



**Next Move Arizona
Statewide Listening Tour**

**Grand Canyon Area Focus Group
Meeting Notes**

November 3, 2025

Attendees

ADOT and Consultant Team

- Mike Kies, ADOT Strategic Advisor
- Dezbah Hatathli, ADOT Native Nation Ambassador for Infrastructure Development
- Rebecca Robinaugh, ADOT Environmental Planning Tribal Liaison and Cultural Resources Program Manager
- Jeremy Degeyter, ADOT Northcentral District Administrator
- Kristin Darr, Consultant Team Facilitator
- Misty Klann, Consultant Tribal Liaison
- Dillon Kennedy, Consultant Transportation Planner

Agency and Public Participants

- Aaron Anderson, City of Williams Public Works Director
- Greg Lightbourn, Valle Airport
- John Saltenstall, Coconino County Economic Development Director
- Miranda Baldosky, Canyon Community Alliance
- Norm Gobeil, Valle Airport Manager
- Robb Baldosky
- Tammy Ontiveros, District 3 Coconino County Supervisor
- Tim Pettit, City of Williams City Manager

Welcome

- Mike welcomed attendees on behalf of the ADOT Director and introduced the purpose of the Listening Tour: to understand unmet transportation needs, work toward a shared statewide vision, and identify how ADOT can prioritize projects that build upon each other.
- Kristin emphasized that the meeting was intended for listening rather than presenting and noted that the packet provided reflects what is currently included in ADOT's Five-Year Plan.
- Mike explained that although ADOT refers to it as the Five-Year Construction Program, it is updated annually as projections and funding availability change.



Discussion

- Priorities for the City of Williams include significant concerns about traffic and the aging and deteriorating conditions along SR 64. Drivers are often in a hurry on this corridor, and additional passing lanes are needed. It was also noted that heavy truck traffic continues to wear down the pavement along I-40.
- A past plan proposed adding exits at one-mile intervals along SR 64 and US 180, but the Valle community is largely opposed to this approach.
- Community members requested guardrail at the curve on US 180 approaching SR 64 due to vehicles running off the road near the Valle Travel Stop. ADOT previously determined the location did not meet standards for guardrail installation; however, there is a perception that safety concerns persist.
- Community members expressed interest in a Valle-specific strategic plan to guide future improvements, noting Searchlight, Nevada as an area for ADOT to reference.
- Suggestions for Valle include a roundabout at the SR 64/US 180 junction and a roadway cross-section with two lanes in each direction divided by a median along SR 64. Safe crossings remain a major challenge, and participants noted that improvements modeled after Tusayan—such as additional roundabouts and street lighting—would be beneficial.
- Business owners are hesitant to invest in Valle without clarity on potential future ADOT projects that could affect access, property, or business operations. Greater certainty would increase confidence in local investment.
- Participants noted that Valle does not need to resemble Cameron, AZ; some improvements are appropriate, but a fully developed streetscape may be unnecessary at this time.
- There are no crosswalks throughout Valle, leading drivers to assume no one will be crossing. The area also has many bicyclists on US 180 and SR 64, and pedestrians have been hit by vehicles on SR 64, underscoring the need for improved safety.
- Pull-outs and access points in Valle are short and create dangerous conditions when merging, and hills in the area limit sight distance, making it difficult for drivers to see oncoming traffic.
- SR 64 is viewed as outdated despite being a critical corridor serving Grand Canyon traffic, including buses, tourists, and caravans. Speeding is common, safety is a major concern, and more passing lanes are needed due to frequent close calls with potential head-on collisions.
- A pavement rehabilitation project on SR 64 from I-40 to 20 miles north is scheduled to begin next spring and is currently being advertised. The project will add some new turn lanes but does not include new passing lanes.
- Comments on modernizing the transportation system emphasized a multi-tiered approach that includes construction, planning, maintenance, enforcement, and education.
- There is a perception that the current infrastructure does not feel safe for motorcyclists.
- Participants highlighted the importance of stronger enforcement and public education efforts, such as targeted advertising, to encourage safer driving behavior.



