

MINUTES OF THE  
MARICOPA ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS  
TRANSPORTATION REVIEW COMMITTEE

August 23, 2007

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

MEMBERS ATTENDING

Maricopa County: John Hauskins	*Litchfield Park: Mike Cartsonis
ADOT: Dan Lance	*Mesa: Jim Huling
#Avondale: David Fitzhugh	*Paradise Valley: Robert M. Cicarelli
#Buckeye: Scott Lowe	Peoria: David Moody
Chandler: Patrice Kraus	Phoenix: Tom Callow
El Mirage: Lance Calvert for B.J. Cornwall	*Queen Creek: Mark Young
Fountain Hills: Randy Harrel	RPTA: Bryan Jungwirth
*Gila Bend: Lynn Farmer	Scottsdale: Mary O'Connor
Gila River: David White	Surprise: Randy Overmyer
Gilbert: Tami Ryall	Tempe: Carlos de Leon
Glendale: Terry Johnson	Valley Metro Rail: John Farry
Goodyear: Cato Esquivel	
Guadalupe: Jim Ricker	

EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS ATTENDING

*Regional Bicycle Task Force: Randi Alcott, RPTA	*Pedestrian Working Group: Eric Iwersen, City of Tempe
*Street Committee: Darryl Crossman, City of Litchfield Park	*ITS Committee: Alan Sanderson

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

OTHERS PRESENT

Roger Herzog, MAG	Kwi-Sung Kang, ADOT
Eric Anderson, MAG	Ed Stillings, FHWA
Ken Hall, MAG	Wulfe Grote, METRO
Bob Hazlett, MAG	Carol Slaker, City of Mesa
Steve Tate, MAG	Don Herp, City of Phoenix
Kevin Wallace	Bob Antila, Valley Metro RPTA
Eileen Yazzie, MAG	Jonathan Lindsey, Fennmore Craig/BNSF Railroad
Bill Hayden, ADOT	

1. Call to Order

Chairperson Tom Callow called the meeting to order at 10:01 a.m.

2. Approval of June 28, 2007 Draft Minutes

Mr. Callow welcomed Mr. David White from the Gila River Indian Community as the newest member of the Transportation Review Committee (TRC). Mr. Callow asked if there were any changes or amendments to the meeting minutes, and there were none. Mr. Dan Lance from the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) moved to approve the minutes as presented. Then, Mr. Terry Johnson from the City of Glendale seconded, and the minutes were subsequently approved by unanimous voice vote of the Committee.

3. Call to the Audience

Mr. Callow asked if any cards requesting to speak had been submitted. Mr. Eric Anderson stated that none had been received, and Mr. Callow moved on to the next item on the agenda.

4. Transportation Director's Report

Mr. Eric Anderson, MAG Transportation Director, announced the addition of Christina Hopes to the MAG staff. Previously, Ms. Hopes had worked at the University of South Florida's Center for Urban Transportation Research. Mr. Anderson announced that Ms. Hopes would be the staff person for the TRC and the MAG contact for the Arterial Life Cycle Program (ALCP). After announcing Ms. Hopes, Mr. Anderson continued on to present the Transportation Director's Report.

Mr. Anderson summarized key points from the MAG Regional Council Meeting held on August 22, 2007. One of the items heard at the Regional Council meeting included the STAN II account reimbursements recommendation(s) to three West Valley cities for transportation improvements. After a number of attempts, the Council approved a conditional 60/40 reimbursement of \$10 million (m) to defray some regional costs for the I-10 widening project. Under the tentative agreement, \$4m would remain in the STAN II account while three cities would receive \$6m for improvements to Interstate 10, pending each city's ability to obtain local funding.

The Regional Council meeting adjourned with the agreement that as the next step in the process the three cities would return to their councils to request and obtain funding for remaining project costs and report on the status of local funding to Mr. Dennis Smith, the Executive Director at MAG. Once Mr. Smith was notified that funding was secured, then the recommendation would be forwarded to the State Transportation Board for their consideration. Mr. Anderson is hopeful that the recommendation will be an agenda item at the next State Transportation Board Meeting on September 21, 2007.

