN 172 H7007 01L**
Federal Aid No. **347-A(204)A**

Appendix D: Public Meeting Display Boards



State Route 347 at Union Pacific Railroad

What is a Grade Separation:

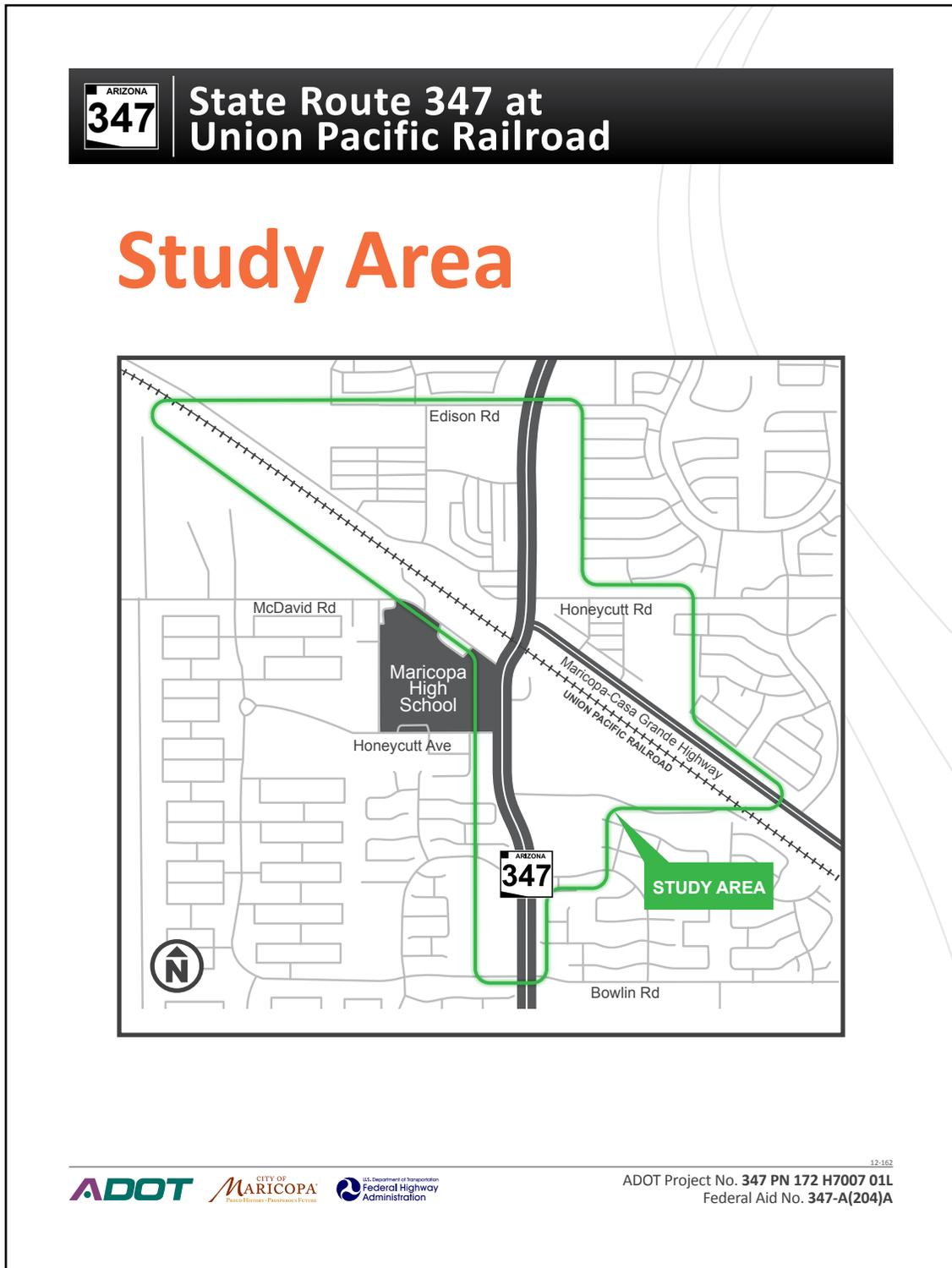
As it relates to this project, a grade separation is the method of aligning the intersection of the highway (SR 347) with the railroad (UPRR) at different heights (grades) so that the railroad traffic will not disrupt the highway traffic.

