

MINUTES OF THE
MARICOPA ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS
TRANSPORTATION REVIEW COMMITTEE

January 9, 2001

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

MEMBERS ATTENDING

Wickenburg: Fred Carpenter, Chair	Mesa: Ron Krosting for Jeff Martin
ADOT: Dan Lance	Paradise Valley: Tom Martinsen
Avondale: Michael Powell for William Bates	Peoria: David Moody
*Buckeye: Joe Blanton	Phoenix: Jack Tevlin, Vice-Chair
Chandler: Bryan Patterson	RPTA: Bryan Jungwirth for Ken Driggs
*Fountain Hills: Randy Harrell	Scottsdale: Michelle Korf for John C. Little
Gilbert: Tami Ryall	*Surprise: Ellis Perl
Glendale: Jim Book	Tempe: Glenn Kephart
Goodyear: Cato Esquivel	
Litchfield Park: Mike Cartsonis	
Maricopa County: Chris Plumb for Tom Buick	

EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS ATTENDING

*Regional Bicycle Task Force: Eric Iwersen, Tempe	Pedestrian Working Group: Reed Kempton, Maricopa County Dept of Transportation
*Street Committee: Grant Anderson, Glendale ITS Committee: Jim Book	*Telecommunications Advisory Group: Jim Hull

* Members neither present nor represented by proxy.

OTHERS PRESENT

Eric Anderson, MAG	Ali Makarachi, Phoenix
Bob Antila, RPTA	Brian Fellows, Mesa
Stuart Boggs, MAG	Dawn Coomer, MAG
Chuck Eaton, ADOT	Kwi-Sung Kang
Jon Green, Parsons	Lynn Timmons, Phoenix
Bill Hayden, ADOT	Mark Schlappi, MAG
Don Herp, Phoenix	Chris Voigt, MAG
Roger Herzog, MAG	Paul Ward, MAG
Terry Johnson, Glendale	

1. Call to Order

Fred Carpenter, Chairman , called the meeting to order at 10:08 a.m.

2. Approval of Minutes of December 12, 2000

Turning to the first order of business, Chairman Carpenter asked if there were any changes or amendments to the meeting minutes. There being none, the Chairman asked for a motion. Jack Tevlin moved to approve the minutes as amended, with Bryan Jungwirth seconding. The minutes as amended were subsequently approved by unanimous voice vote.

3. Call to the Audience

Turning to the next order of business, Chairman Carpenter asked if there were any members of the public in attendance wishing to address the Committee. There being none, the Chairman turned to the next order of business.

4. Amend the Recommendation of Projects for CMAQ Funding in FY 2006 of the FY 2002 -2006 MAG Transportation Improvement Program

Chairman Carpenter introduced Eric Anderson of MAG who briefed the Committee on the letter received by Arizona Department of Transportation, Division Director Mary Lynn Tischer from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) regarding the proposed list of CMAQ funded projects. Mr. Anderson noted that FHWA had expressed concerns over three projects in the list approved by the Committee at its meeting of December 12, 2000.

Mr. Anderson described the projects in question: a multi-modal path requested by Paradise Valley; mid street pedestrian refuges requested by Tempe; and a pedestrian overpass on Camelback Road requested by Phoenix. Mr. Anderson stated that in their letter, FHWA had taken the position that the Paradise Valley project should be reclassified as a sidewalk and its air quality benefit recalculated accordingly. He noted FHWA also felt that Tempe's pedestrian project addressed safety issues and had a small air quality benefit. For this reason the agency felt that the refuges should be constructed using some other source of federal funds such as STP.

Turning to the pedestrian bridge project requested by Phoenix, Mr. Anderson told the Committee that FHWA's opinion reflected the project's low air quality score, their concerns over ADA accessibility, and whether the facility would be accessible to the public at all hours of the day. He noted that the City of Phoenix had sent a letter to FHWA responding to these concerns. Mr. Anderson stated that, after considering Phoenix's arguments, FHWA still felt that another source of funding other than CMAQ would be a better fit for their project.

Glenn Kephart handed out copies of a memo to the Committee that described the scope of Tempe's pedestrian refuge project and summarized its benefits. He noted that Tempe's priority was the development of a safe, efficient and modally balanced transportation system. Referring to FHWA's policies and guidelines, Mr. Kephart argued that crosswalk projects such as the one proposed by Tempe were in fact eligible for CMAQ funding. He also noted that the MAG Bicycle Taskforce had recommended the project for funding. He asked the Committee for their support.

