

MINUTES OF THE
MARICOPA ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS
REGIONAL COUNCIL TRANSPORTATION SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING

September 12, 2001
MAG Office - Saguaro Room
Phoenix, Arizona

MEMBERS ATTENDING

Mayor Keno Hawker, Mesa, Chair	* Supervisor Jan Brewer, Maricopa County
Mayor Elaine Scruggs, Vice Chair, Glendale	* Councilmember Peggy Bilsten, Phoenix
Mayor Ron Drake, Avondale	* Roc Arnett, State Transportation Board
Mayor Bill Arnold, Goodyear	

*Those members not present.

1. Call to Order

The meeting of the Regional Council Transportation Subcommittee was called to order by Chairman Keno Hawker at 10:10 a.m. He stated that information agenda items would be considered until a quorum was met.

3. Update on Phase One of the MAG Regional Transportation Plan

This agenda item was taken out of order.

Eric Anderson provided a status update of Phase One of the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). Mr. Anderson stated that the objective of the focus groups was to identify values, issues, and concerns about transportation and regional growth and development. He stated that the focus group report is now completed and participants have received a detailed report on their focus group results. Mr. Anderson indicated that the results will be used as one of the resources for the development of regional values, goals, and objectives.

Mr. Anderson stated that a working draft of the regional values, goals and objectives was received in July. The draft was deemed insufficient, and after discussion with the consultant, a revised draft was received. He noted that this draft is close to where we want to be. Mr. Anderson stated that the draft will be made available to the RTP Advisors, the TRC and the Transportation Subcommittee after internal review. Mr. Anderson stated that the draft will then be submitted to the Regional Council for their review and approval. He noted that this draft is an important exercise because it sets the framework.

Mr. Anderson stated that the objective of the State of the Region Report is to summarize existing and projected conditions in the region based on current plans and information. He mentioned that the report was delayed because key information was not available to the consultant. The first draft of the report, which was just received, will undergo an expedited review by MAG in the upcoming week. Mr. Anderson stated that a revised draft will be distributed to members after this review.

Mr. Anderson stated that the regional growth analysis and transportation strategies will establish future population and employment planning targets for the RTP. They are long term so that future urban

development patterns will be understood. He noted that the region is looking at an increase of 75 percent in population in 2020. Mr. Anderson this could be eight to ten million people in the next 50 years, which is beyond the scope of the RTP, but sets a long range framework to look at. He mentioned that there is a meeting with the consultant on September 20th. A workshop is planned in mid-October with transportation, planning and economic development staff. Mr. Anderson reviewed the time table. Phase I is expected to be complete by April 2002 and Phase II will begin by June 2002, depending on the progress of supporting studies. Mr. Anderson explained that Phase II is the development of the RTP and a fiscally constrained 20-year transportation plan. He stated that a schedule has not yet been drafted, but it is anticipated that Phase II will take 12 months to complete.

Mr. Anderson summarized the status of the support studies, including three subarea studies, the High Capacity Transit Study, the Regional Transit Study, the East/West Mobility Study, and the Bottleneck Study.

Chairman Hawker asked the time horizon of the Bottleneck Study. Mr. Anderson replied that the projection is to 2025. He noted that additional capacity is also being examined, in addition to existing facilities.

Mayor Bill Arnold asked if Grand Avenue would be considered in the Bottleneck Study. Mr. Anderson replied that it would. He noted that the ultimate concept for Grand Avenue needs to be determined.

Chairman Hawker asked if anything in particular had come out of the public meetings on the visions, goals and objectives. Mr. Anderson replied that findings are contained in the document, which will be provided after review.

Chairman Hawker asked about the impact of commuter rail studies on other entities. Mr. Anderson replied that commuter rail aspects were defined in the RFP where high capacity is defined. He noted that nothing would be done that would conflict with the light rail system. Chairman Hawker asked if there would be a cost comparison between commuter and light rail that could be provided to cities. Mr. Anderson replied that the study will provide a comparison and show operating and capital costs. Chairman Hawker asked about ownership and access. Mr. Anderson stated that the RFP was structured around these issues. He mentioned that some regions have taken 10 years to negotiate a joint use agreement with the railroads. Mr. Anderson stated that one step needs to be taken at a time. If the study finds it is feasible, this could be a key component of the transportation system. He stated that a brief look would be taken at relocating freight operations, which is a big ticket item. Chairman Hawker asked if this would be blended in with Grand Avenue challenges. Mr. Anderson replied that it would. Chairman Hawker asked if Hispanic growth had been blended in. Mr. Anderson explained that the difficulty is that there are no state or regional projections broken down by Hispanic ethnicity. He indicated that this is something MAG will attempt to provide. Mr. Anderson stated that immigrants show a tendency toward transit. However, Dr. Olivas from ASU has brought up that when income increases, immigrants change their preference to automobiles. Mr. Anderson stated that travel behavior change is a tricky issue. He noted that agencies in California have studied this issue and their findings may be useful to the MAG region.