Typical overpass (I-10 in Casa Grande)



12-162
ADOT Project No. 347 PN 172 H7007 01L
Federal Aid No. 347-A(204)A

Appendix D: Public Meeting Display Boards



Appendix D: Public Meeting Display Boards



**State Route 347 at
Union Pacific Railroad**

Your Input is Important:

There are three ways to participate:

- 1 Participate in the public meeting
- 2 Visit the project website:
azdot.gov/347GS
- 3 Submit comments:
online: valleyfreeways.com/SR347GS
email: projects@azdot.gov
Return the comment form

12-162

ADOT Project No. **347 PN 172 H7007 01L**
Federal Aid No. **347-A(204)A**

Appendix D: Public Meeting Display Boards



**State Route 347 at
Union Pacific Railroad**

Su opinión es importante:

Hay tres formas de participar:

- 1 Participar en la reunión pública
- 2 Visitar el sitio web del proyecto:
azdot.gov/347GS
- 3 Enviar sus comentarios:
Por el sitio web:
azdot.gov/347GS
Por correo electrónico:
projects@azdot.gov

12-162

ADOT Project No. **347 PN 172 H7007 01L**
Federal Aid No. **347-A(204)A**

Appendix D: Public Meeting Display Boards

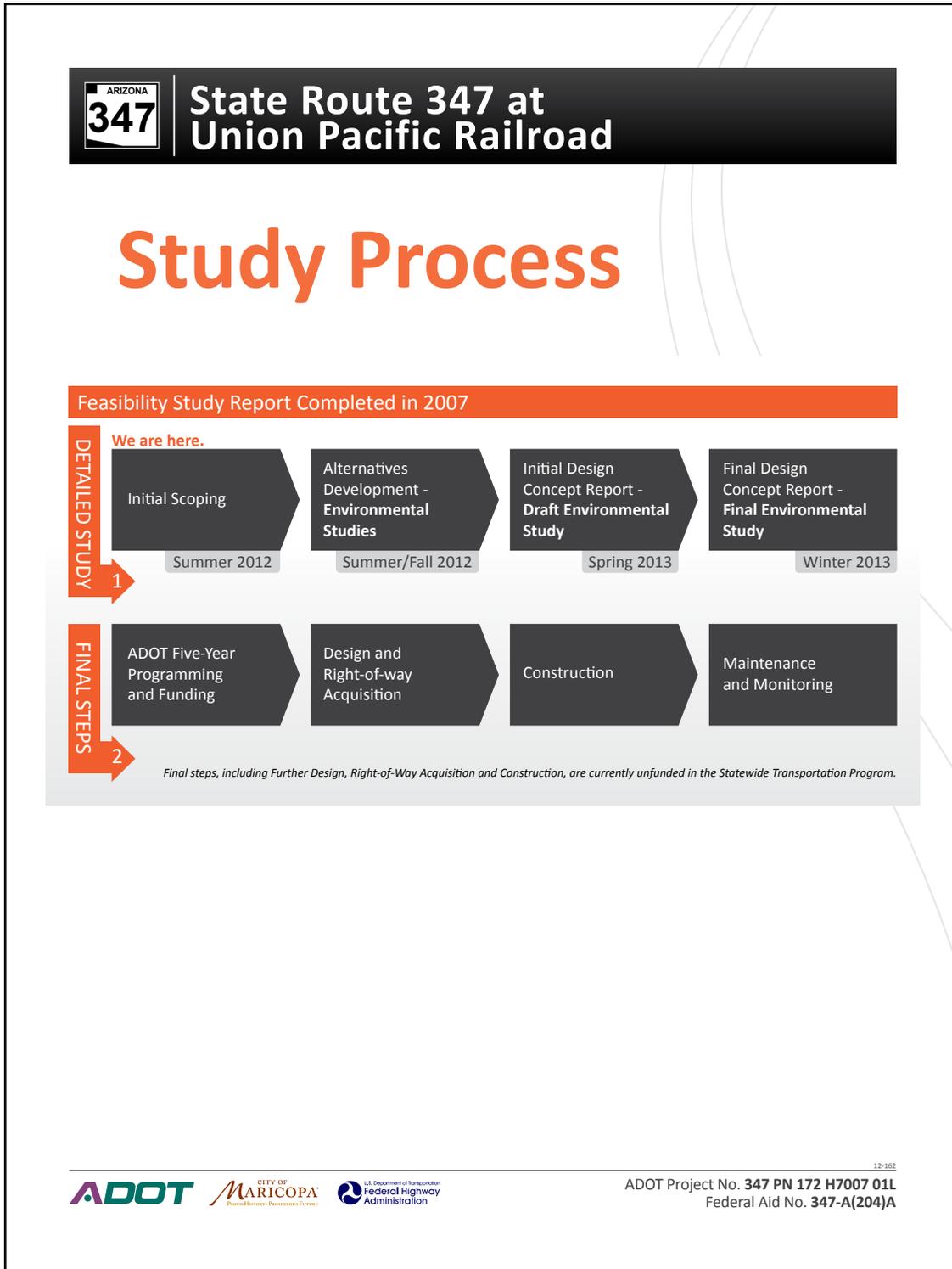


**State Route 347 at
Union Pacific Railroad**

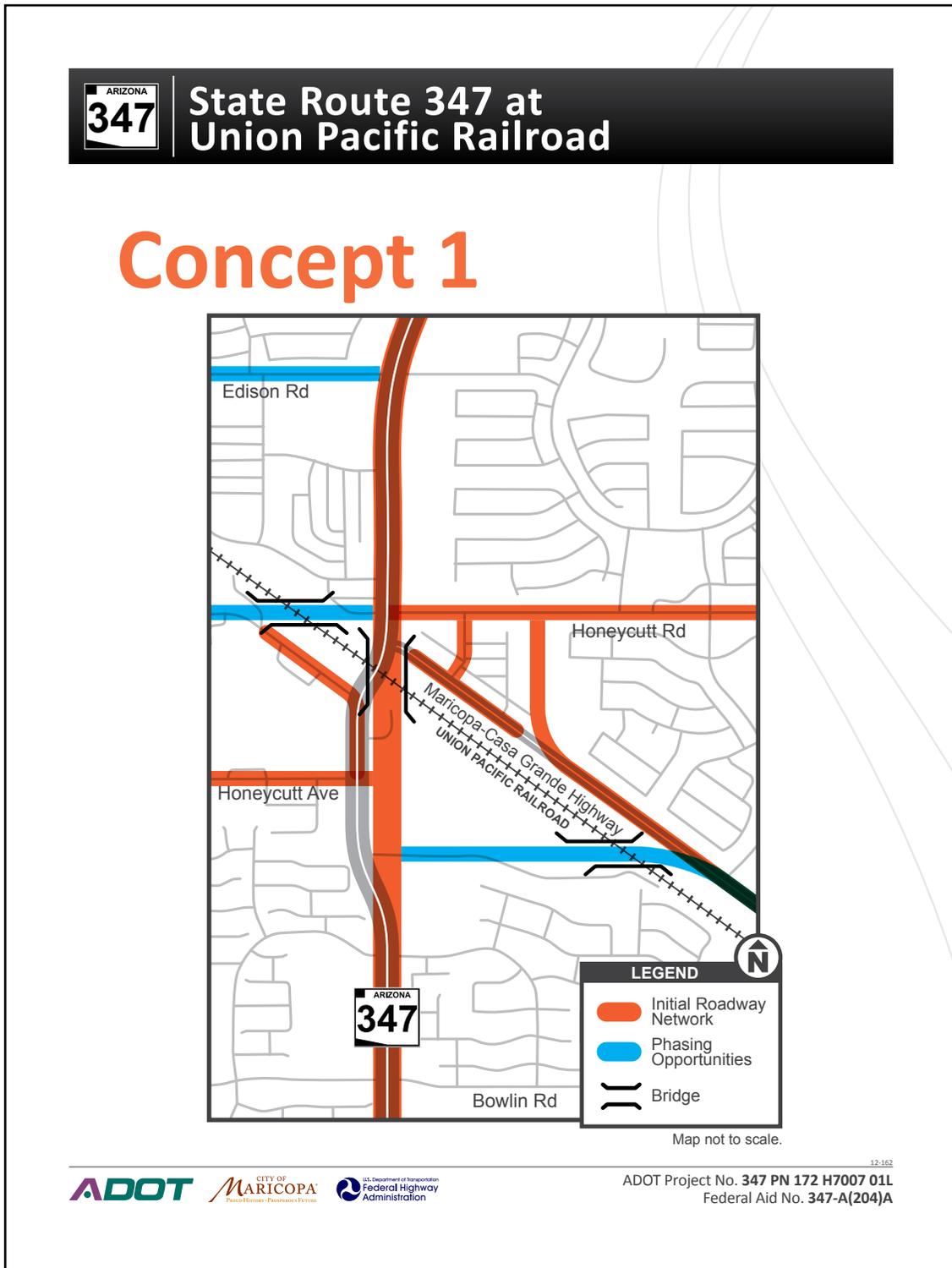
Purpose of Scoping Meeting:

- ▶ Scoping is the first step in the study process and is intended to inform and involve the public, agencies and special interest groups.
- ▶ During the scoping process, information about the study will be made available and the public is given the opportunity to communicate issues and concerns to help develop the project.
- ▶ At the scoping meeting, the public is encouraged to participate and comment in order to help guide the direction of the study, define project goals and objectives and identify issues and concerns.

