

MINUTES OF THE
MARICOPA ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS
TRANSPORTATION POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING
August 19, 2020

This meeting was conducted virtually via Zoom.
The link to a video recording of the meeting can be found [here](#).

MEMBERS ATTENDING

#Phoenix: Mayor Kate Gallego, Chair	#Peoria: Councilmember Bridget Binsbacher
#Chandler: Mayor Kevin Hartke, Vice Chair	
#Avondale: Mayor Kenneth Weise	#Queen Creek: Mayor Gail Barney
#Buckeye: Mayor Jackie Meck	#Roc Arnett Consulting: Roc Arnett
#Glendale, Mayor Jerry Weiers	#Scottsdale: Councilmember Suzanne Klapp
#Goodyear: Mayor Georgia Lord	*State Transportation Board: Sam Elters
*Huellmantel and Affiliates: Charles Huellmantel	#Sunland Asphalt: Doug DeClusin
#Maricopa: Mayor Christian Price	#Surprise: Mayor Skip Hall
#Maricopa County Board of Supervisors: Supervisor Jack Sellers	*Swift Transportation: Dave Berry
#Mesa: Mayor John Giles	#Valley Partnership: Cheryl Lombard
	#Vulcan Materials Company: Mark Reardon

* Those members neither present nor represented by proxy.

Participated by web/telephone conference call.

1. Call to Order

The meeting of the Transportation Policy Committee (TPC) was called to order by Chair Kate Gallego, Phoenix, at 11:32 a.m.

Chair Gallego reminded members to mute their phones when not speaking and gave some additional meeting instructions to members.

Chair Gallego noted that members of the public were asked to submit written comments related to this meeting on the MAG website at least one hour prior to the posted start time for the meeting. She stated there were no comments.

Chair Gallego indicated she was happy to chair her first meeting of the TPC. She recognized Mayor Jenn Daniels who recently stepped down as her position as mayor for her service to the region as the mayor of Gilbert and as a member of this committee. Chair Gallego next congratulated TPC members who won their recent elections including

Councilmember Binsbacher, Mayor Giles, Mayor Hall, Mayor Weise, Mayor Weiers, and Supervisor Sellers.

MAG Executive Director Eric Anderson stated public comment was received from Mr. Walt Gray regarding agenda item 3 prior to the start of the meeting and mentioned the comments would be included in the meeting minutes.

Mr. Gray's comments follow:

"Two Comments Re Item #3, Update of New Regional Transportation Plan: 1. The computer model used to forecast the amount and direction of travel should be changed before any planning is done. The computer model, basically the same that has been used for the past 40 years, is outdated because it has only led to using the same corridors for travel because it always has been based on a home to work system. Thus, we have gone from arterial roads to freeways to super freeways, to light rail, and soon to commuter rail. All the while, there is bumper to bumper traffic; long commute times, and reduced quality of life for suburban and Inner City residents alike. The computer model should be linked to a new approach to comprehensive metropolitan planning in the Valley. The direction of the plan should come before the computer model is revised. Too long MAG and its member cities have emphasized a regional transportation system to concentrate employment and commerce in Downtown Phoenix, connecting the employment with bedroom communities in the suburbs. This development approach ignores the basics of good, coordinated, city-by-city participation in balanced regional development, including complementary land use patterns for schools, commercial centers, parks, streets, bike lanes and the like. This type of balanced development would be much better than the current system and corresponding computer model that MAG uses that leads to largely bedroom suburban communities commuting to jobs largely in Downtown Phoenix. These planning and computer models, consequently, have led to metropolitan socioeconomic segregation, having gainfully employed suburban commuters traveling right through the Phoenix Inner City and its very large underemployed population, to reach jobs Inner City residents are closer to. The basic element of good comprehensive planning is good paying jobs close to home--jobs in communities with social, economic, cultural and political balance. We do not have balanced development in Phoenix or the Valley at this time. The result is not only increased infrastructure costs, higher air pollution levels, and higher commuter expenses. At the same time, the unbalanced development leads to reduced quality family time, less efficiency from too-big government and inequitable financing (sales taxes) for access, safety and protection for the Downtown workers and businesses. We need to train the Inner City workforce, over time, to take over more and more Downtown and Inner City jobs. This alone will go a long way toward upgrading the Inner City through resident investments in housing, schools, tax resources, buying power,

