

FINAL MEETING MINUTES
MARICOPA ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS
TRANSIT COMMITTEE

August 13, 2015

Maricopa Association of Governments; Ironwood Room;
302 N. 1st Avenue, Suite 200
Phoenix, Arizona

MEMBERS ATTENDING

*ADOT: Jaclyn Meli	*Paradise Valley: Jeremy Knapp
Avondale: Kristen Sexton, Vice Chair	Peoria: Stuart Kent
*Buckeye: Andrea Marquez	Phoenix: Ken Kessler for Maria Hyatt, Chair
Chandler: Jason Crampton for RJ Zeder	Queen Creek: Mohamed Youssef
El Mirage: Jose Macias	Scottsdale: Gregory Davies for Madeline Clemann
Gilbert: Kristin Myers	Surprise: Martin Lucero
Glendale: Kevin Link for Debbie Albert	#Tempe: Robert Yabes
Goodyear: Cato Esquivel	*Tolleson: Chris Hagen
# Maricopa: Ryan Wozniak for David Maestas	Valley Metro: Abhi Dayal for Wulf Grote
*Maricopa County DOT: Suparna Dasgupta	#Youngtown: Grant Anderson
Mesa: Jodi Sorrell	

*Members neither present nor represented by proxy + - Attended by Videoconference
- Attended by Audioconference

OTHERS PRESENT

Marc Pearsall, MAG	Carlos Lopez, ADOT
Alice Chen, MAG	Jeff Martin, Chandler/Mesa
Teri Kennedy, MAG	Ted Mariscal Phoenix
DeDe Gaisthea, MAG	Jorge Luna, Valley Metro
Margaret Boone, MAG	Deron Lozano, AECOM
Amy St. Peter, MAG	Randy Overmyer, CK Group
Tim Strow, MAG	

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 10:02 a.m. by Vice Chair Kristen Sexton. She welcomed everyone in attendance and announced that a quorum was present. She noted that three members were joining the meeting by teleconference: Grant Anderson of Youngtown, Robert Yabes of Tempe and Ryan Wozniak of Maricopa. She asked if there were any public comment cards, and there being none, proceeded to the next item on the agenda.

2. Approval of Draft May 14, 2015 Meeting Minutes

Vice Chair Sexton inquired if there were any comments or corrections to the Draft May 14, 2015 Minutes. Hearing no further comments, she called for a motion on the Draft May 14, 2015 Minutes. Ken Kessler of Phoenix moved to approve the motion, Martin Lucero of Surprise seconded, and the motion passed unanimously. Vice Chair Sexton then proceeded to the next item on the agenda.

3. Call to the Audience

Vice Chair Sexton stated that she had not received any request to speak cards from the audience and moved onto the next item on the agenda.

4. Transit Program Manager's Report

Vice Chair Sexton invited Marc Pearsall of MAG to brief the Committee with the Transit Program Manager's Report. Mr. Pearsall said that he had several items to report on for the Staff Report. He gave an update on the current status of federal funding. He noted that in late July, Congress passed a 3-month, short-term funding authority for transportation which would expire in late October. Both the House and Senate had differing philosophies on the content of a proposed new transportation funding bill. The \$275 Billion DRIVE ACT would be the first 6-year Transportation Authorization Bill for highways and transit in over a decade. Many in Congress had expressed hope in passing a version prior to the holidays that would fund 3 of the 6 years, with a future Congress figuring out how to fulfill the funding gap for 2019-2021. If another continuing short-term funding bill was passed, then it was assumed that a new President and Congress would tackle the DRIVE ACT by spring 2017.

He explained that ADOT would issue a NOFA (Notice of Funding Availability) for Rural Transit Planning Projects in September. The applications were directed through the COGs and MPOS. MAG would be sharing with the Committee a list of projects that we compiled that may be possible wish-list candidates, as culled from previous MAG and Valley Metro studies and routes. He encouraged member agencies to add their Rural Projects to the list when they receive it. He also noted that TC member Suparna Dasgupta was leaving MCDOT and would now work for City of Tempe.