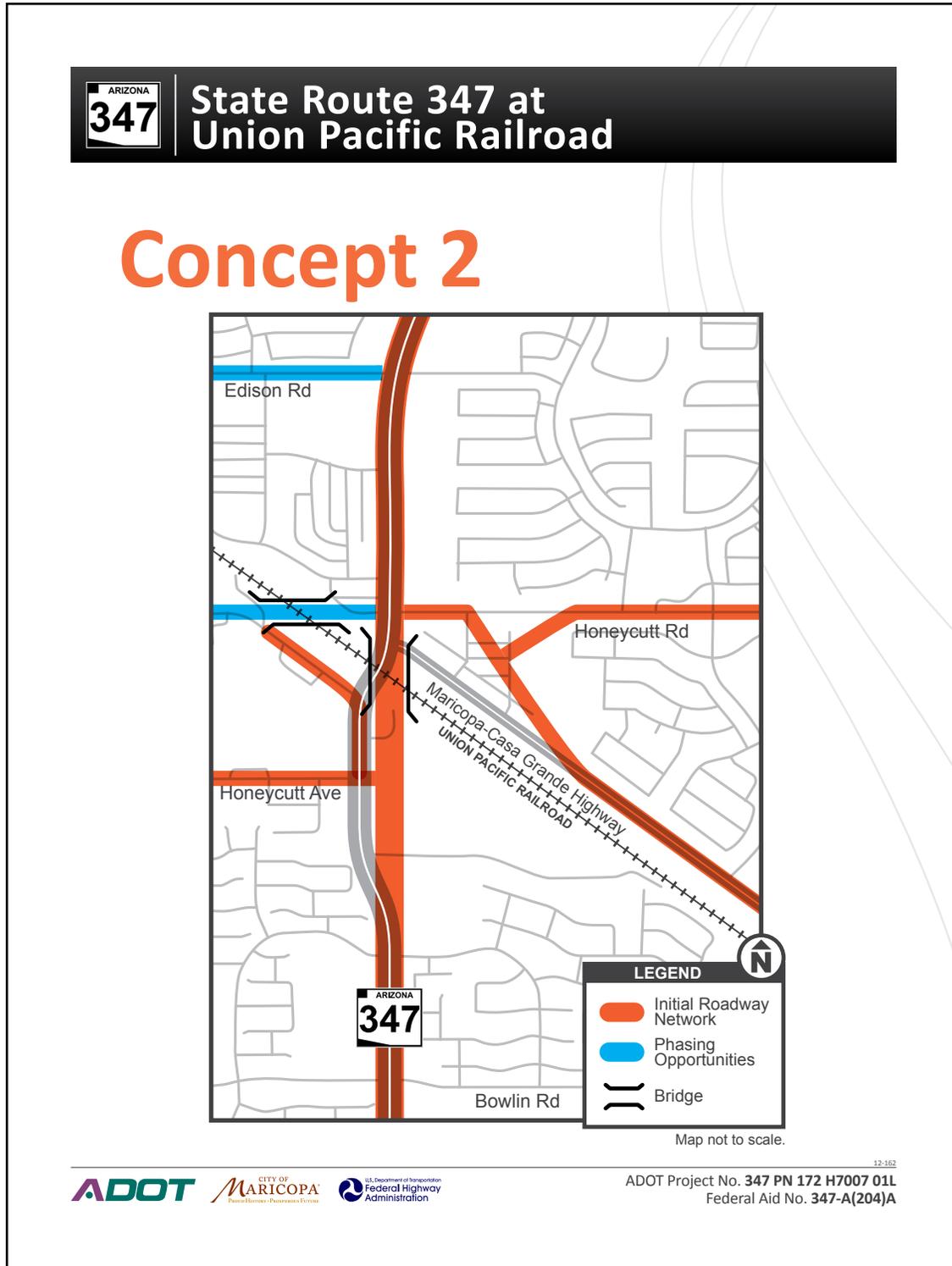
Appendix D: Public Meeting Display Boards