recreation and the like. Phoenix, which has been very lax in addressing its Inner City and which, too often, has taken counterproductive measures, such as gentrification, should stop gentrification; upgrade Inner City communities through strategic investments in streets, sidewalks, bike lanes, shade, parking, and the like. The combination of workforce development for the Inner City matched with employment centers with ever rising job opportunities will be a major step toward balanced development and away from political-centered, friend rewarding, partisan decision-making when it comes to recruiting employers for all parts of the Valley. Not to be overlooked in comprehensive planning is social planning that is complementary to physical planning. MAG currently is engaged in such social planning elements as homelessness, domestic violence and aging services. However, these are more program focused rather than based on comprehensive physical and social planning. MAG is blessed with an experienced, talented and dedicated social planning staff that produced some ground-breaking work in the first decade of this Century. However, over the past 10 years or so, the staff has been directed away from planning and toward program administration. This is a grave error. Social planning, for example, fits with physical planning in locating shelters, housing and services for the homeless population and domestic violence victims. Social planning also can be used for community enrichment by documenting the need for cultural and artistic venues, robust political participation and the like. 2. In considering the new Regional Transportation Plan, it is imperative that taxes for Motor Carriers be reviewed. Motor Carrier taxes have not been increased in years, yet Motor Carriers do more damage to the freeways and state highways than any other single user. At one time, ADOT estimated that it took 7,000 vehicles to do the same amount of damage as one semi. Motor Carriers should not be overtaxed because they are a business. However, they should pay their fair share along with commuters, smaller delivery vehicles, public transportation and the like. To have an equitable tax system for Motor Carriers, it is much better to have a State Transportation Plan that incorporates the best of the regional plans prepared by councils of governments and their member cities and counties, and ties them together with transportation facilities and services of statewide significance. However, we should broaden all regional plans to include a comprehensive, coordinated, city-by-city look at physical and social planning. In this way, we not only will have balanced regions, but also a balanced state that gives all its residents the benefits of comprehensive, balanced planning." END COMMENT

Chair Gallego thanked Mr. Gray for his participation.

2. Approval of Consent Agenda

Chair Gallego stated agenda items 2A through 2C were on the Consent Agenda and asked if any member had questions about any of the items. There were none.

Mayor Weiers moved to approve the Consent Agenda items. Mayor Hartke seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously. Mr. Arnett, Mayor Barney, Councilmember Binsbacher, Mr. DeClusin, Mayor Gallego, Mayor Giles, Mayor Hartke, Mr. Huellmantel, Councilmember Klapp, Ms. Lombard, Mayor Lord, Mr. Reardon, Mayor Price, Supervisor Sellers, Mayor Weise, and Mayor Weiers voted in favor of the motion. The vote on the motion carried unanimously.

2A. Approval of the June 17, 2020, Meeting Minutes

The Transportation Policy Committee, by consent, approved the June 17, 2020, meeting minutes.

2B. Transportation Improvement Program Project Changes

The Transportation Policy Committee, by consent, recommended approval of amendments and administrative modifications as appropriate to the Fiscal Year 2020-2024 MAG Transportation Improvement Program, and 2040 MAG Regional Transportation Plan Update, as appropriate.

The Fiscal Year (FY) 2020-2024 MAG Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and the 2040 MAG Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) Update were approved by the Regional Council on February 26, 2020, and have since been amended three times.

Since approval of the last amendment, additional changes and modifications are needed.

2C. Arterial Life Cycle Program Status Report, January – June 2020

The Arterial Life Cycle Program (ALCP) is the financial management tool for the arterial street component of the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). Management of the program is guided by the ALCP Policies and Procedures, which were approved by the MAG Regional Council on June 24, 2015. The ALCP Policy and Procedures require that a status report is provided to MAG committee members to give an update on all project requirements and financial information. This agenda item reflects the second semi-annual update for FY 2020.

This item was on the agenda for information.

3. Update on the Development of a New Regional Transportation Plan

MAG Transportation Planning Program Manager Audra Koester Thomas provided an

update on efforts to develop a new Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) that will serve as the basis for the extension of Proposition 400, including the planning work underway, technical work associated with the development of the new RTP and activities associated with the RTP Management Committee Work Group.

Ms. Thomas' presentation focused on an overview of the performance-based evaluation framework, the activities that will occur over the next six months, and how these activities will move the region along in the process of going from a full needs catalog to a refined and fiscally constrained investment project and program portfolio. She began by reviewing the plan's vision and goals. The purpose of the RTP is to establish a sustainable, resilient, multimodal transportation investment program that connects people with opportunities to prosper and thrive with six goals to achieve this, which include safety; prosperity; responsiveness; livability; preservation; and mobility.

Ms. Thomas reviewed the performance-based evaluation process and the steps the region will take to get from the full needs catalog to the project and program portfolio. The full needs catalog comprises more than 1,300 different project and program ideas submitted by member agencies, regionally identified needs, studied projects over the last decade, as well as projects that were deferred out of Proposition 400 funded programs. The RTP project evaluation steps include regional project screening, project-level evaluation, project/program review and evaluation, and a scenario planning and tradeoff analysis, which will inform development of a fiscally-constrained project and program portfolio.

