Planning Partners
Meeting #6 Summary Notes

Date: June 13, 2011
Location: Valley Metro Boardroom (101 N. 1st Ave., Suite 1300)

Handouts: Meeting Agenda, Draft Project Schedule (June 2011)

Participants: Steve Beasley, ADOT; Eric Buskirk, City of Phoenix; Rob Cox, City of Phoenix; Jason Crampton, City of Chandler; Ken Davis, FHWA; Abhishek Dayal, Valley Metro Rail; Carol Johnson, City of Phoenix; Terry Johnson, City of Glendale; David Meinhart, City of Scottsdale; Denise Lacey, Maricopa County Department of Transportation; Connie Randall, City of Phoenix; Robert Yabes, City of Tempe; and Jamal Rahimi, City of Peoria

MAG Staff and Consultants Present: Bob Hazlett and Tim Strow, Maricopa Association of Governments; Mark Yalung, PB; Audra Koester Thomas, Partners for Strategic Action, Inc.; Dan Marum, Amy Moran, and Jim Townsend, Wilson & Company

Meeting convened at 1:05 p.m.

I. Welcome
Bob Hazlett, MAG's Central Phoenix Transportation Framework Study (CPHX) project manager, welcomed all in attendance.

II. Project Status Update
Mr. Hazlett reported that MAG and the project consulting team had been spending the past months evaluating the impact of CPHX to the "next generation" RTP update. In preparation for the update, Mr. Hazlett noted that MAG was considering expanding the CPHX study area, however, upon receiving news that population and employment forecasts weren't expected until 2013, it was decided that CPHX (Phases I and II now collapsed) would proceed with an anticipated completion date of December 2012.

While an interim update to the RTP would occur in 2011-12 (per Federal requirements), Mr. Hazlett reported that the "next generation" RTP update would occur subsequent to receiving the 2013 forecasts.

III. Other Project Updates
a. Managed Lanes – Mr. Hazlett reported that PB was awarded the 9-12 month project with an anticipated start date of summer 2011.

b. TransModeler – Mr. Hazlett reported that the delivery of TransModeler has been revised to December 2011 in order to facilitate software upgrades.

c. Southeast Corridor MIS – Mr. Hazlett reported that the project hosted a successful charrette in January, and based on feedback, crafted three "bundled" alternatives, currently under analysis by the consulting team. A recommended alternative is anticipated by the end of 2011, complementing the CPHX project schedule.

d. I-17 Corridor – Mark Yalung, PB project manager for the I-17 Corridor, provided a PowerPoint presentation that outlined some of the project findings to date. Mr. Yalung reported that the corridor, currently (2010) experiencing level of service (LOS) "E" is anticipated to have LOS F by 2035, translating to a 23% trip time increase (or an additional 1 hour of congestion at p.m. peak).

As part of the project, the feasibility of managed lanes has been evaluated. Early projections indicate that tolled lanes, with rates[i] between $0.11 and $0.50/mile, travel times would be cut in half from those experienced in the general purpose lanes with projected annual revenues ranging from $18.8 to 28.5 million. Mr. Yalung cautioned that this initial analysis indicates that managed lanes could be feasible, but additional, more detailed analysis must occur to refine assumptions and costing implications.

Mr. Yalung indicated the team anticipates a December 2012 notice of decision on the DCR/EIS.

VI. Overview of Universe of Transportation Improvement Concepts

Dan Marum, Wilson & Company project manager, introduced the "Review of Transportation Improvement Concepts" draft catalog, reminding participants that a discussion of the document was postponed at the January 2011 because of the unexpected evacuation of MAG offices.

Mr. Marum indicated that the catalog was intended to be a living document, identifying the universe of transportation concepts and strategies available for consideration as part of CPHX, and other, transportation planning projects. As outreach occurs, the catalogue would be used to craft the "bundled" alternatives.

Mr. Marum introduced deputy project manager, Amy Moran, who led participants through the catalogue. Planning Partners offered the following comments for each concept category.

Traffic Interchange Concepts

- Page 4, Roundabout Interchange: An advantage listed is "Reduces delay", but a disadvantages listed is "Can become congested easily…"; are these compatible?
- Consider describing the compatibility of each traffic interchange with transit options/access

- Other potential traffic interchange concepts to add: semi-directional; platform

Freeway Improvement Concepts

- Consider describing the compatibility of each freeway improvement with transit options/access
- Page 5, Rail-in-Freeway (and to other applicable concepts): include as an advantage, "incorporating transit alternatives improves federal funding opportunities"
- Other potential freeway improvement concepts: ramp braids; local express lanes

ITS Improvement Concepts

- Page 8, Intellidrive: update as "IntelliDrive" has been renamed

Parkway Facility Improvement Concepts

- Page 11, TOPS: might there be an opportunity to have at grade *and* grade-separated options?
- Page 11, TOPS: Are there any other disadvantages to TOPS, including cost and pedestrian access?
- Other potential improvement concepts: a hybrid of expressway/parkway (potential Grand Ave. solution?)

Toll Facility Concepts

- No comments

Arterial Roadway Improvement Concepts

- Page 16, Freeway Grade-Separated Crossings: revise graphic to Mountain View intersection
- Other potential arterial roadway improvement concepts: complete streets (including bike lanes, etc.—examples include Arizona Avenue through Chandler and Indian School in Scottsdale); roundabouts; BAT (business access and transit) lanes; median closures; raised medians

High-Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) Lane Concepts

- No comments

Express/Managed Lane Concepts

- Combine "Express/Managed Lane Concepts" and "Express Lane Concepts" categories

Rail Transit System Concepts

- Page 25, "Comparison of Selected Characteristics…" chart: what does the high/low classifications mean for "Boarding Platforms at Stations" characteristic?
- Other potential rail transit system concepts: street car; people mover

Bus Transit System Concepts

- Other potential bus transit system concepts: para-transit (including Dial-A-Ride and other non-fixed route options); flex-routing; neighborhood circulators; transfer centers; park-and-ride lots; BAT lanes; secured bike parking stations (individual lock per Portland)

Express Lane Concepts

- Combine "Express/Managed Lane Concepts" and "Express Lane Concepts" categories

Traffic Flow Improvement Concepts

- Other potential traffic flow improvement concepts: restricted on-street parking (eliminate during peak times)
- Page 33, "Street Widening" – add "additional pedestrian crossing time" as a disadvantage

Other comments:

- Consider "sorting" concepts by the level of impact on congestion
- Consider adding a dedicated pedestrian/bike concepts category (although it has been assumed solutions/bundles will integrate pedestrian/bike concepts)
- Consider evaluating transportation demand management (TDM) strategies (including alternative work hours, etc.)

V. Next Steps

a. Revised Base Model Runs (8 Million Population) and Deficiency Analysis – Mr. Hazlett noted that the study is moving forward with an 8 million population forecast, although additional work is needed to polish modeling. He indicated he would be sending out an update regarding the modeling in September or October.

b. Charrette to Discuss Multi-Modal Network Bundles – Mr. Hazlett reported that the next Planning Partners meeting was anticipated later this fall, but asked participants to mark their calendars for a potential Charrette November 14-16th. Participants requested more frequent project updates, and Mr. Hazlett noted he'd send monthly progress reports to Planning Partners via e-mail.

The meeting adjourned at 3 p.m.

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[i] Calculated in today's dollars:
North Bound: $0.11/mile, a.m. peak; $0.50/mile, p.m. peak
South Bound: $0.33/mile, a.m. peak; $0.36/mile, p.m. peak