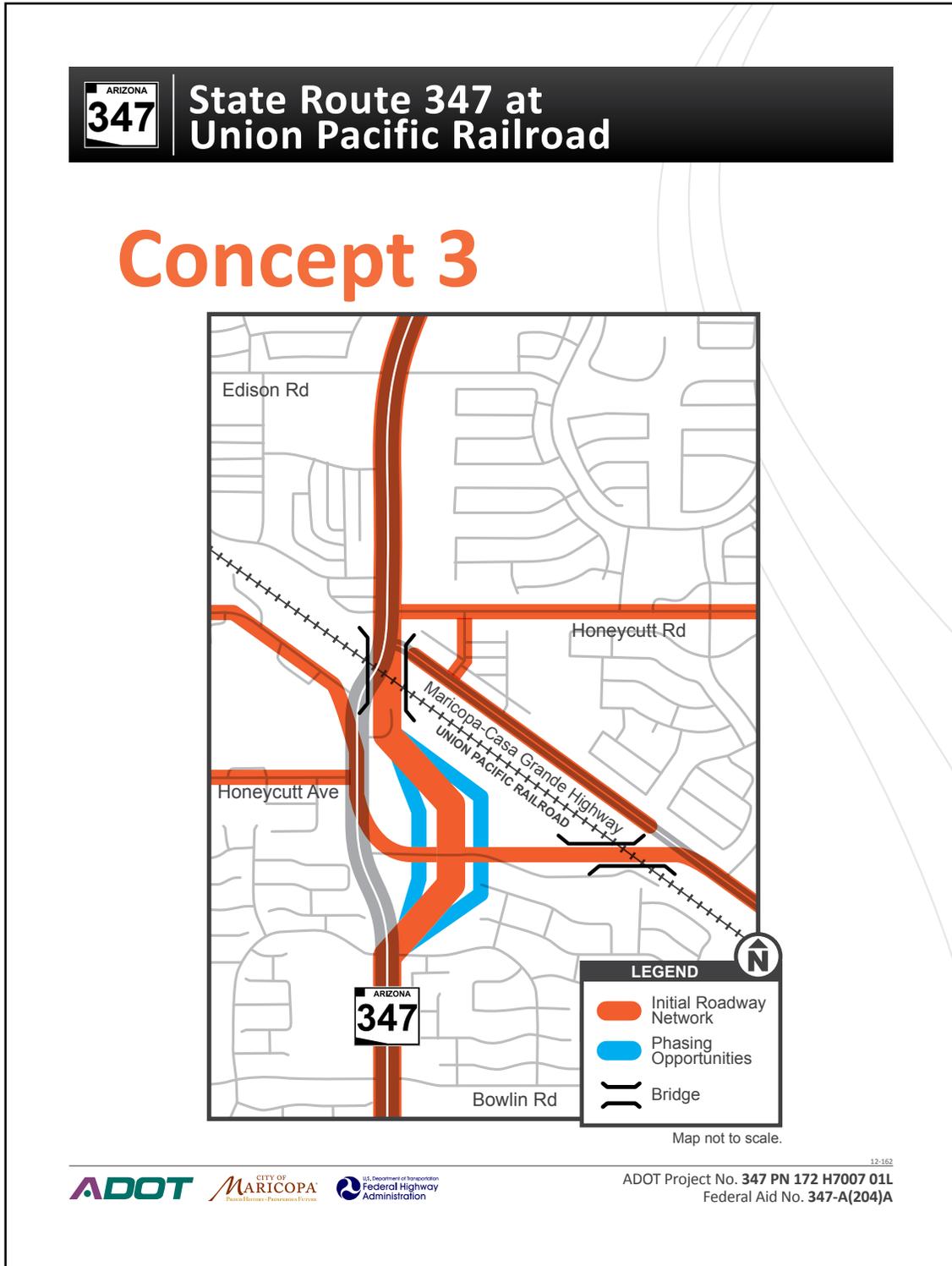
Appendix D: Public Meeting Display Boards



Appendix D: Public Meeting Display Boards



Appendix D: Public Meeting Display Boards



Appendix E: Public Scoping Meeting Presentation

**State Route 347 at Union Pacific Railroad
Design Concept Report and
Environmental Study**

Agency Scoping Meeting
July 10, 2012
Maricopa Unified School District Administrative Offices
ADOT Project No. 347 PN 172 H7007 01L | Federal Project No. 347-A(204)A