Ms. Thomas next discussed some of the feedback already received by the Management Committee RTP work group and Management Committee. She provided a summary of the performance homework assignment feedback from July's Management Committee work group, which staff used to gain feedback into some of the elements of the process. Staff focused on receiving feedback for how to evaluate larger projects and what uncertainties or policies should be tested in a trade-off analysis. This work involved homework assignments which were included as a part of the agenda packet for today's meeting. Ms. Thomas went over key takeaways from the homework including feedback on the modal evaluation frameworks. She noted some of the takeaways are that the revised six goals are on target, with some members ranking mobility, safety and prosperity higher in importance. She commented that a few managers found all six goals to be of equal importance and therefore the group found that weighting criteria within modal project evaluation categories to be the best method moving forward. Ms. Thomas also mentioned feedback from the frameworks to evaluate freeway and highway projects, arterial framework projects, and high-capacity transit projects. She also detailed suggested qualitative and policy considerations offered by managers, in addition to ideas offered for project implementation and scope development.

Ms. Thomas indicated the Momentum website has launched. She encouraged TPC members to share the website and social media handles with their constituents to help build an online presence, noting the pandemic will require heavy reliance on the website and its virtual tools to connect with the public and leverage opportunities for feedback through virtual meetings, online surveys, and other tools.

Ms. Thomas also reviewed next steps and key deliverables coming up in September that include a peer region analysis, the draft needs catalogue for which staff will be seeking direction from the TPC and other policymakers to identify what potential programs are regional priorities, as well as documentation of future RTP and extension policy questions. In late September, robust conversation will begin on transit policy, including the region's approach to a future regional bus system and the role of the region and local communities in each funding transit investments. She noted that in response to questions about MAG's transit responsibilities, a memo was included in today's agenda packet that details the transit planning roles in the region, codified in state statute as well as a planning agreement between Valley Metro, City of Phoenix and MAG.

Chair Gallego stated this is an exciting time in our region with discussions about how to continue to grow toward a strong, sustainable future as America's fastest growing county. She thanked staff for their work on the RTP as well as the Management Committee for their work in defining what regional priorities are for the extension of the regional tax. Chair Gallego asked if next steps would include the discussion of roles and responsibilities with other levels of government. She gave an example of MAG funding a freeway project and ADOT building it, and how to determine who is responsible for ongoing maintenance, landscaping, and other aspects.

Mr. Anderson stated last fall, MAG rolled out an analysis of the long-term maintenance needs for our region's highway system that traditionally has been a state-level responsibility, paid for out of the Arizona Highway User Revenue Fund (HURF). He added the gas tax in Arizona has not changed since 1991 and the federal gas tax has not changed since 1993, resulting in financial constraints for ADOT. Some of the internal discussion centers around if the region continues to build and improve highways, will there be money to maintain the basic structure as well as safety improvements. Mr. Anderson noted part of the peer region analysis was studying how other regions handle maintenance and added that highway systems are typically maintained with state funding sources.

Mr. Anderson emphasized the work ahead for the TPC, Management Committee, and Regional Council. He added a question staff continues to get is when MAG will start talking about the policy questions and noted the policy questions are answered throughout the planning effort. Staff is putting together a document that takes different policy questions

and lays them into the planning process. Mr. Anderson commented he gets a lot of questions about what is going to be the rate and term of the sales tax extension. He stated that it will depend on where the region ends up on the tradeoff analysis identifying the region's top priority projects and programs. The chart presented earlier noted step 4 where tradeoff analysis will determine what transportation projects and programs the region will be able to deliver with a continuation of a half-cent, a penny or more; this will inform discussion and decisions on what the region can fund, and what that will mean in terms of quality of transportation moving forward. Mr. Anderson indicated the peer region analysis that will be distributed in September will show that our region is no longer in the top tier of transportation investments for metro areas around the country like it once was. He added our county's peers have stepped up their regional investments in transportation, further emphasizing the continued need to increase revenues from other sources at the state and federal government level.

Mayor Hartke recalled Mr. Anderson mentioned a document is coming that will start the process around policy questions and asked when MAG hopes to get that out to TPC members.

Mr. Anderson indicated staff completed the draft document yesterday and sent it to members of the Management Committee for review. He noted MAG was starting the review process with that committee because they provided staff with an initial list of policy questions. Mr. Anderson stated the document should be ready to distribute to the TPC in a week or so. He noted there are two documents: the first is a list of policy questions with a narrative description of each one, and the second document places policy questions within the evaluation process so policymakers will be able to see where in the process policy question discussions will occur. Mr. Anderson added that some planning processes are linear and this one is not, it is iterative. As policymakers start getting into different scenarios and evaluating tradeoffs, they will be looking at how projects improve our regional transportation system and the mobility of our citizens, and if the investment package that comes as a result of this planning process resonates with voters.

Mayor Hartke commented that voters, no matter where they reside in the county, need to have tie-in to and support for the investment plan. He stated he looks forward to participating in the process and answering the policy questions.

