

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

July 18, 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 10:05 a.m.

2. Approval of March 1 and March 21, 2001 Meeting Minutes

Mayor Ron Drake moved to approve the minutes of the March 1 and March 21, 2001 meetings. Supervisor Jan Brewer seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

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

Chairman Hawker stated that presentations would be given on agenda items #3 and #4 followed by discussion.

Eric Anderson provided an update on the development of the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). He stated that the RTP is a performance-based plan. Mr. Anderson displayed a chart of the RTP process. He stated that Phase I of the process would establish regional values, goals, objectives and policies. Input was received from a series of expert panel forums and focus groups. Mr. Anderson stated that these would be integrated with transportation system concepts, strategies and performance measures into Phase II of the process. During Phase II, investment options will be evaluated and ranked. Mr. Anderson stated that the evaluation and ranking will take into account transportation facilities and services investments and area, corridor and mode studies and plans. Mr. Anderson stated that this leads to the development of a regional transportation system plan, a fiscally constrained, 20-year transportation plan, and a five-year Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

Mr. Anderson displayed a chart that showed the integration of area/modal studies with the RTP. He reviewed the various area and corridor studies and modal studies being currently conducted or planned. Mr Anderson stated that in addition to the expert forums and focus groups, five Issue Papers are now complete and are available on the MAG website. Mr. Anderson noted that a summary of issues from the focus groups has been compiled.

Mr. Anderson stated that the consultant is currently drafting the State of the Region report, which will provide a profile of existing and future socioeconomic environment and the region's transportation system. He noted that a draft report is due in July. Mr. Anderson provided an update the status of RTP tasks. In addition to the completion of the expert panel forums, the issue papers, the focus groups and the current drafting of the State of the Region report, regional values, goals and objectives will be developed. He noted that a draft is due to MAG in July. Alternative growth options and transportation systems will be developed and analyzed. Mr. Anderson stated that a planner's stakeholders working group meeting was scheduled for July 20, 2001. A workshop is planned for September. Mr. Anderson stated that when the growth analysis is complete, the stakeholders will meet again.

4. Update on Major Transportation Studies in the FY 2002 MAG Unified Planning Work Program

Roger Herzog gave a presentation on area and corridor and modal transportation studies that will provide input for the RTP. Mr. Herzog stated that the area and corridor studies include the East/West Mobility Study with a completion target of May 2002; the Northwest Area Study, with a completion target of July 2002; the Southwest Area Study, with a completion target of July 2002; the Southeast Maricopa/North Pinal Area Study, with a completion target of July 2002, the Northwest Grand Avenue Corridor Study, with a completion target of October 2001; and the Park and Ride Lot Study, which was recently completed. Mr. Smith explained that Chairman Hawker was instrumental in the agreement with Pinal County for a financial commitment for the Southeast Maricopa/North Pinal Area Study. Mr. Herzog stated that the Regional Off Street System Plan (ROSS), the Grand Avenue MIS and the Desert Spaces Plan will be incorporated into the RTP.

Mr. Herzog stated that modal studies include the Commuter Rail/High Capacity Transit, with a completion target date of December 2002; the Freeway Bottleneck Capacity Study, with a completion target date of September 2002; the HOV/HOT Lane Study, with a completion target date of September 2001; the Regional Transit System Study, with a completion target date of December 2001; the Scottsdale/Tempe Transit MIS, with a completion target date of December 2001; and the Chandler Transit MIS, with a completion target date of July 2002.

Chairman Hawker asked for examples of other high capacity transit. Mr. Herzog explained about studying demand between action centers that could warrant high capacity transit, such as I-17. He noted that high capacity transit would not necessarily be fixed guideway, but could include bus or elevated transit. Mr. Herzog noted that the process will identify needs and how to meet those needs. Chairman Hawker requested clarification of the scope of the study. Mr. Anderson replied that the study's original amount was \$300,000, which was increased to \$500,000 to include additional examination of commuter rail and other modes if that is not viable. Chairman Hawker asked if grade separations would be examined. Mr. Anderson replied that they would. Chairman Hawker expressed interest in costs.

