

December 1, 2010

TO: Members of the MAG Transportation Review Committee

FROM: David Moody, City of Peoria, Chair

SUBJECT: MEETING NOTIFICATION AND TRANSMITTAL OF TENTATIVE AGENDA

Thursday, December 9, 2010, 10:00 a.m.
MAG Office, Suite 200, Saguaro Room
302 North 1st Avenue, Phoenix

A meeting of the MAG Transportation Review Committee (TRC) will be held at the time and place noted above. **Please park in the garage under the building. Bring your ticket to the meeting as parking will be validated. Bicycles can be locked in the rack at the entrance to the parking garage.**

The next meeting of the MAG Transportation Review Committee will be held at the time and place noted above. Committee members or their proxies may attend **in person, via videoconference or by telephone conference call**. Those attending video conference must notify the MAG site three business days prior to the meeting. Those attending by telephone conference call please contact MAG offices for conference call instructions.

Pursuant to Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), MAG does not discriminate on the basis of disability in admissions to or participation in its public meetings. Persons with a disability may request a reasonable accommodation, such as a sign language interpreter, by contacting Christina Hopes or Jason Stephens at the MAG Office. Requests should be made as early as possible to allow time to arrange the accommodation.

Please be advised that under procedures adopted by the MAG Regional Council on June 26, 1996, all MAG committees need to have a quorum in order to conduct business. A quorum is a simple majority of the membership or twelve people for the MAG TRC. If the Transportation Review Committee does not meet the quorum requirement, members who have arrived at the meeting will be instructed a legal meeting cannot occur and subsequently be dismissed. Your attendance at the meeting is strongly encouraged. If you are unable to attend the meeting, please make arrangements for a proxy from your jurisdiction to represent you. Please contact Eric Anderson or Christina Hopes at (602) 254-6300 if you have any questions or need additional information.

TENTATIVE AGENDA

1. Call to Order
2. Approval of Draft October 28, 2010 Minutes
3. Call to the Audience

An opportunity will be provided to members of the public to address the Transportation Review Committee on items not scheduled on the agenda that fall under the jurisdiction of MAG, or on items on the agenda for discussion but not for action. Citizens will be requested not to exceed a three minute time period for their comments. A total of 15 minutes will be provided for the Call to the Audience agenda item, unless the Transportation Review Committee requests an exception to this limit.

4. Transportation Director's Report

Recent transportation planning activities and upcoming agenda items for the MAG Management Committee will be reviewed by the Transportation Director.

COMMITTEE ACTION REQUESTED

2. Approve Draft minutes of the October 28, 2010 meeting.
3. For information and discussion.
4. For information and discussion.

ITEMS TO BE HEARD

5. Project Changes – Amendment and Administrative Modification to the FY 2011-2015 MAG Transportation Improvement Program

The Fiscal Year 2011-2015 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) 2010 Update were approved by the MAG Regional Council on July 28, 2010. The Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT), Avondale, Buckeye, Chandler, Gila Bend, Gilbert, Maricopa County, Mesa, Peoria, Phoenix, Queen Creek, Scottsdale, Surprise, and Valley Metro Rail have submitted new projects and have made project modifications since the approval of the

5. For information, discussion and recommendation to approve of amendments and administrative modifications to the FY 2011-2015 MAG TIP, and as appropriate, to the RTP 2010 Update dependent on a new finding of conformity.

TIP. The projects contained in the attached table will be moved forward through the MAG Committee process. Please refer to Attachment One for additional information.

6. Programming of Pave Dirt Road Projects for MAG Federal Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Funding in the FY 2011-2015 MAG Transportation Improvement Program

The MAG Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) allocates MAG Federal Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) funds to specific modes, and, in some cases, identifies specific projects for the funds. Currently, the FY 2011-2015 MAG TIP identifies \$4,898,000 in CMAQ funding for the pave dirt road program in FY2014. MAG relied on its competitive application process to program these funds. Applications were made available in August 2010 with a due date of September 16, 2010. There were 15 complete project applications submitted on time, and 14 were deemed eligible for federal funding. The projects went through a two-tiered Street Committee review process starting in October that resulted in project rankings by the Air Quality Technical Advisory Committee in November 2010. Attachment Two includes memorandum from the Chair of the Air Quality TAC that details the evaluation and ranking process used, the ranked lists of projects, and the Street Committee discussion notes per project.

