

MINUTES OF THE
MARICOPA ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS
POPULATION TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

February 28, 2012
MAG Offices, Chaparral Room
302 N. 1st Ave, Phoenix

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE

Wahid Alam, Mesa, Acting Chair
Tracy Clark, ADOT
*Bryant Powell, Apache Junction
Eric Morgan for Charlie McClendon, Avondale
A-Andrea Marquez, Buckeye
DJ Stapley, Carefree
*Usama Abujbarah, Cave Creek
A-David de la Torre, Chandler
A-Mark Smith, El Mirage
A- Ken Valverde, Fountain Hills
*Rick Buss, Gila Bend
Leah Hubbard for Patrick Banger, Gilbert
Thomas Ritz, Glendale
Katie Wilken, Goodyear

*Gino Turrubiarres, Guadalupe
Sonny Culbreth, Litchfield Park
*Matt Holm, Maricopa County
*Molly Hood, Paradise Valley
A-Ed Boik, Peoria
Chris DePerro, Phoenix
Dave Williams, Queen Creek
*Bryan Meyers, Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian
Community
A-Adam Yaron, Scottsdale
A-Lloyd Abrams, Surprise
A-Arlene Palisoc for Lisa Collins, Tempe
Anne McCracken, Valley Metro
A-Diane Cordova, Youngtown

** Not in attendance*

A - Participated via audioconference

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE

Max Enterline, Phoenix
David Neal, Surprise
Jim Chang, AZ Dept. of Administration
Thara MacLaren, AZ Dept. of Administration
Abhishek Dayal, Metro Light Rail
A-Linda Edwards, Gilbert
Scott Wilken, MAG

Jonathan Donie, MAG
Jami Garrison, MAG
Anubhav Bagley, MAG
Shannon Acevedo, MAG
Jesse Ayers, MAG
Scott Bridwell, MAG
Jason Howard, MAG
Steve Gross, MAG

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 9:02 am by Acting Chair Wahid Alam.

2. Call to the Audience

3. Approval of the Meeting Minutes of January 24, 2012

Thomas Ritz moved that the January 24, 2012 draft minutes be approved. Dave Williams seconded the motion and the Committee unanimously approved the minutes of January 24, 2012.

4. MAG Committee Officer Terms

Scott Wilken said that MAG Regional Council had recently updated the policy for terms of officers on technical committees, like the POPTAC. He said that, previously, chairs and vice chairs would serve for one year with an option to be reappointed for a second year. He said that the new policy is that chairs and vice chairs will now serve for two full years.

5. State Demographer's Office Update

Jami Garrison gave an update on the State Demographer's Office (SDO) and Council for Technical Solutions (CTS) activities. She said that CTS is working on the state and county projections model. She said that in April they will participate in a workshop on state and county level projections. She said that the state and county projections totals should be available by the end of July, and that is where MAG staff gets the control totals for its projection series. She said that the SDO is working on a process for challenging population estimates.

6. 2012 Socioeconomic Projections

Anubhav Bagley gave an update on the 2012 Socioeconomic Projections. He said that MAG staff is working on finalizing the Municipal Planning Area (MPA), Regional Analysis Zone (RAZ) and Traffic Analysis Zone (TAZ) boundary datasets. He said that MAG staff is also working on producing base and build-out numbers, which will provide the two ends of the projection series. He also mentioned that, after the meeting, MAG staff would be conducting an in-depth workshop on the modeling system, Arizona's Socioeconomic Modeling, Analysis and Reporting Toolbox (AZ-SMART).

7. Regional Economic Update

Jonathan Donie gave a presentation on regional economics. He said that unemployment is a key indicator of the health of the economy, and is a big indicator on economic recovery. He showed a graph of the job losses and gains for every recession since 1948. He said that this showed that the nation's current recession has been the longest and has had the most job loss since World War II.

He said that there are four factors in unemployment rate: labor force, which is everyone over 16 years old and eligible for work; people who are employed; people who are unemployed; and the ratio of unemployed to labor force. He showed a graph of national unemployment rate since 1972, to illustrate the consistent peaks and valleys. He said that in times of recession, unemployment increases, followed by slower periods of decreased unemployment. He then showed a graph of unemployment rate for just Arizona going back to 1982 to illustrate that the cyclical trend persists at the state level, as well.