He continued by noting upcoming training opportunities, specifically one hosted by MAG's Alice Chen. She will present a Multimodal Level of Service (MMLOS) Study Training Session on October 13th from 8:30am-12:30pm. He also mentioned that there was a CMAQ Call for Projects for 2018-19-20 Bike-Ped, ITS, paving of unpaved dirt roads and transportation alternatives and sweepers (1 year only) was released on August 10th. The applications were to be due Sept 21 at 10:00am sharp. He completed his report by noting that the Regional Air Quality Conformity Analysis was approved by MAG RC in June, and that the FY 2014-2018 MAG TIP was also approved by RC.

Vice Chair Sexton thanked Mr. Pearsall and asked if there were further questions or comments regarding the agenda item. Hearing none she proceeded to the next item on the agenda.

5. Amendment and Administrative Modification to the FY 2014-2018 MAG Transportation Improvement Program, and to the 2035 Regional Transportation Plan to add the FY 2015 Section 5310 Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities Transportation Project Listings for the Phoenix-Mesa Urbanized Area.

Vice Chair Sexton invited Ms. DeDe Gaisthea of MAG to brief the Committee on the item. Ms. Gaisthea began with an overview and noted that the item was not on the agenda for committee action at this time, but that she would keep the committee informed on any changes in funding status. She noted that on June 24, 2015, the MAG Regional Council approved the FY 2015 FTA Section 5310 Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities Program priority listing of projects for the Phoenix-Mesa Urbanized Area (UZA). She explained and reminded that to be eligible for FTA Section 5310 funding, Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO) must ensure that all program activities are included in a Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for activities in urbanized areas. The FY 2015 Section 5310 priority listing for the Phoenix-Mesa UZA included five mobility management projects, 22 project requests for vans and equipment, and 13 New Freedom eligible projects.

She further explained that the full year of funding was unknown at the time of approval of the priority listing, as full year apportionments were expected to be announced in the near term. At the time the priority listing was developed, action from Congress was still pending, but in July they voted to extend the federal transportation funds for the full fiscal year, ending October 31, 2015. Ms. Gaisthea added that the region was awaiting federal register notice for full final amounts prior to the committee meeting. She also stated that when they were received, the complete FY2015 Section 5310 Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities Transportation Project Listings for the Phoenix-Mesa Urbanized Area TIP listings would be emailed to the committee.

Vice Chair Sexton thanked Ms. Gaisthea and asked if there were any questions or comments from the members regarding the agenda item. There were some brief clarifying comments from Mr. Kent, Mr. Lucero, Mr. Kessler and Ms. Kennedy. Ms. Kennedy noted that this item was not for action and would return to the agenda in September. Vice Chair Sexton asked if there were any questions or comments on the agenda item. Hearing no further questions, she proceeded to the next item on the agenda.

6. MAG Programming - Year in Preview

Vice Chair Sexton invited Ms. Alice Chen of MAG to brief the Committee on the item. Ms. Chen of MAG began her presentation on the item and noted it was for information and discussion. She explained that in Fiscal Year 2016, MAG staff, in coordination with the MAG Transit Committee, the City of Phoenix/ Designated Grant Recipient and Valley Metro/RPTA, would be developing the FY 2016 Program of Projects (POP) and FY 2017-2021 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

She stated that the programming principles would follow the guidelines approved by the MAG Regional Council on March 27, 2013, last amended on May 27, 2015. The development process included the public participation component that was also a requirement of the Federal Transit Administration and that all regionally significant projects must be included in an Air Quality Conformity Analysis. The programming efforts for the current cycle would include updates to the guidelines for Priority 4: Job Access and Reverse Commute; and Priority 9: Regional Competitive Process.

She further continued with a brief presentation on the transit programming schedule's Year in Preview. She discussed developing the fiscal year 2016 Program of Projects (POP), the fiscal years 2017-2021 TIP, and reviewed the MAG tentative schedule from Aug 2015 through June 2016. She concluded by noting the next steps, which featured the Regional Transit Needs Assessment (included on within the agenda as Item 7) and MAG Air Quality 101.

Vice Chair Sexton thanked Ms. Chen and asked if there were any questions or comments from the members regarding the agenda item. Hearing no further questions, Vice Chair Sexton proceeded to the next item on the agenda

7. Regional Transit Needs Assessment

Vice Chair Kristen Sexton invited Ms. Chen to continue to brief the Committee on the item. Ms. Chen advised that the item was on the agenda for information and discussion and that MAG was conducting a planning exercise to understand and facilitate a discussion of how to meet the transit needs of all its member agencies.