The Regional Area Road Fund (RARF) revenues were the second item on the Transportation Director's Report. Mr. Anderson informed the Committee that although RARF revenues increased in June 1.4% over the previous year, there was an overall decline in RARF revenues during the last three months.

The fiscal year-to-date RARF account revenue was \$ 390 million (m), which was lower than the \$397m projected. Mr. Anderson reported that the ADOT lowered the fiscal year 2008 RARF revenue forecast to \$410m and has started the process of revising the RARF revenue forecast through 2025. MAG anticipates receiving the revised ADOT forecast by the end of September or early October.

Mr. Anderson attributed the decline in revenue growth to the declines in the retail sales sector, which accounts for half of the RARF market. He stated that contracting continues to be robust; however, a decline in contracting is expected. According to Mr. Anderson, MAG speculates that the decline in retail sales is due to a ripple effect caused by the slow down in the housing market. He also reported a decrease in the statewide sale tax.

The third item of the Transportation Director's Report was the Hassayampa Valley Framework Study. Mr. Anderson reported to the Committee that the Hassayampa Valley agenda item would not be heard at today's meeting and would be postponed until the next Committee meeting. He attributed the postponement to requests for technical papers and lengthy discussions on STAN II reimbursements at the Transportation Policy Committee meeting, which encroached on the time allotted to discuss the Hassayampa Valley Framework Study. The Hassayampa Valley agenda item will be moved to the TPC and TRC September agendas.

Next, Mr. Anderson reported MAG had been asked by a number of member agencies to consider the development of an integrated Regional Transit Plan for commuter rail, light rail, and the regional bus system. He announced that MAG had already started scoping work and would continue to hold discussions on the process. The intent of the plan is to assess the region's long-range transit needs beyond Proposition 400 and potentially prepare for a statewide vote in 2009-2010. There were no questions, and this concluded the Transportation Director's Report.

5. Items for Consent

Mr. Callow proceeded to the next agenda item, which was the consent agenda.

6. Red Letter Process

The ADOT Red Letter Process was the only item on the consent agenda and was not up for a vote. Mr. Callow moved on to items to be heard.

7. Arterial Life Cycle Program Status Report

Mr. Callow invited Ms. Eileen Yazzie, MAG Transportation Programming Manager, to present the Arterial Life Cycle Program (ALCP) Status Report. Ms. Yazzie announced that during the

first full fiscal year of implementing the ALCP program, MAG received 18 completed project overviews and 16 signed project agreements. She informed the Committee that by the end of the fiscal year all lead agencies had completed at least one project overview and project agreement to date, which would serve as templates for future projects.

According to Ms. Yazzie, \$57 million (m) had been deposited in the Regional Area Road Fund arterial account to date, and the end of fiscal year (EOY) 2007 account balance was \$32.9m. Ms. Yazzie also cited a decline in the RARF arterial account revenues.

Ms. Yazzie reported \$14m of the \$51m programmed for project reimbursements in fiscal year 2007 (FY07) was reimbursed during the fiscal year. The remaining \$37m was reprogrammed for other fiscal years due to project changes and deferrals. Ms. Yazzie referred to Figure 1 of the ALCP Status Report, which illustrated reprogrammed ALCP reimbursements.

Ms. Yazzie announced the ALCP Schedule for FY08 and noted the Working Group Meeting scheduled for September 6, 2007 from 2:30pm to 4:00pm. At the meeting, the Working Group will review ALCP policies and procedures. She encouraged lead agencies and other MAG member jurisdictions to attend. There were no questions, and this concluded the ALCP Status Report.

#### 8. Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2007 Final Year Closeout

Mr. Callow asked Ms. Yazzie to present the Federally Funded Projects Update. Ms. Yazzie informed the Committee that \$50m of funding for federally funded projects was deferred in FY07; however, the final amount is unclear as additional requests for deferment are still being received. Ms. Yazzie noted the amount deferred in FY07 was a significant increase over previous years (i.e. FY06 - \$13.6m; FY05 - \$16m; FY04 - \$18.4m; FY03 - \$11m).