Katie Wilken asked what level of unemployment would be considered healthy for the economy. Jonathan Donie said that the best things seem to get is around 4%, and between 6% and 4% is typically pretty healthy.

He said that based on historic trends, the Phoenix metropolitan economy tends to have slow, steady recovery. Based on the recent unemployment numbers, he said, if the trend persists, most economists would speculate that the local economy should be recovered around 2016. He said if the trend continues to persist, we could see 4% unemployment around 2018, which is a good indicator of when the next recession could start.

Jonathan Donie concluded his presentation by showing a map of the contiguous United States, with information for the number of job postings per capita during the fourth quarter of 2011. He said that, compared to other comparable metro areas, Phoenix seems to be doing pretty well, having more new job postings than areas like southern California and Florida. He mentioned a handout that the committee received that included sources of information for unemployment data.

Thomas Ritz asked Jonathan Donie to repeat something from earlier in the presentation, asking what indicator he had said was at its highest level ever. Jonathan Donie said that the stock market is nearing its peak, and the national gross domestic product (GDP), when adjusted for inflation, is at its peak. He said that the GDP had recovered to its pre-recession levels about a year and a half earlier. He said that as the economy shed jobs, businesses became more efficient, and, therefore, the GDP recovered much more quickly than jobs did.

Ken Valverde asked if there was a trend that the maximum job losses occurred seasonally. Jonathan Donie said that the seasonality hides the macro trends, and that is something that is seen in every yearly cycle. He said that Januarys and summers are typically the worst, and in the peak of the recession, 2009, January and July were particularly bad for job losses.

8. MAG Land Use GIS Viewer Update

Jason Howard gave an update on the Existing Land Use (EXLU) 2010 dataset. He said that MAG staff has been working on this dataset for a long time, and have incorporated many of the comments from POPTAC members. He said that the biggest improvements from the 2009 EXLU are that they have improved the open space category and gotten a better understanding of agricultural areas. He said that they have also made some improvements in how developing areas are defined. He said that overall the changes are not too substantial. He said that the base of this dataset is the assessor's parcels dataset, and in that dataset areas of right-of-way (ROW) are left blank. He said that MAG staff wants to have a seamless dataset across the whole county, so those blank areas have to be filled in. He said for the 2010 dataset, they have a slightly different method for filling in these blanks. He said that for land labeled as "developing" in the 2009 dataset, has mostly been changed "vacant" if there was no new activity. He also said that information about arterial roads was added.

Thomas Ritz asked if, for the arterial roads, staff drew the line at major arterials or used a certain size of road. Jason Howard said that they used the mile grid and any street labeled as a major street in the County elections database. Anubhav Bagley said that this dataset has had major enhancements since the last update, including the streets, streams, waterways, and parks. He said that this dataset gets enhanced every time it gets updated.

Scott Bridwell gave a demonstration of the MAG GIS Land Use Viewer. He said that land use data has been added to the GIS viewer websites, maintaining most of the tools, and the look and feel of the previously released GIS viewers. He said that the Land Use Viewer will have two looks at land use information: the EXLU dataset and Future Land Use (FLU) dataset. He said that the FLU dataset is built upon the EXLU, adding in information from general plans and the

developments dataset. He said that anything in EXLU labeled as “developable” is overridden by information from the general plan or developments datasets. He said that there are reporting capabilities similar to the previous GIS viewers, and the primary information available is related to shares of different types of land use categories, for the county and for municipalities.

Wahid Alam asked if the land use reports are for cities’ incorporated areas, or municipal planning areas, including county islands. Scott Bridwell said that the reports are for incorporated areas. Anubhav Bagley said that a separate tool will have to be created in find the information for county islands. He said staff will send out an email to POPTAC members asking for suggestions and feedback on the viewer.