2. Approval of July 18, 2001 Meeting Minutes

Chairman Hawker noted that a quorum was present. He asked for a motion to approve the minutes.

Mayor Elaine Scruggs asked if she could comment about moving freight operations before moving on. She expressed that she hoped that additional time and money would not be added until the freight companies add more money. Mr. Anderson replied that the commitment of additional time and money was not being planned. He stated that the issue was being examined because it was brought up during the input phase. Mr. Anderson stated that if the study says it needs examination, another study might be appropriate. Mayor Scruggs stated that it is important that the freight companies make a statement to be folded into the study. She indicated the difficulties of continuously answering citizens' questions.

Mayor Arnold moved to approve the minutes of the July 18, 2001 meeting. Mayor Ron Drake seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

4. Integration of Regional Transportation Plans and Programs

Dennis Smith stated that one issue that the Regional Governance Task Force and the Governance Advisory Committee asked to be addressed was the integration of regional transportation plans and programs. He mentioned that there is a perception that the transportation system is not well integrated. Mr. Smith stated that the two committees requested that staff present opportunities for integration. Mr. Smith summarized the history of federal transportation acts and requirements. He explained the cooperative integrated planning process by MAG, RPTA and ADOT to develop funding estimates of funds available for programming. Mr. Smith stated that projects need to be in the TIP. The Regional Council has the capability to consider items in the TIP separately.

Mayor Scruggs commented on projects, such as Anthem, that are approved by the County. She asked if an item was taken out of the TIP and considered separately, how would this disrupt the whole process, and then would move ahead anyway? Mr. Bourey stated that in the case of Anthem, the interchanges needed to be included in the TIP. He stated that the Regional Council could have voted against. Anthem could not have taken place if the interchanges were not in the TIP. Mayor Scruggs asked about funding for the interchanges. Mr. Bourey replied that funding was provided by the developers. Mr. Bourey stated that the Regional Council has the authority to say no.

Mayor Scruggs stated that if the Regional Council says no, then others say that economic development will be hurt. What happens at that point, when other government agencies say they need this development? Mr. Smith replied that the Regional Council would probably vote approval, if a no vote would negatively impact economic development. He indicated that the Regional Council was probably not aware of the far-reaching impacts when they voted approval of the TIP, which included the interchanges at Anthem. He commented on the process for approving 208 Water Quality amendments could be applied to projects of regional impact.

Mayor Scruggs stated that this is an important issue as governance is being examined. Outsiders say that the mayors are not doing their job. She stressed the importance of connecting land use and transportation planning. Mayor Scruggs pointed out a weakness when a Regional Council member is unable to attend and a proxy attends the meeting to accomplish a quorum. She expressed concern for the process that predetermines who can attend the meeting as a representative. Mayor Scruggs noted that some members do not clearly understand some implications.

Mr. Smith mentioned comments made at a Task Force meeting by Stephen Cleveland, Goodyear City Manager, who stated that what MAG does is process projects for its cities, and does not decide

projects proactively. He expressed that he to some degree, he disagreed with Mr. Cleveland, and examples of MAG's proactive planning would be the three new subarea studies.

Chairman Hawker stated that some duties might be better handled through the Executive Committee or Transportation Subcommittee. He noted that it is difficult to inform all Regional Council members of the consequences of their vote. Mr. Smith stated that working with cities to increase their street plans beyond a 10 year horizon would be helpful.

Mr. Smith spoke about remaining transportation integration challenges, including better integration of transit across the region. He explained that the City of Phoenix is the designated recipient for federal transit funds. Historically, the primary transit coverage for this region has been in the City of Phoenix, with a significant amount of Phoenix general funds paying for transit service. With the failure of Proposition 400 in 1994, additional transit service is being funded through successful city elections in Tempe and Phoenix. Other cities are also contemplating transit elections. Without a regional funding source, other than federal funds, transit planning and programming is not as integrated as other transportation services. Mr. Smith noted that funding challenges could increase with the expiration of the ½ cent sales tax in 2005. He stated that the RPTA board is not represented by all agencies. He explained the process where MAG member agencies submit transit requests to MAG, which are then considered by the Valley Metro Operating Staff (VMOS) which is a technical group primarily from the membership of the RPTA. The VMOS ranks the projects and the rankings are provided to the City of Phoenix and sent to MAG for inclusion and approval in the TIP.