Ms. Yazzie provided the Committee with the EOY analysis on federally funded projects. She reported that 57 projects included in the FY2007-2011 MAG Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) were slated to receive \$93.9m in federal funds. Sixteen projects received \$44.4m in federal funds; two projects were abandoned; and, 39 projects slated to received \$48.5m were deferred. Two of the 39 deferred projects were ALCP projects. The remaining 37 deferred projects were local government projects. Twenty-one of the 37 projects were deferred for the first time in FY07. The remaining 16 projects have been deferred more than once.

Ms. Yazzie expressed concern about the number of projects being deferred. Mr. Eric Anderson stated that the adopted guidelines allow communities to defer a project for one year, but added that retribution should occur if projects are repeatedly deferred. Mr. Anderson informed the Committee that projects from the FY2004-2008 TIP were still being deferred and expressed concerns about level of carry forward and the impact of the deferments on fiscal management. Mr. Anderson also expressed concerns about the 2010 Performance Audit and felt that excessive deferments might raise concerns about the management of federally funded projects. In particular, he believed the excessive deferments would raise two questions: (1) why are the projects being deferred and (2) what can MAG do to reduce the number of deferments?

After Mr. Anderson raised his points, Ms. Yazzie continued with the Federally Funded Projects

Update. She stated that by the end of FY07, 16 of the 37 deferred projects were inactive and that the member agencies had not contacted the Arizona Department of Transportation about the projects. Ms. Yazzie suggested that MAG should consider reviewing current programming practices and policies to address the deferment issue. She suggested the possibility of adding the design phase to the TIP as a method to address the deferment issue, and encouraged MAG and member agencies to revisit their organization's closeout policies. She also encouraged MAG to work on the information exchange with member agencies and the ADOT Local Governments Section to resolve this issue.

Ms. Yazzie informed the Committee of the Local-Government MAG Working group, which meets 3-4 times year to discuss and set priorities for MAG and the ADOT Local Government section to work towards together. Members of the working group include Chandler, Gilbert, Mesa, Phoenix, and Scottsdale. The working group has not met since March/April and will probably meet again sometime in October. Discussion followed, and Ms. Yazzie explained that during the last working group meeting that she had asked the local governments to develop a schedule of milestones for projects. She also acknowledged that project schedules vary by project type and added that the working group would address this issue again in October and determine what the status of the issue at that point.

Ms. Yazzie announced the availability of the new MAG Fed-TIP website and thanked Mr. Paul Ward, Mr. Steve Tate, and Mr. Matt Nelson for their efforts in developing the website. The website is intended to serve as a primary information source for federally funded projects in the TIP and allows users review project specific information, such as the project manager, ADOT manager, project history and costs. The website also includes a project calendar that will give users a two-year milestone view of a project. Each project listed on the website includes a support page with contact information. Ms. Yazzie directed users to access the site at directly at <http://fedtip.mag.maricopa.gov/index.asp> or indirectly through the MAG website.

Mr. Callow asked if there were any questions or comments about the Federally Funded Projects Update or the new MAG Fed-TIP website. Ms. Tami Ryall from the City of Gilbert thanked Ms. Yazzie for the effort that went into developing the website and congratulated Ms. Yazzie and the others on their results of those efforts. Mr. Carlos de Leon seconded Ms. Ryall's comments and asked Ms. Yazzie who was responsible for administering and updating the website. Ms. Yazzie replied that Mr. Steve Tate, MAG Senior Transportation Planner, collaborates with ADOT and visits ADOT bi-monthly to update the website. Ms. Yazzie continued to state that she hopes the website will serve to facilitate the exchange of information between MAG, member agencies, and ADOT.