Welcome and Agenda

- ▶ Meeting Purpose and Format
- ▶ Study Area
- ▶ Project Purpose & Need
- ▶ Project Considerations
- ▶ Previous Studies
- ▶ Roadway Concepts
- ▶ Study Process
- ▶ Q & A



Purpose of Scoping

- ▶ Scoping is the first step in the process
- ▶ Provides the public and agencies an opportunity to learn about the study and identify issues that need to be addressed

Purpose of the Meeting

- ▶ Provide an overview of the study, the environmental and engineering processes and the project schedule
- ▶ Have a forum for the agencies to ask questions and provide feedback



Study Area

- ▶ UPRR and SR 347 intersection
- ▶ The study area is within the City of Maricopa
- ▶ The Heritage District surrounds the intersection
- ▶ The Ak-Chin Indian Community is one-half mile south of the study area





Project Purpose

The purpose of the study is to evaluate potential grade separated crossings of the Union Pacific Railroad tracks and recommend a solution that would improve safety, access, and mobility, and addresses congestion on State Route 347.



Project Need

The need for this project results from the following issues:

- ▶ Increased transportation demand
- ▶ Limited transportation capacity
- ▶ Safety concerns
- ▶ Transportation infrastructure challenges
- ▶ Operational difficulties due to the adjacent AMTRAK station



Appendix E: Public Scoping Meeting Presentation

Project Need

- ▶ The City of Maricopa is one of the fastest growing communities in the nation
 - Population has grown from 4,000 residents to 45,000 residents in the last decade
- ▶ SR 347 is the main transportation corridor through the community, serving as a regional connector to major employment and recreation areas
 - Daily traffic averages approximately 34,000 vehicles per day
 - Future traffic projections (2030) show as many as 69,000 vehicles per day

ADOT

Project Need

- ▶ SR347 crosses the existing Union Pacific Railroad, which is currently double tracked
 - Currently 40-60 trains per day
 - Plans for up to 100 trains per day in the future
- ▶ Amtrak’s Maricopa Station is located adjacent to the SR 347/UPRR intersection
 - Passenger operations routinely stop traffic for 20 to 30 minutes resulting in substantial traffic delays
 - May 7 schedule change potentially increases the traffic impact

ADOT

Project Considerations

▶ Air Quality	▶ Socioeconomics
▶ Cultural Resources	▶ Transportation
▶ Environmental Justice	▶ Visual Conditions
▶ Hazardous Materials	▶ Floodplains/Drainage
▶ Historic Properties	▶ Geology
▶ Land Use/Local Planning	▶ Soils
▶ Noise	▶ Threatened or Endangered Species
▶ Pedestrians and Bicycles	▶ Vegetation
▶ Recreation	▶ Water Quality/ Resources
▶ Property Impacts	
▶ Utility Impacts	

ADOT

Previous Studies

- ▶ 2007
 - SR 347 Feasibility Report/Environmental Overview
 - Maricopa-Casa Grande Highway Project Assessment
- ▶ 2008
 - City of Maricopa Regional Transportation Plan Update
 - Regionally Significant Routes Plan for Safety and Mobility
- ▶ 2009
 - City of Maricopa Heritage District Area Plan
- ▶ 2010
 - City of Maricopa Master Drainage Plan

ADOT

Feasible Concepts

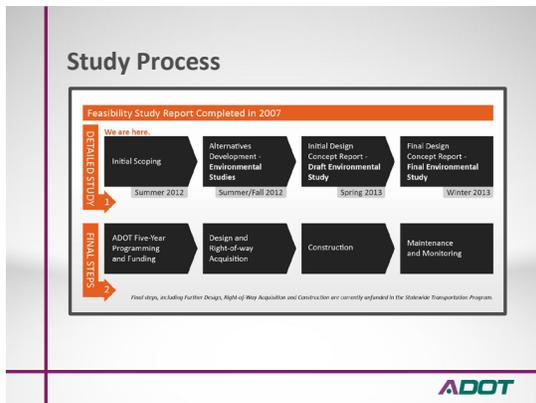
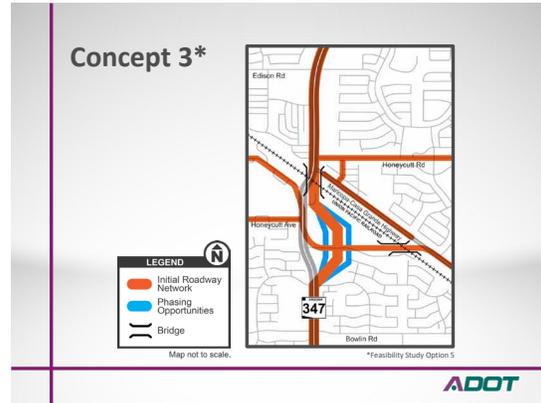
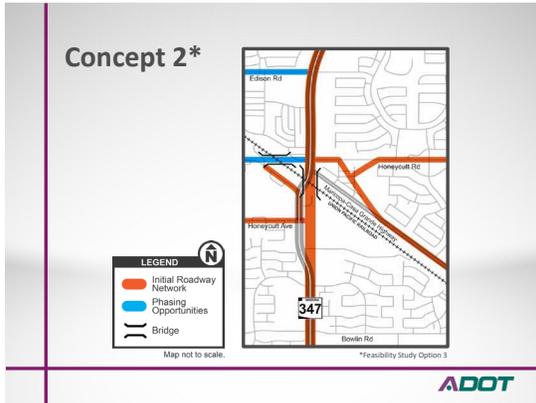
- ▶ Three concepts were identified for further study/analysis upon the completion of the 2007 Feasibility Study
- ▶ This study will analyze and refine the recommended alignments from the 2007 Feasibility Study and develop additional alignments to address the purpose and need
- ▶ Consider a “No-Build” option