Responding to Mr. Kephart's argument, Eric Anderson observed that FHWA's concerns were not over eligibility issue, but rather over what funding source should be used to construct a given project based on the projected benefits of that project. He noted that FHWA thought that Tempe's project addressed a safety issue more than it addressed air quality and as such would be a better candidate for STP funding. Mr. Kephart asked if there had been any discussion of projects that encouraged mode splits at the meeting with FHWA. Mr. Anderson replied that there was, but the bottom line was that there could be other CMAQ eligible projects that would provide better air quality benefits than these projects.

David Moody asked what the ramifications would be if the Committee maintained the current list of projects and did not remove the three that FHWA had identified. Paul Ward replied that FHWA could not pull individual projects since they don't have a direct role in the review of the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). He noted that the only point at which they could object would be when the project is submitted to them for funding obligation. Mr. Ward also noted that other funding sources, such as STP, were available that could fund these projects.

Mr. Anderson observed that FHWA's underlying message was that CMAQ money should be used to fund the best projects that reduce congestion and improve air quality. Mike Cartsonis stated that he felt that FHWA's letter required a vigorous and articulate response. He noted that the Tempe project would encourage people to get out of their cars for short trips by making it safer for pedestrians to cross busy arterials. He further observed that regionally, there was little use of non-motorized modes for short trips.

Jack Tevlin told the Committee that he had attended the FHWA meeting. He felt that there was a desire by FHWA and ADOT to work cooperatively with MAG and its member agencies. He asked what the ramifications would be for other projects if these projects were constructed using STP funds rather than CMAQ funds. Mr. Ward replied that there would be no ramifications since the projects are eligible for STP funds. Mr. Tevlin suggested that the next funding cycle would be a good time to have a discussion with FHWA and ADOT to insure that everyone is on the same page when projects are being selected and evaluated.

Dan Lance indicated that he had also been at the meeting. He noted that FHWA staff did not have a good understanding of the projects in question and had wondered if they would be the wisest use of CMAQ funds. Mr. Lance suggested using another funding source for these projects. Chairman Carpenter asked if switching these projects to STP would result in bumping of STP projects

already in the program. Mr. Lance responded that additional Revenue Aligned Budget Authority (RABA) was available so projects would not need to be bumped. Mr. Moody expressed his concern over shifting projects between funding sources. He was worried that a shift to STP might preclude funding for other STP eligible projects.

Glenn Kephart observed that projects that add travel lanes to streets rank high for CMAQ but reduce pedestrian accessibility, thus reducing the viability of walking as an alternative mode for short trips. Mr. Cartsonis observed that FHWA's letter should be responded to. Mr. Ward noted that the letter in question had been written to ADOT and had not been copied to MAG so a direct response by MAG would be inappropriate. He argued for better cooperation between FHWA and ADOT. He further observed that half of the federal funds are committed to freeways since they do the most to address air quality issues. Mr. Ward noted that FHWA's goal was to get the most air quality benefit for the money.

Bryan Patterson expressed his concern over going head to head with FHWA over the project list. Mr. Lance noted that FHWA had lined out two of his agency's projects. He also observed that the ADOT Director must sign off on the Transportation Improvement Program. Michael Powell asked if FHWA would become directly involved when it came time to allocate funds for FY 2006 projects? Mr. Ward replied in the affirmative. Noting that these were FY 2006 projects, Mr. Powell asked if the time frame would give Tempe the opportunity to better describe the scope and benefits of their project. Mr. Ward replied that the projects were already CMAQ eligible. He pointed out that FHWA could turn the projects down on different grounds.

Mr. Tevlin observed that the projects in question did address air quality issues. He further noted that the Committee would not be capitulating if the projects could be shifted to another source and they engaged in a discussion with ADOT and FHWA in the next funding cycle to address Committee concerns. Mr. Tevlin observed that it would not be prudent to provoke FHWA if the Committee was interested in developing a cooperative process with federal highway.

Glenn Kephart made a motion, seconded by Tom Martinsen to retain the three projects in question as CMAQ funded projects. Eric Anderson suggested that Mr. Kephart consider amending his motion to include language that supports entering into discussions with ADOT and FHWA to address the issues raised by these three projects. Michael Cartsonis suggested that the Committee send a conciliatory letter to Mary Lynn Tischer of ADOT expressing the Committee's willingness to discuss these issues.