Mr. David Moody from the City of Peoria inquired who individuals should contact person in event the project status on the website was incorrect. Ms. Yazzie encouraged Mr. Moody and the other member agencies to contact the project manager to update the information and also to inform MAG via Mr. Tate or herself. No additional questions or comments were raised, and Mr. Callow thanked Ms. Yazzie for her report. This concluded the Federally Funded Projects Update.

9. The Interstate-10 - Hassayampa Valley Transportation Framework Study

Mr. Callow announced that the Committee would not be hearing the Interstate 10 - Hassayampa Valley Transportation Framework Study agenda item at this time.

10. Status of Planning Studies by Valley Metro Rail

Mr. Callow introduced Mr. Wulfe Grote from Valley Metro Rail (METRO). As part of METRO's promise to periodically update the TRC on planning activities, Mr. Wolfe provided the Committee with a status update on light rail planning studies currently underway. Mr. Grote reported that METRO is conducting a number of on-going activities as part of the implementation process for these projects. First, there are two projects which are system level analyses, the Systems Configuration Study and a sub-regional study in the Phoenix-Glendale area. METRO is also conducting specific corridor planning that includes alternatives analysis and environmental impact statements.

According to Mr. Grote, the purpose of the Systems Configuration Study is to determine how the 57-mile light rail corridor should be operated. In particular, the study is attempting to determine, which and where corridors should merge, the need for corresponding transit facilities such as transfer stations, as well as other maintenance and operations needs. In addition, the study will assess opportunities for express operations along the corridors.

The study is divided into two phases, capacity and demand. According to Mr. Grote, the capacity phase is near completion. During the study, Central Avenue (Central) became a focal point as a merging point for numerous corridors. This raised concerns as to the potential impact merging corridors would have on Central. As a result, METRO reviewed multiple options, such as limiting the number of corridors merging on Central and operating multiple lines on the Central corridor. Other options reviewed included adjusting headways and level of service frequency.

METRO conducted AM and PM peak analysis to assess potential impact to the Central Corridor. The PM analysis indicated that as headways decrease the level of service also decreases. One exception the level of service decline occurred at Central and Highland Avenue. Mr. Grote attributed to the reduced impact on cross streets to Highland running parallel to Central. He anticipates a 5 minute headway as the most likely threshold. Mr. Grote continued on stating Valley Metro Rail's goal was to find a balance between transit and street service.

Mr. Grote stated that express transit service was another area of interest analyzed. The analysis revealed potential problems with express service on the corridors as planned. The increase in service associated with the express service would cause trains to "catch up with each other" and cause the system to breakdown. Adding offline stops would remedy this issue however it would require substantial additional investment in the system. For that reason, express operations were not recommended at this time. Discussion followed, and Mr. Grote continued on to discuss the Glendale-Phoenix subregional area study.

The original subregional area study showed the transit corridor going to downtown Glendale in 2017. Due to changes in the region, METRO wanted to assess if the corridor placement was the

best option or if other options should be evaluated. As a result, METRO opted to review three alternatives, inclusive of the original line. The first option would extend from I-10 northward to the 101 Loop and out to the stadium area. Another option would extend west of the downtown Glendale area. The final option would extend to Thunderbird Road along I-17 to the Thunderbird Medical Complex in Glendale. Currently, METRO is the process of gathering data for the initial analysis and hopes to complete an evaluation matrix and report by the end of December. Discussion followed as to the decision making process for corridor selection.

Ms. Patrice Kraus from the City of Chandler asked Mr. Grote if METRO's intention was to prioritize the corridors for implementation or if METRO was analyzing the corridor to select the best option. Mr. Grote replied that METRO intended to determine which corridor would be the best investment for the region, and that it would be a policy decision to identify any future corridors for investment. Discussion followed.

During the discussion, Mr. Anderson encouraged member agencies to approach light rail transit planning and corridor selection from a regional perspective as opposed to a piecemeal fashion. In addition, he discussed the scoping process for the Regional Transit Plan and mentioned that some potential sources of funding may have been identified for this undertaking.