- Although ADOT has implemented innovative pavement and freeway designs in metro areas, participants perceived that similar advancements have not yet been realized in rural locations.
- Valle is rapidly changing and growing, and without timely improvements the community may face significant problems in the future. Participants noted the need for acceleration lanes and roundabouts to help manage speeds through the area. While police enforcement is helpful, it is not consistently present.
- Participants noted that the last ADOT project in the area was in 1997, when US 180 and SR 64 were realigned and some lighting was installed. They emphasized that small, incremental improvements each year would help the community keep pace with changing needs and avoid the need for large, disruptive projects later, and acknowledged that past plans may no longer fit future conditions.
- Participants noted that roadway design affects driver behavior; people tend to drive as fast as conditions allow, and design elements that add friction can help slow traffic and improve safety.
- Participants emphasized the importance of designing infrastructure that can be improved over time without requiring major reconstruction and noted that cost efficiency matters more than speed of implementation.
- Many visitors are international travelers, and current signage is not always effective for those unfamiliar with U.S. road signs. Suggestions included providing better orientation for rental car users, enhancing signage with features like flashing speed limit signs, and exploring in-vehicle technologies to support safe driving.
- Participants emphasized the need to display critical information more effectively for international visitors through multilingual signage and radio, increased use of symbols instead of text, and partnerships with rental car companies to provide additional traveler information.
- Participants noted that with so much information available, it can be difficult for travelers to know what sources are accurate or trustworthy.
- Participants suggested that ADOT more effectively use social media to educate travelers and highlight enforcement efforts.
- Stronger partnerships with local businesses and agencies were encouraged, including opportunities to leverage Valle's role as a gateway to the Grand Canyon and enhance the area's historic character.
- Participants raised concerns about the lack of available funding and questioned how the state will address long-term transportation funding needs.
- It was noted that projects often struggle to advance without being "shovel-ready," which can limit opportunities.
- Participants discussed what a statewide visioning document should include, emphasizing the need for a clear outline of transportation needs to demonstrate their importance to elected officials.
- Highway 260 to Cottonwood was cited as an example of how roundabouts can effectively improve traffic flow and safety.
- Participants noted that electric vehicles are not contributing equitably to roadway funding and discussed the need for a more balanced system in which all users pay



their share. Suggestions included modest gas tax increases, exploring broader user-pay approaches, and ensuring funding is distributed equitably across all regions of Arizona.

- Participants noted that additional explanation of the sources of transportation funding and the Highway User Revenue Fund (HURF) would be helpful.
- Participants discussed tolling as a funding tool, noting that while it may carry negative perceptions, toll roads in other regions often result in well-maintained infrastructure.
- Collaboration and partnership were emphasized as essential, including aligning individual plans across agencies and jurisdictions.
- Participants questioned whether different routes should have different priorities, noting that high volume highways, or those that contribute economically to the state, may warrant higher prioritization.
- There was interest in building stronger coalitions among rural communities to ensure their needs are represented alongside urban areas.
- Ideas to support economic development included exploring ways to encourage tourists to extend their visits and recognizing that the economic benefits of the Grand Canyon extend far beyond the park itself.
- Participants identified several unmet needs, including potholes on I-40, narrow or soft shoulders perceived to pose safety challenges, and limited public transportation options. The region is also a “grocery desert,” and many residents feel constrained by the lack of transportation alternatives.
- Many people live or work in Williams, and carpooling was suggested as one way to reduce congestion. Participants also emphasized the importance of ensuring all communities are represented in statewide planning.
- There is growing recognition that regional needs exceed available funding, and participants stressed that new approaches are needed to close the funding gap.
- Participants emphasized the importance of continued collaboration with tribal communities.

Key Takeaways

- SR 64 and I-40 are critical corridors facing significant safety, congestion, and pavement challenges, with strong interest in added passing lanes, updated design, and overall modernization.
- Valle is rapidly growing and needs targeted infrastructure improvements—such as roundabouts, medians, safer crossings, and improved pull-outs—to address current and future demands.
- Safety concerns are widespread, especially for pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorcyclists, and participants stressed the role of roadway design, enforcement, and education in improving safety.
- A Valle-specific strategic plan is desired, as well as greater clarity on future ADOT actions to support local investment and guide responsible development.



- Rural communities want access to the same level of innovation seen in metro areas, emphasizing the need for ongoing, incremental improvements rather than waiting for large, disruptive projects.
- Improved communication and traveler information—including multilingual signage, symbolic signing, social media outreach, and rental car partnerships—would support both local users and international visitors.
- Funding limitations remain a major barrier, and participants highlighted the need for clearer understanding of statewide funding sources, equitable distribution, and long-term solutions for a sustainable transportation system.
- Regional collaboration is essential, including stronger coordination among agencies, local partners, rural coalitions, and tribal communities to align plans and advocate for shared priorities.