Paul Ward told the Committee that he had received requests for the additional Revenue Aligned Budget Authority. He suggested deferring action until the Committee has had the opportunity to consider these additional projects. Mr. Kephart noted that his motion does not change the Committee's original action on the project list which they took in December. Instead, the new motion addresses the Committee's desire to respond to FHWA's letter. Jim Book and Tom Martinsen both pointed out that the Committee needed to reaffirm its December action on the

CMAQ project list.

There being no further discussion on the motion, Chairman Carpenter called for the vote which was fifteen votes in favor and Dan Lance voting against the motion. The motion passed. Eric Anderson told the Committee that he would prepare a draft letter for the Committee's review at their next meeting.

Paul Ward then distributed a list of additional federal projects to the Committee. He noted that the list included both new projects and changes to existing projects. Mr. Ward told the Committee that these projects would be considered by the Committee at an upcoming meeting.

5. Cooperatively Developed MAG/ADOT/RPTA Project Rankings for State Transportation Projects

Turning to the next order of business, Chairman Carpenter introduced Chuck Eaton representing the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT). Mr. Eaton briefed the Committee on the cooperative process utilized by ADOT to rank state transportation projects. He noted that the federal guidance to state departments of transportation specified that funding estimates be developed cooperatively between ADOT, MAG, and the Regional Public Transit Authority (RPTA).

Eric Anderson told the Committee that prior to 2000, ADOT had not cooperatively developed their state transportation project list. He noted that the development of a cooperative relationship between ADOT and MAG had been a major step forward.

Mr. Eaton noted that there was \$45 million in Revenue Aligned Budget Authority now available for FY 2001 through 2005. He pointed out that this additional funding would enable ADOT to accommodate additional projects added in FY 2006. Mr. Eaton also noted that this worked out to approximately \$9 million in additional funding per year with the exception of FY 2001.

Mr. Eaton observed that ADOT was undertaking the US 60/Superstition Freeway project as a design/build. He noted that the \$270 million project was over programmed as insurance against potential cost overruns. He also pointed out that the program had been corrected to include \$6 million in park & ride projects which had been left out of FY 2004. Michael Powell noted that upon examining the program he had not seen the funding for the park & rides in 2004. Mr. Eaton replied that the funding appeared in the original handout but had been left out by error from the current handout before the Committee.

Mr. Eaton stated that the major focus of the ADOT program was to complete the regional freeway projects by 2007. He also noted that ADOT had added a major reconstruction project on state route 85. He pointed out the need for a traffic by-pass for Wickenburg and said that ADOT would attempt to address this need.

David Moody observed that Peoria and Chandler had two projects that were not on ADOT's list. He expressed his concern that the cities were not part of ADOT and MAG's cooperative process.

Mr. Eaton noted that Chandler's railroad project had been on the list but the funding ran out. He also noted that the Grand Avenue/Loop 303 TI was being programmed as part of the regional freeway plan. Mr. Eaton observed that a project scope for Loop 303 had not yet occurred so its construction had not yet been programmed for funding. Mr. Lance noted that Chandler's and Peoria's projects may be eligible for funding as CMAQ bottleneck projects.

Bryan Patterson asked what was included in the state route 87 shoulder widening shown in FY 2006. Mr. Lance replied that it was a safety improvement that would bring the roadway up to a 38 foot template with breakdown lanes. Jim Book noted that the Committee had recently taken action regarding the environmental evaluation and preliminary design of Loop 303. He wondered why ADOT's programming list did not include funding for an EIS or DCR. He asked how this could be addressed.

Mr. Anderson told the Committee that there would be an interagency meeting that afternoon at MAG to address Loop 303. He noted that the meeting would specifically address who would take the lead the project, and what the scope of that project would be. Mr. Eaton told the Committee that ADOT's list was still a draft and would need to go through a public review process and air quality analysis before it could be finalized.

Mr. Anderson asked when the bid opening on the US 60 project would occur. Mr. Lance replied that the bid opening would occur in mid March. Jim Book asked when ADOT's list would be going to public hearing. Mr. Eaton replied that a joint ADOT/MAG hearing would occur on March 1, 2001. Mr. Anderson noted that the MAG member agencies could submit written comments prior to the hearing as well as attend the hearing.

Ron Krosting, representing Jeff Martin of Mesa asked that Higley Road be substituted for Greenfield Road in the ADOT project list. There being no further discussion, Chairman Carpenter asked for a motion. Dan Lance made a motion to approve the cooperatively developed MAG/ADOT/RPTA Project Ranking for State Transportation projects with the following amendment: to substitute Higley Road for Greenfield Road for TI improvements in FY 2006. The motion was seconded by Ron Krosting.