7. FY 2011 MAG Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) Projects

Starting in FY 2010 MAG has begun receiving a total of \$1 million per year in federal Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) funds from the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT), to be allocated towards projects and studies that would lead to road safety improvements in the region. Based on a prior MAG action, \$200,000 of the HSIP allocation for FY 2011 has been set aside for conducting Road Safety Assessments

6. For information, discussion, and possible action to recommend a list of pave unpaved road projects to be funded with CMAQ funds, and that the identified work phases and costs from the project application are added to the FY2011-2015 MAG Transportation Improvement Program.

7. For information, discussion and possible action to recommend the FY 2011 list of safety improvement projects as described in Attachment Three.

at high risk intersections. The balance \$800,000 needs to be programmed for safety projects that can be obligated by the May 1, 2011, a deadline established by Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) for all such projects from Metropolitan Planning Organizations and Councils of Governments. A call for projects was announced by MAG on October 14, 2010 with a deadline of November 5, 2010. Member agencies were invited to submit applications for systematic safety improvement projects that can be classified as Categorical Exclusion Group 1 projects by ADOT. A total of 15 project applications were received by MAG. The Transportation Safety Committee reviewed the applications at the meeting held on November 23, 2010, and recommended a list of projects and the funding amounts as shown in Attachment Three. The total of all requests slightly exceeded the \$800,000 available and is expected to be approved by ADOT. Please refer to Attachment Three for additional information.

8. Revised Sales Tax and Highway User Revenue Fund Projections

Revised projections of the transportation sales tax and the Arizona Highway User Revenue Fund (HURF) have been released. The sales tax projections from FY 2011 to FY 2026 are approximately \$2.2 billion lower than the projections for the same period that were made a year ago. The lower sales tax projections mean a significant loss of revenue for the highway, transit and arterial street life cycle programs. The highway program share of the loss is \$1.241 billion, the transit loss is \$735.5 million and the arterial program loss is \$231.9 million. In addition, the lower sales tax revenues result in lower future bonding capacity for all three program. The Arizona Department of Transportation estimates that the loss in bonding capacity for the highway program is approximately \$925 million. HURF revenues for the period FY 2011 to FY 2020 are also lower than the projections made

8. For information and discussion.

last year. Cumulative HURF revenues for the ten year period are approximately \$1.13 billion lower than last year.

9. Request for Future Agenda Items

Topics or issues of interest that the Transportation Review Committee would like to have considered for discussion at a future meeting will be requested.

10. Member Agency Update

This section of the Agenda will provide Committee members with an opportunity to share information regarding a variety of transportation-related issues within their respective communities.

11. Next Meeting Date

The next regular Transportation Review Committee meeting will be scheduled Thursday, January 27, 2011 at 10:00 a.m. in the MAG Office, Saguaro Room.

9. For information and discussion.

10. For information.

11. For information.

DRAFT MINUTES OF THE
MARICOPA ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS
TRANSPORTATION REVIEW COMMITTEE

October 28, 2010

Maricopa Association of Governments Office
302 North First Avenue, Suite 200, Saguaro Room
Phoenix, Arizona

MEMBERS ATTENDING

Peoria: David Moody	Maricopa County: Clem Ligocki for John Hauskins
ADOT: Steve Hull for Floyd Roehrich	Mesa: Scott Butler
Avondale: Shirley Gunther for David Fitzhugh	Paradise Valley: Bill Mead
Buckeye: Scott Lowe	Phoenix: Rick Naimark
Chandler: RJ Zeder for Patrice Kraus	Queen Creek: Tom Condit
El Mirage: Lance Calvert	RPTA: Bryan Jungwirth
Fountain Hills: Randy Harrel	Scottsdale: Dave Meinhart
*Gila Bend: Eric Fitzer	Surprise: Bob Beckley
*Gila River: Sreedevi Samudrala for Doug Torres	Tempe: Jyme Sue McLaren for Chris Salomone
Gilbert: Tami Ryall	Valley Metro Rail: John Farry
Glendale: Cathy Colbath for Terry Johnson	*Wickenburg: Rick Austin
Goodyear: Cato Esquivel	Youngtown: Grant Anderson for Lloyce Robinson
*Guadalupe: Gino Turrubiarres	
Litchfield Park: Paul Ward for Woody Scoutten	

EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS ATTENDING

Street Committee: Dan Cook, City of Chandler	*Bicycle/Pedestrian Committee: Peggy Rubach, RPTA
* ITS Committee: Nicolaas Swart, Maricopa County	*Transportation Safety Committee: Julian Dresang, City of Tempe

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

OTHERS PRESENT

Eric Anderson, MAG	Holly Hassett, METRO	Karen Savage, Surprise
Alice Chen, MAG	Ben Limmer, METRO	Shana Ellis, Tempe
Maureen DeCindis, MAG	Stephanie Shipp, METRO	David Bond, Horrocks
Roger Herzog, MAG	Kristen Sexton, Avondale	Robert Yabes, Tempe
Jorge Luna, MAG	Drew Spear, Dibble	Marc Soronson, HDR
Kevin Wallace, MAG	John Bullen, Glendale	Laureen Neu, Strand
Eileen Yazzie, MAG	Ryan Peters, Glendale	Art Brooks, Strand
Kwi-Sung Kang, ADOT	Nicolaas Swart, Maricopa County	Mark Bolton, Fennemore Craig
Bob Antilla, RPTA		

1. Call to Order

Chairman David Moody from the City of Peoria called the meeting to order at 10:01 a.m.

2. Approval of Draft July 31, 2010 Minutes

Chairman Moody asked if there were any changes or amendments to the September 23, 2010 meeting minutes, and there were none. Mr. David Meinhart from the City of Scottsdale motioned to approve the minutes. Mr. RJ Zeder from the City of Chandler seconded, and the motion passed by a unanimous voice vote of the Committee.

3. Call to the Audience

Chairman Moody announced that he had not received a request to speak card and moved on to the next item on the agenda.

4. Transportation Director's Report

Chairman Moody invited Mr. Eric Anderson to present the Transportation Director's report. Mr. Anderson announced the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) had released the revised Regional Area Road Fund (RARF) and Highway User Revenue Fee (HURF) revenue forecasts. He reported that revised RARF forecast had been decreased projected revenues by \$2.2 billion from the previous forecast. He explained that the revised forecast projected \$7.3 billion in revenues instead of \$9.5 billion for the remainder of the tax adding that the projections were conservative, but not unrealistic.

Mr. Anderson informed the Committee that the decreased revenue projections would require adjustments to the Freeway Life Cycle Program (FLCP), the Transit Life Cycle Program (TLCP), and the Arterial Life Cycle Program (ALCP) to maintain the fiscal balance of the programs. He announced a reduction of \$735 million and \$232 million would be required for the TLCP and ALCP, respectively.

Mr. Anderson stated that RARF revenues for the first quarter of Fiscal Year (FY) 2011 were 3.7 percent lower than FY 2010. He added that RARF revenues had not been positive since September 2007. Mr. Anderson commented that previously the region had rebounded from economic downturns sooner and subsequently experienced double-digit growth. He stated that the current downturn was different cautioning that the comeback would not be like those experienced regionally in the past.

Next, Mr. Anderson discussed the revised HURF projections. He reported that the cumulative HURF forecast was down \$1.1 billion. He stated that a reduction in vehicle license tax (VLT) revenues were a significant contributor to the decline. He explained that new car sales were down 50 percent from the peak that occurred in 2006 and 2007.

Chairman Moody asked if there were any questions or comments about the Transportation Director's Report. There were none, and he proceed to the next item on the agenda.

5. Consent Agenda

Addressing the next item of business, Chairman Moody directed the Committee's attention to the consent agenda. Chairman Moody announced that revised attachments for agenda items 5b and 5d had been emailed to the Committee and that copies of the revised handouts were at their places.

Chairman Moody asked the Committee if there were any questions or comments regarding the consent agenda items: (5a) on the Arterial Life Cycle Program Status Report, (5b) Project Changes to the MAG FY 2011-2015 Transportation Improvement Program, (5c) Request for New Traffic Signal Optimization Program Projects, or (5d) the 2011 Tentative Transportation Review Committee meeting schedule. There were none. Mr. Tom Condit from the Town of Queen Creek motioned to approve the consent agenda. Mr. Meinhart seconded, and the motion passed with a unanimous voice vote of the Committee.

6. Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities Design Assistance Program

Next, Chairman Moody invited Ms. Maureen DeCindis from MAG to present on the Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities Design Assistance Program. Ms. DeCindis informed the Committee that the \$300,000 in funds had been allocated in the MAG Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) for the MAG Design Assistance for Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities. She explained that funds in the Design Assistance Program could be applied to the design portion of bicycle and/or pedestrian projects in the region.