Mr. Anderson stated he is aware there has been some frustration among managers and elected officials wanting to begin policy discussions. He noted that with this process it is almost impossible to talk about policy questions in isolation, adding the need to be taken in context of tradeoffs and other elements. Mr. Anderson added a lot of policy discussion will take place throughout the remainder of the year and said there would be a lot of

information coming out over the next month to review.

Supervisor Sellers stated securing funding for investment in the future is critical to ensure that the region is successful for the 20 to 25 years the plan will go into the future. He noted policymakers need to be engaging the right people and planning for future innovations and technology like intelligent vehicles and intelligent transportation.

Mr. Anderson stated that although Supervisor Sellers' experienced some audio glitches during his comments, he believes he wanted to make sure the plan takes into consideration advanced technologies like autonomous vehicles moving forward.

Chair Gallego asked to see the presentation slide that lists the six goals to see if innovation is reflected and captures what Supervisor Sellers was referring to. She stated our region is at the forefront of new technology and MAG has done a great job utilizing new technology.

Ms. Thomas referred to the slide listing the six RTP goals and pointed out that the "responsiveness" goal refers to expanding travel choices that accommodate future growth and are flexible in adapting to changing needs and innovations. That language recognizes the difficulty and complexity but need to consider advance technology. In reviewing the variety of potential project and program ideas that were submitted as part of the RTP call for projects, and are being studied at MAG over the course of the ten-year period, intelligent transportation systems (ITS) solutions and emerging technology are notable in the forthcoming needs catalogue. Even some basics in fiber technology continue to pay dividends from the early investment this region made within our regional community network; there is a need to continue expanding that network into the future. She noted that the responsiveness goal is intended to acknowledge that transportation innovation must be considered in the plan and that future program and project funding should be responsive to emerging technology.

Chair Gallego commented that it is hard to label these goals with a single word. She added the word responsiveness does not fully capture advanced technology but the description does.

Supervisor Sellers thanked staff for their explanation.

Chair Gallego commented livability and sustainability are different and wondered if the right word is being used.

Mayor Lord expressed concern looking at the list of goals and added she hopes the list is just a list and could be placed in a different order. She stated the most important goal is

mobility to move people and goods. Mayor Lord stated Arizona is a fast-growing state with industry and commented she believes safety comes with mobility. She said she would like to see an emphasis on mobility because she believes prosperity comes with mobility and without mobility, the state will not be economically competitive. Mayor Lord added she believes in sustainability and that cities are doing a great job to support the region's health industry.

Mayor Weise stated he agrees with what Mayor Lord said and how transportation affects the West and East Valleys. He noted he would like to have a conversation about legacy projects from Proposition 400 that for financial reasons have been pushed back to the Proposition 400 extension and what the process will be to ensure those projects are part of the conversation moving forward.

Councilmember Binsbacher stated she agrees with Mayor Lord's comments and added that emphasis on mobility is important and safety is also a top priority.

4. Legislative Update

Mr. Anderson reported MAG is following activity at the federal level, including discussions about whether there will be additional COVID-19 stimulus. He noted there has been some work at the committee level on reauthorization and mentioned the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act authorization ends this year but added he does not think it will be renewed in its current form. Mr. Anderson added the Act will probably be a part of a Continuing Resolution.

Mr. Anderson stated the November elections could affect the composition of the Administration and Congress, as well as the Arizona Legislature. He stated MAG continues to have conversations with legislators to ensure lines of communication remain open, including with Senate Transportation Committee Chair Senator David Livingston. He added he does not know who the chair will be for the Arizona House Transportation Committee because current chair Senator Noel Campbell did not run for reelection. MAG's legislative consultants, Policy AZ, have done a great job helping the agency navigate potential changes in the legislature as well as to work through some of the policy questions for the extension planning.

Mr. Anderson indicated MAG continues to try to get the State to entertain an increase in the gas tax or an alternative to fund the HURF and stated this effort has been a priority for the past couple of years. The State needs a significant amount of money to maintain the Arizona state highway system. Outside of Maricopa County there is not money for expansion projects. He commented the State is slowly running into a situation where they

are not going to have any money for projects moving forward and at some point will have to take on this issue to increase revenue going into the HURF.

Chair Gallego commented policymakers will wait until November to see what happens in the elections.

5. Request for Future Agenda Items

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

No requests were noted.

6. Comments from the Committee

An opportunity was provided for Transportation Policy Committee members to present a brief summary of current events. The Transportation Policy Committee is not allowed to propose, discuss, deliberate or take action at the meeting on any matter in the summary, unless the specific matter is properly noticed for legal action.

Chair Gallego again congratulated members who won recent elections.

Adjournment

There being no further business, Chair Gallego adjourned the meeting at 12:15 p.m.

Secretary

Chair