ADOT

Concept 1*

ADOT

Appendix E: Public Scoping Meeting Presentation



Your Input is Important

Appendix F: Frequently Asked Questions Handout



State Route 347 at Union Pacific Railroad

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q&A

Q What is a grade separation?

As it relates to this project, a grade separation is the method of aligning the intersection of the highway (SR 347) with the railroad (UPRR) at different heights (grades) so that the railroad traffic will not disrupt the highway traffic.

Q What is the purpose of this study?

The objective of this study is to evaluate a future grade separation to replace the existing at-grade intersection of SR 347 at the Union Pacific Railroad tracks. It will assess alternatives and identify improvements that will improve safety, access, capacity and traffic operations through 2040. The study will also project how the existing at-grade intersection will perform in the future if no improvements are made, known as the no-build option. The outcome of this study and resulting recommendations will ultimately help determine what, if any, improvements may be constructed should funding become available.

Q Has this area been studied previously?

In 2007, ADOT completed the SR 347 Feasibility Report/ Environmental Overview. The goal of this report was to determine the feasibility of providing a grade separation between SR 347 and the Union Pacific Railroad while maintaining connections with other key roadways in the area. Additionally, the City of Maricopa has completed several reports and plans that have focused on, or included, this area: Maricopa-Casa Grande Highway Project Assessment; City of Maricopa Regional Transportation Plan Update; Regionally Significant Routes Plan for Safety and Mobility; Heritage District Area Plan and the Master Drainage Plan.

Q How long will the study process take? When will construction start?

Completion of this Design Concept Report and Environmental Study is expected in winter 2013. Subsequent steps include approval of an environmental document, identifying funding sources, final design, right of way acquisition and construction. However, further steps beyond this phase of the project have not been scheduled at this time.

Q Will right of way be required for this project?

Right of way may be required for any build alternative. However, ADOT cannot say for certain which parcels might need to be purchased until an alternative has been identified. Identification of right of way impacts will be evaluated with all alternatives considered in this study.

PROJECT FUNDING

Q How is this study being funded?

Funding for this study is shared equally between the City of Maricopa and ADOT.

Q If a build option is selected, how will the project be funded?

The Statewide Transportation Improvement Plan does not currently provide funding beyond the study phase of the project. The City of Maricopa is, and has been, designating funds each year to assist with future project construction. The source of funding for the entire project is currently unknown.

AGENCY AND PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

Q Will the public have a voice in evaluating the proposed alternatives?

Yes, an extensive effort is ongoing to keep the public informed of the progress of the study and to gather public input. Issues, concerns and opportunities expressed by community members will be considered in the study process.

Q How will public input affect the study?

Public comments are a vital component in the decision-making process and one of the many criteria used in evaluating alternatives. All public comments received will be considered, compiled and recorded for inclusion into the project's administrative record.

Q How can the public get involved?

An initial public meeting will be held on July 10, 2012, at which time the public is invited to learn about the study and submit questions and comments to the study team. The public can also learn about the project online as well as submit comments online at azdot.gov/347GS. Comments may also be mailed to the address below. The public comment period is from July 1 to August 1, 2012.