Ms. DeCindis announced that six applications had been submitted to MAG for funding consideration. She reported that on October 19, 2010, the MAG Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee met to review and rank six project applications for funding consideration. The projects reviewed for funding consideration included: Community Improvements in Apache Junction (\$40,070), the Grand Canal at 22nd Street Multi-Use Path in Phoenix (\$75,000), the Multi-Use Path on Litchfield Road in Litchfield Park (\$85,000), the New River North Connection in Glendale (\$90,000), the Porter Park Pathway in Mesa (\$125,000), and the Rancho El Mirage Multi-Use Path in El Mirage (\$100,000).

Ms. DeCindis reported that the Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee had recommended three projects for funding approval. She stated that the projects recommended for funding included the Grand Canal at 22nd Street Multi-Use Path (\$75,000), the Porter Park Pathway (\$125,000), and the Rancho El Mirage Multi-Use Path (\$100,000). Mr. Lance Calvert from the City of El Mirage motioned to approve Design Assistance Program funding for the projects as listed in Attachment Four. Mr. Scott Butler from the City of Mesa seconded the motion, and the motion passed by a unanimous voice vote of the Committee.

7. Programming 5307 and 5309 - Fixed Rail and Guideway Modernization Funds in FY2010 and 2011

Chairman Moody invited Ms. Eileen Yazzie, MAG Transportation Programming Manager, to present on the programming on 5307 Urbanized Area Formula and 5309 Fixed Rail and Guideway Modernization (FGM) funds. Ms. Yazzie informed the Committee that 5309 FGM and 5307 funds were for preventative maintenance. She stated the discussion would focus on the programming of 5309 FGM funds preventative maintenance distributions in FY2010 and 5307 preventative maintenance funding levels for FY2011 and FY2012. She stated that the programming of 5307 and 5309 funds were being heard as one agenda item because of the preventative maintenance discussion previously heard by the Committee. She stated that the Transit Committee heard the discussion in three parts, with one item being reheard later at the request of the Transit Committee.

Ms. Yazzie reported that \$1,517,999 of 5309 FGM funds were available for FY2009 and FY2010. She stated that all eligible regional priority projects in the Transit Life Cycle Program (TLCP) and Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) were currently programmed in the FY 2011-2015 MAG Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). She, then suggested programming the remaining 5309 funds for preventative maintenance for fixed guideway eligible activities and presented four programming scenarios.

Next, Ms. Yazzie presented four programming scenarios using data from the National Transit Database (NTD). Ms. Yazzie noted a two-year lag in data on the NTD stating the scenarios presented were based on 2008 data. She also noted that information regarding operations was based on data reported to the NTD. Ms. Yazzie presented four programming scenarios, which included funding preventative maintenance according to:

Scenario 1: Valid annual fixed guideway vehicle revenue miles

Scenario 2: A combination of total bus fixed guideway vehicle revenue miles and a half-year of METRO's guideway vehicle revenue miles;

Scenario 3: A combination of total bus fixed guideway vehicle revenue miles including a full year of METRO's projected operation fixed guideway vehicle revenue miles; or

Scenario 4: All funds allocated to METRO for light rail.

Ms. Yazzie explained that the four scenarios would allocate varying percentages of 5309 funds for preventative maintenance to the City of Phoenix, Valley Metro/RPTA, and METRO. Then, she discussed the allocations by scenario. The allocation by scenario included:

Scenario 1: City of Phoenix (64.7%), RPTA (35.3%), and METRO (0%);

Scenario 2: City of Phoenix (18.5%), RPTA (12.8%), and (68.7%);

Scenario 3: City of Phoenix (11%), RPTA (7.6%), and METRO (81.4%); and

Scenario 4: City of Phoenix (0%), RPTA (0%), and METRO (100%).

Ms. Yazzie informed the Committee that the MAG Transit Committee had recommended scenario 3.

Moving on, Ms. Yazzie presented two options for programming additional 5307 preventative maintenance funds. She stated that under Option 1, the currently programmed FY 2011 funds would be combined the additional funds and distributed in FY 2011 based on the

recommended formula. She stated that under Option 1, the funding allocation for FY 2012 would remain the same. Ms. Yazzie explained that under Option 2, all funds would be combined and distributed evenly between FYs 2011 and 2012. She added that under Option 2, \$5.8 million in bus purchases would need to advance to FY 2011. Ms. Yazzie informed the Committee that the MAG Transit Committee had recommended Option 2 for approval. She stated that the Transit Committee surmised that Option 2 would be easier to balance and maintain the budget.