Mr. Herzog stated that other modal studies that will be integrated into the RTP include the Light Rail Plan, the Bus Rapid Transit Plan and the Intelligent Transportation Systems Strategic Plan.

Chairman Hawker asked for clarification of the governance of the study between MAG and RPTA. Mr. Anderson replied that it is a joint study. Dennis Smith explained that when MAG relocated to the current building, being housed in the same building with RPTA assisted in cooperative efforts. Mr. Smith stated that MAG contracts with RPTA to provide transit planning assistance to tap into RPTA's expertise. He indicated that any actions on the Regional Transportation Plan, including transit

elements, still need to come through MAG. Chairman Hawker asked for clarification of the coordination of the many studies that will provide input to the RTP. Mr. Anderson stated that a planning calendar is being developed to coordinate the studies. He described the concern for coordinating the studies with the timing of the sales tax vote, which may require acceleration of some of the studies. Mr. Anderson mentioned a planned workshop with all of the study consultants in attendance. The consultants will present the preliminary findings of the studies and coordinated their applications to the RTP. He also mentioned that the consultant management system is being beefed up internally. Chairman Hawker commented that there may be a need for more than one meeting with the consultants.

Supervisor Brewer asked for clarification of how the sales tax extension would be put on the ballot. Mr. Smith explained that the Executive Committee has discussed going to the Legislature to get the authority to take the issue to the voters. Chairman Hawker stated that the best method is still being determined. He explained the function of the newly formed Governance Advisory Committee and commented that the input from the County is important. Mr. Smith stated that this is the most aggressive look at transportation in this region in over 40 years. The foundation is being laid for the new RTP by conducting these studies.

Mr. Arnett commented that the studies need to be completed in June or July of 2002 in order to go to the Legislature. The December 2002 target dates are too late. Mr. Arnett stated that if we are not successful this year, then the opportunity for the following year is still available. He commented that MAG absolutely needs to have the studies completed by June 2002. Mr. Arnett stated that the Advisory Committee needs the County to provide input.

Mayor Bill Arnold asked for clarification of Bus Rapid Transit. Jim Dickey, RPTA staff, explained that the bus rapid transit is being considered for SR 51, I-17 and I-10 freeway corridors and south central corridors. He stated that bus rapid transit will integrate with park and ride facilities and promote HOV or freeway travel plans. Mayor Arnold asked about integration with the airport. Mr. Dickey stated that there are pre-light rail and post-light rail programs. The post-light rail program will coordinate with BRT to provide a station to get passengers to the airport.

Chairman Hawker asked about input received from the ethnic focus groups. Mr. Anderson replied that one of the needs expressed was for better freeway access in the South Phoenix area. He offered to provide summaries of the focus groups. Chairman Hawker asked about the reasonably available funding identified in MAG's current transportation plan from an extension of the half cent sales tax for 20 years. Mr. Anderson explained that was correct and if the vote does not pass, another set of assumptions might be used. He explained that the specifics used to develop a transportation plan would be shown to the voters.

Chairman Hawker asked for clarification of ranking projects for Phase II of the RTP when projects come in on different schedules. Mr. Anderson explained that the ranking process will take into account funding and priorities identified at the time a vote might be taken. Chairman Hawker commented on concerns for the rankings after redistricting. Mr. Smith replied that redistricting has not been addressed. Mr. Smith commented that the Wilbur Smith plan was drafted in the 1960s and was not started until the 1980s. He expressed the hope that some of the plans and analyses completed in the RTP process will lay a foundation for the future.

Supervisor Brewer asked who would decide the approach for the vote. Mr. Smith replied that would be a Regional Council decision. Supervisor Brewer stated that material for consideration by the

Legislature in 2002 would need to be ready by November 2001. Mr. Arnett stated that the time frame would not be impossible; however, accelerating completion of the studies is needed so that the authorization for the vote could be considered by the Legislature. Mr. Smith noted that the target date for voter material is July 2002 for a November 2002 ballot measure. Mr. Arnett commented that the reports would need to be completed by February 2002. Mr. Smith stated that Proposition 300 was a special election that was held in October. Supervisor Brewer noted that a special election would also require a strategy.