Ms. Kraus expressed concerns about aspects of the decision-making process and the level of public input. Mr. Grote also reminded the Committee that any significant changes to the corridor, such as location, would require a major plan amendment that would require approval from MAG, RPTA, METRO, and other stakeholders in the process. He also invited MAG member agencies to attend the Systems Planning Working Group meetings. Mr. Johnson expressed the City of Glendale was concerned if the current corridor is the best option.

Mr. Grote continued to discuss the Glendale-Phoenix subarea corridor study. To date, METRO has established evaluation criteria at the corridor and station level. In November, METRO hopes to report the results of the initial evaluation to the TRC.

Currently, METRO is conducting alternatives analyses and the environmental assessments for three corridors in the region (Mesa, I-10 West in Phoenix, and Tempe south). The alternative analyses is the first step of the federal process. The two goals of the alternatives analyses is to find the best route(s) for high capacity transit and to define the technology to be used. METRO has not determined that light rail is the best alternative for these corridors. As a result, METRO will review the feasibility of other options, such as bus rapid transit, commuter rail, and street cars.

The Mesa Corridor study area is roughly from Power Road to Mesa Drive. METRO is assessing the corridor for potential bus rapid transit and light rail improvements. METRO recognizes the potential of Small Starts funding for bus rapid transit in the area and is coordinating with the federal government on a regularly basis. This project has been underway since February/March 2007. METRO has already developed an initial set of alternatives and has started to analyze travel demand for the corridor. The formal scoping process for the corridor study is scheduled to start this week. METRO is focusing on Main Street Drive for the high capacity options. The alternative reviewed include options on Main, 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue, 1<sup>st</sup> Street, and combinations of these streets.

Ms. Mary O'Connor from Scottsdale from inquired to how this study relates to the study conducted by the RPTA. Mr Grote replied that the RPTA study focused on the limitations of the service expected to start in 2008, and was primarily an operations assessment. METRO assessment is focusing on the capital investment potential for corridor.

Ms. O'Connor stated that the two studies bring up the need to have a regional overlook because the work seems to be duplicative.

The second study is the I-10 West study which starts at the initial 20 mile line in downtown Phoenix roughly to the 101 Loop. Similar to the Mesa study, METRO is reviewing light rail, bus rapid transit, etc. to determine the best technology for the corridor. ADOT investment in the freeway expansion planned for 2012 speed up the time line for conducting this study. METRO has received a Notice to Proceed from ADOT and is the process of coordinating with the FTA.

The final corridor study is the Tempe South alternative analysis. The study area is from the initial 20 mile line in downtown Tempe south to Southern Avenue. Like the previous study mentioned, the potential for various technologies will be reviewed; however, METRO has not conducted a bus rapid transit for this corridor. METRO received a Notice to Proceed three weeks ago.

Ms. O'Connor again expressed concern about coordination issues and redundancy of efforts. In particular, Ms. O'Connor wanted to know how METRO planned to coordinate with the HDR study on the life cycle program for RPTA to identify the need for a regional study to define bus rapid transit the region. She also expressed interest in formal and informal methods of receiving public input for the studies. Mr. Grote stated that METRO is coordinating with RPTA to integrate RPTA's efforts into METRO's projects to avoid the duplication of efforts. Mr. Grote agreed with Ms. O'Connor and suggested the need for a Systems Plan Update to help integrate the different modes in a comprehensive plan. In conclusion, Mr. Grote referred the Committee to contact Mr. Jim Mathien at METRO if they were interested in participating with the working group. There were no additional questions, and this concluded the Mr. Grote's report on the status of METRO's planning studies.

#### 8. Member Agency Update

Mr. Callow asked members of the Committee whether they would like to provide updates; address any issues or areas of concern regarding transportation at the regional level; and asked whether any members in attendance would like to address recent information that was relevant to transportation within their communities. There were no comments.

#### 9. Next Meeting Date

Mr. Callow informed members in attendance that the next meeting of the Committee would be held on September 27, 2007. There being no further business, Mr. Callow adjourned the meeting at 11:13 a.m.