Ms. Yazzie noted that four scenarios to distribute funding to operators had been presented to the MAG Transit Committee. She stated the Transit Committee had requested additional information as well as research on how other regions distributed the funds to operators. She reported that MAG Staff would conduct the requested research and present the findings to the MAG Transit Committee for approval in the following months.

Mr. Meinhart inquired if the data was calculated for the same year as the reporting. Ms. Yazzie replied that all transit operators report data to NTD each year. She stated that different formulas were applied to different distributions of funds explaining that the formulas for 5307 included revenues miles.

Mr. Bryan Jungwirth motion to recommend (1) Scenario #3 on the preventative maintenance distribution methodology for \$1,571,999 of FY2010 5309-FGM funds and that it be a non-precedent setting distribution and (2) the amount of funds for preventative maintenance programmed in FY2011 and FY 2012 be distributed equally as shown in Option #2, and to modify or amend the FY2011-2015 MAG Transportation Improvement Program and the FY2010 Program of Projects, as appropriate. Ms. Shirley Gunther from the City of Avondale seconded, and the motion passed by a unanimous voice vote of the Committee.

8. Tempe South Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA)

Chairman Moody invited Mr. Kevin Wallace, MAG Transit Program Manager, to address the Tempe South Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA). Mr. Wallace announced that the LPA recommendation was the culmination of three years of work in the City of Tempe. He explained that the LPA was the first step in the process to apply for federal transit funds.

Then, Mr. Wallace invited Mr. Mark Soronson, the consultant from Valley Metro to present the Tempe South Locally Preferred Alternative. Mr. Soronson informed the Committee that the MAG Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) had identified future high capacity transit improvements along Rural Road in the City of Tempe. He stated the identified improvements included two transit projects within the Tempe South Study area noting a two mile high capacity/light rail transit improvement that extended south from downtown Tempe and a Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) corridor on Scottsdale/Rural Road extending from north Scottsdale to Chandler.

Mr. Soronson informed the Committee that both transit projects were analyzed as part of that Tempe South Study. He added that only BRT segment south from downtown Tempe was

evaluated as part of the study. Mr. Soronson explained that the alternatives analysis process resulted in the development of a the LPA, which defined the transit technology and proposed alignments of the project. Mr. Soronson stated the goals of the LPA, included:

- improving mobility of residential and business communities;
- developing efficient transportation system;
- accommodating future travel demand;
- developing a transportation system that supports local and regional development goals and transit oriented development strategies;
- developing transportation strategies that reinforce the cities general plan;
- developing a transportation system that is affordable to build, operate, and maintain; and
- developing a transportation system that provides connectivity to/from neighborhoods, employment, and recreational opportunities.

Mr. Soronson informed the Committee that as part of the study travel patterns were analyzed for three markets areas, which included Arizona State University (ASU), north Tempe, and south Tempe/Chandler. He stated that the study analyzed alignments and technologies to determine the best match for the area. Mr. Soronson reported that the study results indicated that one specific alternative would not fit the travel needs for all markets. Then, he stated that the METRO Staff had proposed a modern streetcar along Mill Avenue as the LPA technology.

Next, Mr. Soronson addressed the preferred alignment from the study. He reported that the preferred alignment was a loop on Mill and Ash Avenues. He explained that the loop would help define downtown, provide an opportunity to stimulate development/redevelopment, avoid utility impacts, reduce parking impacts, offer flexibility for special events, and minimize construction impacts. He stated that the preferred alignment included a shared lane on Mill Avenue and a dedicated lane on Ash Avenue.

Mr. Soronson announced that the Tempe Streetcar would be modeled based on Seattle and other streetcars. He acknowledged that the streetcar would not be as long as a light rail car or have the seating capacity. He explained that the streetcar would work better in a smaller community because stations are smaller and a fraction of the cost of a light rail transit stop.

