

Planning Partners

Planning Advance Meeting Summary Notes

Date: May 10, 2010; 1:30 – 3:30 PM

Location: MAG Cholla Room

Handouts: Central Phoenix Transportation Framework Study Planning Partners Binders: Meeting Agenda, Planning Partners contact list, Project Team contact list, Phase I Schedule, Phase I Scope of Work, Project Fact Sheet, Public Involvement Plan Outline, Project Stakeholders handout, Initial Project Outreach handout, Roles and Responsibilities handout, Potentially Relevant Studies and Reports handout, Sample Evaluation Matrix

Participants: Chris Andres, City of Phoenix; Dawn M. Coomer, City of Tempe; Robert Darr, City of Glendale; Ray Dovalina, City of Phoenix; Wulf Grote, Metro Light Rail; Teresa Huish, City of Scottsdale; Carol Johnson, City of Phoenix; Paul Katsenes, City of Phoenix; Dave Meinhart, City of Scottsdale; Mark Melnychenko, City of Phoenix; Scott Omer, ADOT; Connie Randall, ADOT

MAG Staff and Consultants Present: Monique de los Rios-Urban, MAG; Peggy Fiandaca, PSA, Inc.; Bob Hazlett, MAG; Audra Koester Thomas, PSA, Inc.; Dan Marum, Wilson & Company; Amy Moran, Wilson & Company; Tim Strow, MAG; Jim Townsend, Wilson & Company

Meeting convened at 1:35 p.m.

I. Introduction

Bob Hazlett, MAG's Central Phoenix Transportation Framework Study (CPHX) project manager, welcomed all in attendance and participants were introduced.

II. Study Overview

Mr. Hazlett introduced the framework study concept as an iterative, long-range transportation planning process. Two previous MAG framework studies, I-10 Hassayampa Valley and I-8 and I-10 Hidden Valley, concentrated on largely unpopulated and rural portions of the greater Phoenix metropolitan area. The success of these two projects led the Arizona Department of Transportation to embark on a similar framework process statewide. A key aspect of the framework studies, Mr. Hazlett noted, is that the study does not use funding as a planning constraint; frameworks outline the best multimodal transportation plan to most effectively address buildout conditions.

The newest framework project, Central Phoenix (CPHX), focuses on an area generally within the bounds of Loop 101. He mentioned that the estimated population for the study area is 2.25 million people. The project goal is to develop a sustainable, multimodal transportation network.

Mr. Hazlett mentioned that the purpose of the Planning Partners meeting is to discuss how the group is going to conduct the study and working relationships going forward. He mentioned that the Planning Partners will act as the “steering committee” for this study.

III. Project Status and Schedule

Dan Marum, project manager representing the Wilson & Company consulting team, reviewed the key elements of Phase I of the project, and highlighted activities that would be completed as part of Phase II.

Baseline Modeling—Mr. Marum noted that the project team was seriously considering the 2007 travel pattern model as the baseline for study. Several participants noted concerns that many transit improvements occurred after 2007, and moreover, the 2007 model underestimated the demand for transit. After discussion, Mr. Marum confirmed that the team would work towards a hybrid model that would incorporate the improvements (transit and otherwise) since 2007, to ultimately develop a 2010 baseline.

Wulf Grote mentioned that an Onboard Survey will be done later this year that will provide a better understanding of transit travel characteristics. This will be helpful for the study. Dave Meinhart mentioned that the increase in fuel costs played into transit ridership characteristics or choices.

Bob Hazlett mentioned that MAG will be completed a Traffic Operations Model for the study area and it will address all modes. Caliper has been hired and will be under contract within the next few weeks. This model should be up and running within the first year of the study.

Role of Sustainable Communities program—Carol Johnson inquired what the role of the HUD/EPA/DOT Sustainable Communities grant may play within the project. Mr. Hazlett confirmed that the Sustainable Communities program might be a great opportunity for CPHX and that its six livability goals could serve as the foundation for CPHX’s goals.

ProjectWise—Amy Moran, deputy project manager, introduced the project management software ProjectWise as a single repository of project-related materials and resource library. All Planning Partners would receive access to ProjectWise.

IV. Local Plan Updates

Mr. Marum introduced a preliminary list of “Potentially Relevant Studies and Reports” handout and requested that participants review, add and edit the list as necessary. The handout will be distributed electronically to the Planning Partners.

Mr. Hazlett indicated that as planning continues throughout the Valley, he hoped that CPHX would serve as a regional transportation planning instrument that would facilitate updating of localized planning efforts, but that current local planning projects and studies would contribute to the development of this regional product.

Participants highlighted the following local planning projects:

- Phoenix: due to the recent passage of state legislation that extended the requirement for plan updates, the general plan update is currently on hold. The city had been working with ASU on the visioning project but there has been concern that the community meetings that were held were not representative of the community as a whole. Carol Johnson is meeting with internal staff on May 25th to determine how the city will move forward with the plan update.
- Tempe: forthcoming general plan update and potential community visioning project. Dawn Coomer will provide additional information.
- Glendale: updated transportation plan in spring 2010; ASU facilitating a Main Street/Centerline Downtown Vision Plan
- Scottsdale: general plan update adoption is anticipated for October 2011; the South Scottsdale Area Plan and Airpark Plans are being rolled into the general plan; transportation master plan was completed two years ago and the Downtown Plan Update was completed summer 2009
- METRO: lack of funding has delayed several planning projects, but potential northeast Phoenix corridor study anticipated with sales tax increase; other current planning efforts include I-10 west, Tempe, Glendale, and South Central High Capacity Transit Feasibility study (the area is still being defined)
- Sky Harbor Airport: Phoenix sky train project continuing; 2007 serves as 'peak' year; no plans for 4th runway

V. Public Involvement Plan

Peggy Fiandaca, public outreach task leader, introduced the public involvement plan, Audra Koester Thomas, public outreach task member, outlined the specific kinds of outreach techniques anticipated as part of Task 3, including key leadership interviews, focus groups, geographically-based dialogues and stakeholder contacts.

VI. Define Decision-Making Approach

Roles and Responsibilities—Ms. Fiandaca reiterated the anticipated role of the Planning Partners as agency representatives responsible for technical review and input and Study Review Team (SRT) as a 'virtual' and evolving set of stakeholders kept informed of the project and asked to provide feedback virtually.

Mr. Hazlett also requested that any project related questions or concerns be routed through MAG (Mr. Hazlett and/or Tim Strow) rather than direct communications with the project consultants.

Approach for Resolutions—Mr. Hazlett introduced the concept of “informed consent” a philosophy that asks all stakeholders to be part of “the team” while the project team concentrates its targeted outreach efforts to those stakeholders that need to become supportive of the project.

VIII. Next Steps

Planning Partners identified the 2nd Monday of each month at 1pm as the reoccurring Planning Partners meeting. The next meeting would be scheduled for June 14, 2010.

Meeting adjourned at 3:45 p.m.