Mail:
Jennifer Greutz
Community Relations Project Manager
1655 W. Jackson Street, Mail Drop 126F
Phoenix, AZ 85007

E-Mail:
projects@azdot.gov

Hotline:
855-712-8530

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azdot.gov/347GS

Federal Aid No. 347-A(204)A
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Appendix F: Frequently Asked Questions Handout



State Route 347 y Union Pacific Railroad

PREGUNTAS MÁS FRECUENTES

P. ¿Qué es una separación a desnivel?
Lo que se refiere a este proyecto, una separación a desnivel es el método para alinear el cruce de la carretera (SR 347) con el ferrocarril (UPRR) a diferentes alturas (grados) para que el tráfico ferroviario no interrumpa el tráfico de SR 347.

P. ¿Cuál es propósito de este estudio?
El propósito de este estudio es evaluar una separación a desnivel para reemplazar el cruce a nivel existente entre la carretera (SR 347) y las vías del Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR). Evaluará alternativas y determinar las mejoras que mejorarán la seguridad, el acceso, la capacidad y las operaciones de tráfico hasta el año 2040. El estudio también proyectará cómo el cruce a nivel existente funcionará en el futuro si no se realizan las mejoras, conocido como la opción de no construir. El resultado de este estudio y las recomendaciones resultantes ayudarán a determinar las mejoras que se construirán en caso de que los fondos estén disponibles.

P. ¿Se ha estudiado este área en el pasado?
En 2007, ADOT completó el informe de viabilidad/ descripción general del medio ambiente de SR 347. El objetivo de este informe fue determinar la viabilidad de ofrecer una separación a desnivel entre SR 347 y la Union Pacific Railroad, mientras manteniendo conexiones con otras rutas principales de la zona. Además, la ciudad de Maricopa ha completado varios informes y planes que se han centrado, o incluido, esta área: Maricopa-Casa Grande Highway proyecto de evaluación, Plan de Transporte Regional de la Ciudad de Maricopa, un plan para las rutas de importancia regional para la seguridad y movilidad, Plan de Área del Distrito del Patrimonio, y el Plan Maestro de Drenaje.

**P. ¿Cuánto tiempo durará el proceso del estudio?
¿Cuándo comenzará la construcción?**
Este Informe del Concepto de Diseño y Estudio del Medio Ambiente se prevé que se completará en el invierno de 2013. Los pasos siguientes incluyen la aprobación de un documento ambiental, la identificación de las fuentes de fondos, diseño final, adquisición de derecho de paso y construcción. Sin embargo, otras medidas futuras no se han programado en este momento.

P. ¿Será adquirido derecho de paso para este proyecto?
El derecho de paso puede ser requerido para cualquier alternativa de construcción. Sin embargo, ADOT no puede confirmar cuales parcelas necesitan ser comprados hasta que una alternativa ha sido identificada. Identificación de los impactos de derechos de paso serán evaluados con todas las alternativas consideradas en este estudio.

Financiación de proyectos

P. ¿Cómo se financiará este estudio?
Los fondos para este estudio es repartida a partes iguales entre la ciudad de Maricopa y ADOT.

P. Si se selecciona una opción de construcción, ¿cómo van a financiar el proyecto?
El Plan de Transportación para el Mejoramiento Estatal no provee los fondos más allá de la fase de estudio del proyecto. La ciudad de Maricopa está designando fondos cada año para ayudar en la construcción del proyecto futuro. La fuente de fondos para todo el proyecto se desconoce en este momento.

La participación del público y las agencias

P. ¿El público tiene una voz en la evaluación de las alternativas propuestas?
Sí, hay un gran esfuerzo por mantener al público informado de los avances del estudio y para obtener la opinión pública. Temas, problemas y oportunidades expresadas por los miembros de la comunidad serán considerados en el proceso de estudio.

P. ¿Cómo va a afectar la participación pública el estudio?
Los comentarios del público son un componente vital en el proceso de selección y uno de los criterios utilizados en la evaluación de alternativas. Todos los comentarios públicos recibidos serán considerados, recopilados y registrados para su inclusión en el registro administrativo del proyecto.

P. ¿Cómo puede el público participar?
Una reunión pública inicial se llevará a cabo el 10 de julio de 2012. En esta reunión se invita al público a aprender sobre el estudio y enviar sus preguntas y comentarios al equipo de estudio. El público también puede aprender sobre el proyecto y presentar sus comentarios por el sitio web del proyecto (azdot.gov/347GS). Los comentarios también pueden ser enviados por correo a la siguiente dirección. El período de comentarios públicos es a partir del 1 de julio hasta el 1 de agosto de 2012.

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