Moving on, Mr. Soronson estimated that opening day for the streetcar would occur in FY 2016/2017. He stated that the anticipated opening day ridership would be between 1,100 to 1,600 per day excluding special events. Mr. Soronson cited estimated capital funding sources to be 27 percent Proposition 400 sales tax revenues and 73 percent federal funds from Small Starts or a similar programs. He reported that operation and maintenance costs for the project were estimated at \$3.6 million per year (2017\$) and that the streetcar would use a farebox system to collect fares. He noted that the operations and maintenance of the streetcar would be the responsibility of the City of Tempe.

Then, Mr. Soronson discussed the public involvement process. He reported extensive public involvement that included working through neighborhood and ad hoc committees as well as presentations to neighborhoods in Tempe and Chandler. Mr. Soronson stated that the project partners had received numerous letters of support from the business community in the area. He also reported the endorsements from the Tempe City Council adding that approval from the

Chandler City Council and through the MAG Committee process were currently underway. Mr. Grant Anderson from the Town of Youngtown inquired about the cost difference between streetcar and light rail transit facilities. He specifically inquired about the cost differences on the tracks. Mr. Soronson replied that the cost difference was dependent on how each of the tracks were defined. He stated that track slab would probably be light and therefore cost less. He stated that in contract, a light rail track required communications equipment, which the street car would not.

Mr. Meinhart inquired where the vehicles would be housed and maintained overnight. Mr. Soronson stated that the City was considering storing the vehicles at the existing METRO operation control center, which included two entry points. Then, Mr. Meinhart inquired about the long term extension on Rural Road. Mr Soronson stated that the City desired to have light rail on Rural in the long term although work had not been done to date. He added that BRT would occur on Rural Road before LRT would occur.

Mr. Meinhart expressed concerns about connectivity. Mr. Dan Cook from the City of Chandler stated that connectivity was an initial concern of Chandler's as well. He stated that connectivity was addressed before the Chandler Transportation Commission and that subsequent transit projects in the area were close in terms of time frames.

Mr. Bryan Jungwirth from Valley Metro/RPTA expressed support for the project and motioned approve the recommendation as presented. He then recited the motion, which stated:

1. a Locally Preferred Alternative for the Tempe South project, including a modern streetcar on a Mill Avenue alignment with a one-way loop in downtown Tempe to be incorporated into the MAG FY 2011 to FY 2015 Transportation Improvement Program and the Regional Transportation Plan 2010 Update for an air quality conformity analysis;
2. the inclusion of a potential future phase of modern streetcar east along Southern Avenue to Rural Road as an Illustrative Transit Corridor in the MAG Regional Transportation Plan;
3. the future consideration for increased service levels and capital improvements, per the description provided herein, for Rural Road BRT through the regional transportation system planning process;
4. the future consideration for high capacity transit needs north of downtown Tempe along Rio Salado Parkway and south of Southern Avenue along Rural Road to the vicinity of Chandler Boulevard through the regional transportation system planning process; and
5. the further consideration of commuter rail along the Tempe Branch of the Union Pacific Railroad, through the regional transportation planning process, and pending results from the Arizona Department of Transportation's (ADOT's) Phoenix-Tucson Intercity Rail Alternatives Analysis.

Mr. Steve Hull for the Arizona Department of Transportation seconded the motion. Ms. Jyme Sue McLaren requested a revision to the motion that clarified that the motion did not change the priorities established in the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). Mr. Jungwirth accepted the revised motion. A brief discussion followed about the wording and intent of the motion. Ms. McLaren offered to restate the motion, which was worded as recommended for approval by the MAG Transit Committee and was listed in the agenda.

Chairman Moody called for vote, and the motion passed by a unanimous voice vote of the Committee. Chairman Moody inquired if there were any additional questions or comments about the agenda item. There were none, and he moved on to the next item.

9. Federal Fund Programming Principles and Work Group

Chairman Moody invited Ms. Eileen Yazzie, MAG Transportation Programming Manager, to present on the Federal Fund Programming Principles and Work Group. Ms. Yazzie directed the Committee's attention to a handout at their places. She explained the handout was a copy of the Draft Federal Fund Programming Principles, which MAG Staff relied on in the programming of federal funds.

Ms. Yazzie reported that MAG Staff had requested that member agency staff review projects programmed in the MAG FY 2011-2015 Transportation Improvement Program for revisions before the conformity freeze. She announced that MAG Staff had received approximately twenty requests for project changes to Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality funded projects, which were exempt from the conformity freeze. She stated that many of the changes were rescoping requests.