Chairman Hawker asked if action was needed on this agenda item because a committee member needed to leave for another engagement. Mr. Bourey explained that possible action had been included on the agenda in the event that the Subcommittee wanted to take action.

Bryan Jungwirth explained that RPTA allows input from all even though they are not members. He mentioned that VMOS is non-voting. Mayor Scruggs asked for clarification of lottery funds for membership in RPTA. Mr. Jungwirth explained that the smaller the city, the higher the percentage of lottery funds they need to give to be RPTA members.

Chairman Hawker expressed that providing a history of funding was beneficial. He commented that the governance issue has a long way to go before it is resolved. Chairman Hawker noted that there is an inherent conflict with independent funding. He commented that the establishment of another board would not enhance, but hinder. Chairman Hawker stated that cities will say they are here to represent their own cities with their own transit funds. He expressed that Regional Council briefings need to be presented to increase awareness. Mentoring of new mayors by another mayor may be helpful. Chairman Hawker stated that turnover makes it difficult to ensure that all understand the MAG process. Mr. Bourey explained how he meets for at least two hours with new mayors. Mr. Bourey stated that councilmembers may not be knowledgeable on all issues.

Mayor Scruggs applauded Mr. Bourey's approach to helping new mayors. She acknowledged how difficult it can be for a newly elected official to learn not only their own city's business, but also MAG business. Mayor Scruggs expressed that mentoring was a good method. She stated that staying informed about MAG is a constant refreshing process. MAG's business is different than a city's business. Mayor Scruggs estimated that she spends approximately eight hours in preparation for a Regional Council meeting, and she is not new to the process. Mayor Scruggs stated that something needs to be done to ensure that those attending as a representative at Regional Council understand the MAG process.

Mr. Bourey explained that briefings and workshops on the Work Program will be given at the committee level. He noted that these will be initiated because of a suggestion given by Mayor Scruggs at a Regional Council meeting. Mr. Anderson stated that agenda items need to be written more clearly so that those not familiar with the project will understand.

Mayor Arnold suggested that following the format used by city councils in MAG agendas would be helpful. He commented that those Regional Council members who have jobs and cannot participate on a constant basis may need extra assistance from MAG. Mr. Bourey stated that the most recent Management Committee agenda had been simplified and streamlined. The summary transmittal information remained the same, but the agenda item contains only one short paragraph.

Mr. Smith stated that the Transportation Subcommittee needs to discuss what they want their role to be at MAG. He noted that the TIP and Plan do not go through the Transportation Subcommittee for consideration. Mr. Smith stated that an increased role for the Subcommittee could serve as the eyes and ears for the Regional Council. Chairman Hawker indicated that this could be sent to the Regional Council to see if they agree. He commented that the Executive Committee discussed governance and an increased role for the Subcommittee.

Mayor Scruggs stated that she welcomed as many voices as possible. She indicated that those with money on the table should have the final vote. She referred to previous comments on the 208 amendment process. Mayor Scruggs suggested that when doing a recommendation on the summary transmittal, a statement be added that there was nothing in the Plan to address this project, which could impact other services. She stated that voting is on parts, but nothing connects together. We look at things one at a time. Mayor Scruggs commented on the effects to MAG committees if other counties are brought in. Mayor Arnold commented the lack of opportunity to ask questions in small groups.

Mayor Scruggs stated that it was her understanding that all cities receive lottery money and all have the opportunity to participate and dedicate lottery funds to transit. Mr. Smith mentioned the County's proposal to control Roads of Regional Significance. He stated that it is becoming difficult to explain that there are three different agencies, MAG, RPTA and Phoenix, providing planning, with the possibility of a fourth agency.

Chairman Hawker stated his agreement for local money, but there is conflict on regionally designated money for transit. He indicated that regional governance is needed on this.

5. Update on Governor's Transportation Vision 21 Task Force

Mr. Bourey stated that the September 11, 2001 meeting of the Task Force was cancelled due to the tragic events that occurred. He stated that the next meeting is scheduled for October 16, 2001 to review the recommendations that had been out for comment in their public meeting process. It is anticipated that final action will be taken on December 13, 2001, and then forwarded to the Governor.

Chairman Hawker stated that integrating land use and transportation is one of the themes at Vision 21 meetings. He stated that someone needs to step up and provide integrated land use and transportation planning. Chairman Hawker stated that MAG needs to make known their Master Plan review, then the pressure will be on the agency, not MAG. Mayor Scruggs stated that coordination needs to be broadened and made stronger. The proposals are not ones we can accept. We need to keep searching. Local control is needed or the smaller will be stepped on by the larger.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:30 p.m.

Chairman

Secretary