She explained that to facilitate this effort, a Regional Transit Needs Assessment would be conducted. This exercise was meant to synthesize all local and regional planning efforts related to transit to be included as part of a regional discussion, but noted that it was not a notice of funding availability. To keep the process transparent and collaborative, it was imperative that all projects that agencies may request to have federal funding be submitted as part of this discussion.

She then shared a brief presentation for the Regional Transit Needs Assessment (RTNA), where the planning exercise would serve as the basis for discussion of the how to move forward with Priority 4: fund the Job Access Reverse Commute program and Priority 9: transit accessibility, livability and state of good repair using a regional competitive evaluation process.

Ms. Chen added that there were currently no provisions for expansion or unmet needs, and mentioned that steps and elements of the Assessment included processing goals, transparency, collaboration, recognizing regional differences, balancing needs and revisiting funding opportunities. She noted that example candidate projects included ITS (information, signal prioritization, Nextbus), safety (personal, crossings, perceived), improved accessibility, increased service/complementary stock needs, bus stop amenities and State of Good Repair/Maintenance. She then summarized parts of the schedule: August 13, 2015 through October 8, 2015 - review of projects and evaluation process; October 9, 2015 all invoices over \$10,000 would be due to City of Phoenix; and November 2015, the regional needs discussion would continue.

Vice Chair Sexton thanked Ms. Chen and asked if there were any questions or comments from the members regarding the agenda item.

Mr. Kent inquired if the costs were specific or general estimates. Ms. Chen replied that they were estimates at this time. Vice Chair Sexton asked how this new RTNA would differ from the Short Range Transit planning that the region had been working on with Valley Metro. Ms. Chen replied that the purpose of the RTNA was to assist with needs and projects not covered by the Short Range Transit Plan. Mr. Link asked if this process took the place of the application process, but Ms. Chen replied that this would actually lead to developing guidelines that would shape a more efficient and balanced application process in the future.

Ms. Kennedy added that this would act as a defacto 'sorting exercise' of agency general plans, by specifically looking into categories for unmet needs, such as refurbishing a transit center, bus stops or park and ride and other facilities. Mr. Anderson inquired on clarification on the October 9th invoice deadline, and Ms. Kennedy noted that MAG staff would partner with City of Phoenix to help process the workload for reimbursements. Ms. Myers asked if Valley Metro would be surveyed and if they could forward and include the SRTP items previously given to them by member agencies to MAG as to avoid duplication. Ms. Chen and Mr. Dayal replied that they would be forwarding that list to MAG and those items included in the master list. Mr. Lucero and Mr. Crampton offered additional comments.

Vice Chair Sexton asked if there were any questions or comments on the agenda item. Hearing no further questions, she proceeded to the next item on the agenda.

8. ADOT Passenger Rail Study: Tucson To Phoenix Update

Vice Chair Sexton invited Mr. Carlos Lopez of ADOT to brief the Committee on the item. Mr. Lopez noted that the item was on the agenda for information and discussion and that the presentation was regarding the next steps of the ADOT Passenger Rail Corridor Study: Tucson to Phoenix. He explained that ADOT was in the third year of study for this project that was co-led by the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA). ADOT planned to publish the Tier 1 draft environmental impact statement (DEIS) for review soon. He said that the purpose of the update was to provide an overview of the technical and environmental analysis, as well as to solicit agency and public feedback on the proposed rail corridor.

He then continued with presentation about the project basis for the study, which focused on increasing transportation options within the ever-growing Sun Corridor between metropolitan Tucson and Phoenix. He explained that Interstate 10 was the only high capacity facility between the two metro areas and that additional capacity was need to accommodate future growth. He added that the current passenger rail corridor study process consisted of a Tier 1 environmental impact statement (EIS), which reviewed large expansive corridors with an implementation of service that could be phased over time. It also identified broad program decisions such as mitigation, but that at present time no funding was available.

Mr. Lopez added that the Tier 2 EIS (which would be funded through subsequent studies) would be a project level analysis, which would look at specific rail alignments at a micro-level, station locations and connections, along with cost estimates and operating concepts. The Tier 2 would also look at a reasonable expectation of funding for both capital and operating costs.

