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All the Answers

Support is growing again in some circles for a proposed Interstate 11 that would connect Las Vegas and Phoenix, and possibly extend south to the U.S.-Mexico border and north to Seattle. Much of the proposed interstate would require improving existing highways such as U.S. Highway 93, but the freeway would require new construction. Supporters tout the proposed interstate as a job creator and say it would boost Southern Nevada's economy by making it a major transportation hub for the West.

Would you support a proposal to develop a new interstate connecting Las Vegas and Phoenix?

CLARISSA COTA



Clarissa Cota

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Wendy Albert



Tom Skancke



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Mike Schneider

Chairwoman of the Business Department, College of Southern Nevada

"Being from Arizona, I would welcome a much safer and larger connection to Las Vegas. There's been a lot of improvement on the existing route in Arizona that has made driving much safer and faster than it used to be, but there are still some stretches that are two lanes that are scary. I think it would tie a lot of rural communities closer to Las Vegas, and more people might fly out of McCarran."

TOM SKANCKE

Chief executive officer, The Skancke Co.

"Absolutely. Las Vegas and Phoenix are the only two major Western metropolitan cities not connected by an interstate highway. The growth in this region is expected to be over 110 percent in the next 20 years and an interstate highway is needed. Additionally, with the increased amount of goods movement that will be in this region over the next 30 years, an interstate highway is going to be needed for this region to be able to manage what will be moving through and to these two communities. U.S. (Highway) 93 would be required to be upgraded to interstate standards which would require some rights of way acquisitions as well as new construction. So the two states need to start planning now not after the growth occurs. We need a long-term strategy, not a reaction. The United States has been reacting to our nation's growth for the past 20 years ... it is now time to be proactive."

BILL GRANDA

Regional director, Paradigm Associates

"Yes, I think it would be one of the best things to happen in a very long time. It would open up a new hub and it connects Phoenix and Los Angeles. I think it would be great for tourism ... and it would create construction jobs. I am not for creating construction jobs just for the sake of it. But in this case, it makes sense. It would help with diversification, and I think that idea has legs, this time."

MIKE SCHNEIDER

Real estate developer, vice chairman, Senate Commerce and Labor Committee

"It does make sense. Canada, the U.S. and Mexico into the future will become more connected and more like one country. We will have a North American currency, like the euro in Europe. North America will have to look at that, especially when we start competing against economies that will be bigger than ours, like China or India. A highway will speed that process as goods move back and forth."

WENDY ALBERT

senior director of marketing, Miracle Mile Shops

"I would love to see a new interstate connecting Phoenix and Las Vegas developed. Not only would the project create jobs for Southern Nevada, it would make Las Vegas more easily accessible to one of our major feeder markets. Fostering travel in and out of the area helps Southern Nevada become a transportation hot spot, which ultimately benefits everyone."