Mayor Drake expressed that caution is needed on releasing reports before finalization. He indicated that it would be preferable to go to 2003, rather than proceeding before the reports are final. Mr. Anderson stated that it would be helpful for staff to have a definitive date. He noted establishing a date would allow for modification of schedules. Mr. Anderson stated that some studies are very technical and difficult to modify. He expressed that the public involvement process is very lengthy and sufficient time is needed to provide an opportunity for public and stakeholder input. Chairman Hawker commented on providing the Governance Advisory Committee with the vote timing issue to get their feedback.

5. Regional Action Plan on Aging and Mobility Recommendations

Suzanne Quigley provided a presentation on Elderly Mobility. Ms. Quigley displayed a map of the United States that showed that Arizona is one of the states where at least 20 percent of the population will be elderly by 2025. What this means for Maricopa County is that 1 in 5 individuals will be aged 60 or older in 2025. Between 2010 and 2020, the 65-69 age group will expand by an average of 9,500 per year. This age wave will have profound effects on our transportation system, not to mention other issues related to land use, air quality, health care and social services. Ms. Quigley reviewed preferences of older travelers. Ninety percent of their trips are by car and less than three percent use transit. She stated that baby boomers grew up using freeways and will continue to use technology to its fullest.

Ms. Quigley reviewed the implications of aging and mobility on safety. She stated that seniors have greater crash rates per exposure, which leads to more serious injuries because of frailty. Ms. Quigley explained the slippery slope to dependence. Seniors may incrementally begin limiting their driving behavior until they totally cease driving and become dependent on family, friends or alternative modes for travel.

Ms. Quigley stated that in an effort to respond to the transportation challenges related to an aging population, MAG initiated the *Elderly Mobility Initiative*. The Initiative contains four objectives: Development of a Regional Action Plan on Aging & Mobility; Integration of recommendations into the MAG Regional Transportation Plan; Extensive public involvement activities; and National conference planning with other metropolitan planning organizations.

Ms. Quigley stated that over the past six months, the MAG Elderly Mobility Working Group reached consensus on 25 recommendations to improve mobility for seniors in four areas. She stated that a summary on the recommendations was at each place. Ms. Quigley stated that the recommendations were developed through four subgroups representing 75 stakeholders, in consultation with national and local experts and extensive public input from seniors. These recommendations will be considered in the update of the MAG Regional Transportation Plan.

Ms. Quigley stated that MAG has begun to work with 25 Metropolitan Planning Organizations and other interested stakeholder groups to plan a national conference on aging and mobility at the La Posada Resort, March 25-27, 2002.

Ms. Quigley reviewed the recommendations. She stated that support for implementation is needed from MAG modal committees to integrate the recommendations into the Long Range Transportation Plan and the programming of projects. An advocacy is needed for infrastructure and land use improvements across the region, such as uniform signage and lighting. Ms. Quigley stated that it is anticipated that quarterly meetings will be held to review the implementation process. She indicated that a MAG Associate may be hired for this function.

Ms. Quigley reviewed the time line, with a draft of the full plan completed in July or August. The draft plan would be considered by the Management Committee in September and the Regional Council in October. Chairman Hawker thanked Ms. Quigley for her presentation and asked if there were any questions. Supervisor Brewer complimented Ms. Quigley on her report. Mr. Smith commented on significant pieces of the study being shown to seniors that demonstrate how their quality of life could improve. This could, in turn, help with the vote among seniors.

Mr. Anderson stated that three stakeholders meetings are planned: Monday, July 23, 2001 from 6 p.m to 8 p.m. in Mesa; Tuesday, July 24, 2001 from 6 p.m to 8 p.m. in Peoria, and Thursday, July 26, 2001 from 6 p.m to 8 p.m. at the Burton Barr Library. Mr. Anderson stated that an agency stakeholders would be held the following week.

Chairman Hawker asked for a motion to adjourn. Mayor Arnold moved, Mr. Arnett seconded and the meeting was adjourned at 11:20 a.m.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 12:00 p.m.

Chairman

Secretary