Referring to the presentation maps, he said that the current Tier 1 analysis had narrowed seven alternative alignments down to three. He also showcased the forecast ridership and travel time model that ADOT had been using courtesy of the FRA. The remaining three alignments Green (I-10), Yellow (Union Pacific Railroad), Orange (North-South Corridor) were reviewed and the yellow was the most productive, with the highest ridership as it served most of the communities in the Southeast Valley. The analysis also looked at right of way impact, construction costs, equipment costs and facilities to establish a high level cost estimate. He noted that at present, the preferred alignment was estimated at about \$40 million per mile, but that cost was for exclusive trackway where no trackage was shared with Union Pacific Railroad.

He did note that the study yielded a massive public outreach program and campaign, with over 10,000 surveys completed. The study yielded support from over 95% of those who participated, with most showing preference for the Yellow Alternative. He noted that the preferred alternative by public input showed: Yellow - 48%; Green - 30%; Orange 22%.

Mr. Lopez then reviewed the upcoming schedule for the project: Draft Tier I EIS – late summer 2015; public comment period – fall 2015; public hearings – 5:30 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. at Phoenix - Burton Barr Library, September 15; Tucson - Convention Center , September 16; Central Arizona College, Coolidge, September 17; followed by Final Tier I EIS/Record of Decision (ROD) due in fall 2015 by the FRA. The service development plan would also be issued in fall 2015.

He then summarized the next steps for the project and added that the Tier 1 EIS first step in project development and there was further study required before a system could be built. He explained that no local, state or federal funding had yet been identified for subsequent environmental/preliminary engineering studies, design and construction. Funding could be secured at a later date to guide project phasing into its next step, the Tier 2 EIS. He then completed his presentation.

Vice Chair Sexton thanked Mr. Lopez for his presentation and asked if there were any questions or comments from the members regarding the agenda item.

Ms. Sorrell of Mesa asked ADOT that if the Yellow alignment was selected as the LPA, would there still be an optional Orange alignment moving forward in Tier 2 in order to secure a high capacity connection between the mainline and the growing Gateway Airport campus. Mr. Lopez replied in the affirmative that the FRA and FTA both requested that a high capacity connection option to Gateway be considered as a part of the Tier 2 package. Mr. Esquivel asked clarifying questions on right of way footprint and I-10/I-11 corridors and Mr. Macias asked about the presentation's availability to the member agencies. Mr. Youssef asked about cost issues related to sharing the right of way with Union Pacific. Mr. Lopez replied that there were lease/purchase options that were discussed, but that a more firm cost estimate would need to occur in the Tier 2 analysis. Ms. Myers thanked Mr. Lopez and the ADOT team for the exemplary work and open dialogue they've had with the agencies over the past three years on this study.

Vice Chair Sexton asked if there were any questions or comments on the agenda item. Hearing no further questions, she proceeded to the next item on the agenda.

9. Semiannual Status Report on Federal Grant Activity

Vice Chair Sexton introduced Mr. Ken Kessler and his staff from the City of Phoenix Transit Department. She advised that Phoenix was the Designated Recipient of federal transit funds, and that Mr. Kessler and his staff were available to answer committee questions for the Semiannual Status Report on Federal Grant Activity ending with June 30, 2015. Vice Chair Sexton asked if there were any questions or comments on the agenda item. Hearing no further comments, she proceeded to the next item on the agenda.

10. Request for Future Agenda Items

Vice Chair Sexton asked the members of the Committee if there were any issues that they would like added as future agenda items. Ms. Jodi Sorrell issued an open invitation to attend the public opening of the Central Mesa Extension of the Metro light rail on Saturday August 22, the first extension of its kind since Metro's debut in December 2008. Vice Chair Sexton thanked the members and hearing no further comments, she proceeded to the next item on the agenda.

11. Next Meeting Date

Vice Chair Sexton thanked those present and announced that the next meeting of the MAG Transit Committee would be held on Thursday, September 10, 2015 at 10:00 a.m. in the MAG Ironwood Room. There being no further business, Vice Chair Sexton adjourned the meeting at 11:16 a.m.