6. HOV Study Presentation

Turning to the next item of business, Chairman Carpenter introduce Mark Schlappi of MAG who briefed the Committee on the HOV and Value Lane study undertaken by MAG.

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Mr. Green noted that there were two parts to the HOV study. One part was an update of MAG's HOV Plan. Mr. Green told the Committee that the second part of the project was a value lane study that looked at the existing capacity of the HOV network and evaluated the potential for single occupant vehicle tolling on this network. Mr. Green noted that his presentation would be given in two parts, with the first dealing with the update of the 1998 HOV Plan and the second dealing with the Value Lane Study.

Mr. Green described the primary tasks undertaken as part of the update, including the public involvement plan. He noted that a public opinion survey had been conducted which showed that 86 percent of respondents approved of HOV lanes and 75 percent believed that more HOV lanes should be constructed on the region's freeway network.

Mr. Green discussed the types of HOV infrastructure that would be constructed. In addition to HOV lanes, he described locations in the freeway network where direct HOV lane connectors would be developed between freeways and where on/off ramps would provide direct access to the lanes.

Mr. Green briefed the Committee on the traffic modeling that had been undertaken by MAG of the existing and proposed HOV network. He noted that the base case used by the modeling team was 1998 and that model runs had been done for both 2010 and 2020 levels of service. Mr. Green told the Committee that the model runs for 2020 showed most of the freeway system's general purpose lanes operating at level of service "D" or "F". During this same period, he noted that the HOV lanes showed little congestion. Glenn Kephart asked if the projected level of service on the general purpose lanes reflected the presence of the HOV lanes. Mr. Green replied that it did. Jack Tevlin noted that Interstate 17 was operating at level of service "D" even with the HOV lanes in place. Mr. Green responded that while this was true, this still reflected an average traffic speed of 40 miles per hour which was not gridlock.

Mr. Green then summarized the HOV Plan elements for the Committee. He noted that the plan included policy guidelines which remained unchanged from the 1998 plan. Mr. Green observed that the plan updated the HOV system described in the 1998 plan. He also noted that the plan included an alternatives analysis for HOV facilities and made both near term and long term

recommendations for development of the region's HOV network. Mr. Green told the Committee that the underlying recommendation was to ultimately develop HOV lanes on the entire regional freeway system. Toward this end, the plan recommended that additional capacity be designed into new segments of the regional freeway system to allow for the addition of HOV lanes and connectors in the future.

Mr. Green then briefed the Committee on a color coded map of HOV system priorities. Jim Book observed that the priorities described on the map needed to be date oriented. Mr. Green responded that the priorities were not date specific even though 2020 traffic performance was utilized when developing the priorities. Eric Anderson noted that the priorities were linked to funding and performance measures. Mr. Kephart observed that the discussion gets into a policy issue. He noted that the 2020 level of service (LOS) projections showed too big a difference between LOS on general purpose lanes and HOV lanes. Mr. Anderson pointed out that HOV lanes that didn't meet the minimum cost/benefit level were not included in the 2020 model runs. Dan Lance noted that the modeling was based on use assumptions that were extensions of the current balance of uses. Mr. Kephart restated his concern that the model runs showed LOS "F" and "A" on the same road segments.

Michael Powell asked the consultant how many drivers did not use HOV lanes at all. Mr. Green responded that approximately 33 percent of driver did not use the lanes. Mr. Powell asked how this compared to California's experience. Mr. Green noted that no comparable survey had been done of California's HOV system so it would be difficult to do a point by point comparison. Mr. Powell asked if HOV lanes were really working in California. Mr. Green responded that the HOV lanes did fill up and would eventually be operating a LOS "F".

There being not further discussion, Chairman Carpenter asked for a motion. Jack Tevlin made a motion, seconded by Dan Lance, to approve the proposed HOV Plan. In subsequent discussion of the motion Jim Book indicated his opposition, noting that the study did not include HOV lanes on the Agua Fria (Loop 101) freeway among its priorities. The motion was subsequently approved by a vote of 11 for and two against. The two voting in opposition were Bryan Patterson and Jim Book.

7. Value Lane Study

Discussion continued to next meeting.

8. Next Meeting Date

Turning to the last order of business, Chairman Carpenter told the Committee that the next regular meeting will be held on January 23, 2001, at 10:00 a.m. in the Saguaro Room, 2nd floor, MAG offices.

There being no other business, the Chairman adjourned the meeting at 11:58 a.m.