Ms. Yazzie stated that MAG Staff was trying to determine how to proceed with the requests. She explained that in meetings with member agencies, MAG Staff had heard that some CMAQ projects no longer made sense, but that similar projects did. She explained some of the proposed projects were ready to proceed through the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) review process while other projects were not. She stated that some of the proposed changes were "in grey areas" that needed refinement through the Committee process.

Mr. Eric Anderson stated that in these severe economic times that the region needed to focus on the outcomes of the projects. He emphasized the need proceed with good projects that benefitted the region while protecting the integrity of the project selection process. He stated that MAG understood that changes occur during the project development process cautioning that member agencies could not unilaterally decided to change projects without going through the established project review process. He expressed concerns about the Federal Highway Administration's review if the project selection process was not followed.

Mr. Anderson expressed concerns about project changes to CMAQ projects in air quality plans. He also expressed concerns about inactive obligations. He explained that inactive obligations referred to obligated projects that were inactive for 12 or more months. Mr. Anderson stated that ADOT and FHWA wanted the number of inactive obligations to be less than four percent adding that inactive obligations for the region currently were between eight and ten percent.

Mr. Anderson informed the Committee that MAG was coordinating with ADOT on the issue. He stated that MAG would be receiving quarterly obligation reports from ADOT, which would improve MAG Staff's ability to track inactive obligations. He added that MAG needed to assist with projects until the final voucher was issued.

Chairman Moody inquired how the Committee could assist with the issues. Ms. Yazzie replied that the Management Committee had tasked MAG Staff with establishing a Federal Fund Working Group, which was comprised of several members of the Transportation Review Committee. She stated that MAG hoped to revive the Working Group in November/December to address the issues. She stated that MAG Staff was looking into revisions requested by the Working Group as well as the possibility of a dynamic TIP process. She explained that with a dynamic process any project programmed in the TIP would be able to move forward if the project was ready to go and local match was available.

Mr. Clem Ligocki from Maricopa County concurred with MAG Staff comments. He stated that the approach seemed reasonable, but expressed concerns if the process could be done expeditiously and in an orderly fashion. He hoped that the issue could be resolved before the start of the Federal Fund Closeout process.

Mr. Eric Anderson replied that MAG was coordinating with ADOT to determine when projects obligate. He stated that current practice was to focus on what happens after obligation. Mr. Anderson announced that ADOT was working on a web-based, project tracking system and an update to the Local Governments Section Manual.

Mr. Meinhart expressed concerns about new projects proceeding that had not been through the MAG review process. He stated that members should look at combining projects when the local match is not available for multiple projects. He added that this should be one of the region's key priorities. A brief discussion followed.

Ms. Yazzie stated that MAG Staff has been coordinating with member agencies on the issue. She explained that issue was challenging because a project may be a good fit and make sense; however, from a regional perspective, the projects need to be reviewed. She stated that federal guidelines require MAG to have a set, established project review process.

Mr. Eric Anderson added that the issue had been discussed with the Intergovernmental Liaisons and would be presented to the MAG Management Committee. Chairman Moody asked if there were any questions or comments about the agenda item. There were none.

10. Transit Prioritization Guidelines for Federal Funds

Chairman Moody announced the Agenda Item #10 on Transit Prioritization Guidelines for Federal Funds had been removed from the agenda at the request of MAG Staff.

11. Request for Future Agenda Items

Chairman Moody inquired if the members had any topics or issues of interest they would like to have considered for discussion at a future Committee meeting. There were none, and Chairman Moody moved onto the next agenda item.

12. Member Agency Update

Chairman Moody asked members of the Committee if they would like to provide updates, address any issues or concerns regarding transportation at the regional level, and asked if any members in attendance would like to address recent information that was relevant to transportation within their respective communities.

Mr. Grant Anderson inquired if there was an update on the conformity freeze. Mr. Eric Anderson replied that member agencies had until November 4th to submit project changes requests, which would be presented to the Committee in December. He stated that the Environmental Protection Agency would submit the notice to the Federal Register on January 28, 2011.

Mr. Eric Anderson encouraged MAG member agencies to submit a project change request for all developer funded projects that needed to be in the MAG TIP. He explained that if a project was built that was not included in the TIP that the region could be sanctioned.

13. Next Meeting Date

Chairman Moody informed members in attendance that the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Committee would be held on December 9, 2010. There be no further business, Chairman Moody adjourned the meeting at 11:15 a.m.