9. Data Collection, Review, and Presentation

Jason Howard provided an update on data collection and review. He said the review of land use documents is ongoing, and that this is an opportunity for member agencies to review what land use documents they sent to MAG staff in 2011 and send any additional documents that were not sent during the year. He said that the review of municipal planning area (MPA) boundaries is also currently being conducted. He said reviews of general plans and developments would begin within a few weeks. He said that a review of the major point databases, including hotels, motels, major group quarters, RV parks, mobile home parks, and apartments, would be starting in the near future. He said that the draft 2011 Employer Database is also coming up.

10. Greater Phoenix Rising

Shannon Acevedo gave an update on the Greater Phoenix Rising (GPR) website. She said that the project was a partnership between MAG and the Greater Phoenix Economic Council (GPEC). She said that the goal is to create a resource for employers and employees who are considering relocating to the area. She said it contains different types of information that can be used to give people information about the Greater Phoenix area. She said that the website contains information on demographics, education, and other information businesses might want to know when considering relocating in the area. She said that the information on the website is also downloadable for anyone who wants it. She said there is also a Lifestyle section for employees who are considering moving to the area, which includes information on things to do, attractions, and activities in the area, as well as drive times. She said that there is a Special Reports section, including a Technology section. She said, for example, this area shows where aerospace employers, high tech employers, and renewable energy employers are located in the area.

Wahid Alam said that the website is very simple, user friendly, and is also useful for people who already live and work in the area. He encouraged everyone to take a look at the website.

11. Building and Employment Databases Project

Jami Garrison gave an update on the Building and Employment Database Project. She said that this project was launched in September 2010, and is designed to acquire data to complement the Employer Database and Built Space Database. She said that it includes two inventory lists: the multiple location employers and the Building Landmark Inventory (BLI), which is an inventory of the major landmark buildings, like stadiums, malls, and other large landmarks. She said that in March staff will send the inventories to POPTAC members for their review and input.

12. Town of Carefree General Plan Update

DJ Stapley gave a presentation on the General Plan update for the Town of Carefree. He said that the town is predominantly a rural residential town, with 87% of the town residential and the average lot size between 1 and 2 acres.

He said that the update is being conducted in-house, as the town believed that a wholesale rewriting of the plan is not necessary. He said that they completed visioning in December 2010, and conducted public workshops led by the Planning and Zoning Commission throughout 2011. He said the 60-day review period began in January, and the town is currently taking comments on the draft plan. He said public hearings will be conducted in April and May.

He said that the goal is to apply the Sustainability Triangle throughout the plan, by enhancing social, environmental, and economic needs for each element without one need overpowering another. He said the draft plan enhances the land use analysis, and includes a wider range of environmental policies. He said that, even though a town of their size is not required to have one, they have added an Economic Development element to the plan. He said that economic development is the main target of the plan over the next ten years, and as part of that the draft plan includes an expanded vision for the Town Center.

He said that the biggest question during the process has been whether to maintain the status quo or go in a different direction. He said that the town has a desire to maintain its distinct, natural, rural residential character. At the same time, he said, the town has a desire to emphasize activity in the Town Center. He said as a part of that goal, they would like to make economic development a larger focus, expand the market area of the Town Center beyond the borders of the town, add mixed uses to the Town Center, and include more pedestrian and bicycle connections in the town.

He said that they process has had challenges similar to those seen in other communities. He said that encouraging participation in workshops was a challenge. He said that they used online surveys, mailings, and reached out to homeowners associations to overcome this issue. He said that the Town Council got involved, and came up with ideas to encourage economic development through capital improvements. He said that they want to make the Town Center more visible and a greater attraction. He said that the Town Center currently faces in on itself, and the draft general plan includes strategies to make it more of a destination for residents and visitors. He said that another goal of the draft plan is to simplify the plan itself, and reduce the need for general plan amendments.

13. Regional Updates

There were no regional updates from the membership.

14. Next Meeting of the MAG POPTAC

Acting Chair Wahid Alam said that the next meeting of the MAG POPTAC is scheduled for Tuesday, March 27, 2012 at 10:00 am. The meeting adjourned at 10:06 am.