



## Stakeholders Group Meeting #4 Meeting Notes

Date: October 20, 2011, 10:03 am – 12:05pm  
Location: MAG Saguaro Room  
Attendees: 35

### 1. Welcome, Introductions and Agenda

Ms. Eileen Yazzie of MAG initiated the meeting by welcoming back the attendees and reviewing the agenda. She noted that the stakeholder's process would be informal and that questions were welcomed throughout the meeting. She noted that Kevin Wallace had departed MAG to take a new position as Executive Director of Spokane Regional Transportation Commission and that she was now the Project Manager. She then asked for the Stakeholders to introduce themselves, and introduced Ms. Ellen Greenberg of Arup, the consultant project management team.

Ms. Yazzie then discussed an overview of next steps, completed work, and the next Urban Land Institute (ULI Panel # 2) tentatively scheduled for February 2012.

### 2. Study Progress and Milestones

Ms. Eileen Yazzie then deferred to Ms. Ellen Greenberg to give some background and observations on project progress, as well as completed work and key components. Ms. Greenberg welcomed everyone to the meeting and referred to the first slide in the presentation.

She noted the METRO, MAG and RPTA management met in July and noted the following details from the meeting: MAG and Arup summarized the work done up to date and focused on a review of the HCT corridors. However, she noted that the team was also tasked with the question of defining sustainable transportation for the region.

Ms. Greenberg continued with explaining that the notion of sustainable transportation was to break down criteria even further into alternative fuel vehicles, technology, mode choices, etc. It was also keen to focus on mode productivity and the responsiveness to area residents and businesses. Ellen noted that there was general enthusiasm by the region's leadership for TOD as well as investment in TOD in the region. She noted that the study was to also broaden multimodal approach to mode choices best suited to the various corridors in the Valley.

She explained that one component of the study was to also get actionable project outcomes, by introducing mobility priorities, broadening the definition of sustainability, identifying modes and corridors based on productivity, and tools for community use. She referred to a key study components flow chart that featured: Potential mobility priorities (results from previous stakeholder meetings and different conversions); Establishing a frequent transit network (it's a mix between focus and quality of service not only HCT –circulators, local routes, etc- to allow for regional connectivity); Walk access to transit: expanding transit coverage to cover a certain percentage of population in the region; Productivity of service: expanding transit coverage to cover a certain percentage of jobs in the region; and Increasing transit's appeal (at ULI event builders commented to increase transit's appeal through greater information/branding)

One of the attendees inquired about how the priorities would be ranked. An example was would the region be more likely to favor coverage or less coverage and more frequency. Ms. Greenberg responded that the study would provide options of scenarios/implications, after those were presented, then the discussion of ranking them would occur. The topic would be further discussed at next Stakeholders meeting in the New Year.

Ms. Greenberg continued with a discussion of Pathways. Pathways were tools to enable local selection for cities, the region and the private sector. She added that transit evolution did not happen overnight and it depended on what each jurisdiction wanted to provide its residents, as well as the character it wanted to have. She also explained Corridor performance. Project sub-consultant Mr. Jeff Denzak added that the Pathways would take time to implement and that the three conditions in the pathways were all different from each other, from single family to multi-family to high-rise residential. Denzak noted that sustainability was more than just light rail; it also encompassed walkability, mode choices, and other developmental tools.

Ms. Greenberg then solicited a series of question from the attendees. One asked if the modeling would take into account the various corridors and their mode split within the corridors, for example, the Sycamore station at the end of line has greatly changed the mode split in East Mesa. She answered that there had been some interest of mode splits at different levels, so it would looked at going forward.

Another question was that if cities implemented all of the recommended densities, would that translate into an increase in mode share. Sycamore was cited as an example as it had increased because it was at the end of line. It was asked how does a city set the mode choice, by design or did the city leave it up to the model. Ms. Greenberg replied that it would be left up to the model and the study would use those results.

Ms. Greenberg took a few more questions from the stakeholders. One attendee asked for clarification on what was meant by connectivity. There was general concern over the abundance of 'superblocks', a series of walled-off subdivisions in the region that physically limit the ability of pedestrians and cyclists to access convenient amenities within their own neighborhoods (such as parks, stores, schools, etc) due to artificial obstructions. She replied that block sizes would be one item considered, as well as transit connectivity, intermodal connectivity, and 'the last mile or last five miles' scenarios. She also added that the study will look at different retrofits that are possible, noting smaller blocks for the future.

A final series of questions was taken. One inquired that if the region went for an integrated approach, than it should not forget the chicken and the egg scenario: building for X density to achieve Y transit. It was stated that there was uniform density and that the region needed development oriented transit (DOT); which translated back to transit oriented development (TOD). A final comment was: don't plan one before the other. Ms. Greenberg responded that the observation was correct and that at times there were simply too many factors to consider and that the study was attempting to balance a much more dynamic situation. One attendee asked what the incentive was for a small city to plan for TOD and DOT now. She replied that it depended on the aspirations of the city and what the city wanted to offer its residents, be it more incentives and choices of where the city may want to go in the future.

### **3. Scenarios**

Ms. Greenberg then deferred back to Ms. Yazzie to give observations on scenarios, Base Case and the three alternatives such: Enhanced Transit, Transit Supply, and Transit Productivity. She was asked if Scenario 3 was to be dependent on the jurisdictional feedback from the participating communities. She replied that Scenario 3 was a more conservative look at the system along the line of productivity and that the goal was to learn from the performances of Scenarios 1 and 2. An additional clarifying question related to the catchment area of the study was asked and whether the study was for the entire MAG Region including west Pinal County, or just Maricopa County proper. Ms. Greenberg replied that the study was focusing only on Maricopa County, even though some of the model sets reflect Pinal County originated data.

Ms. Yazzie also described the origins of High Capacity Transit Readiness and that the corridors identified were previously compiled from earlier MAG studies such as the Regional Transit Framework Study as well as the Commuter Rail Studies.

Mr. Anubhav Bagley of MAG then gave a brief overview of the Base Case and that it took the most recent general plans of all cities into consideration. He explained that the percentage build-out was correlated from general plans and draft amendments, and that this was incorporated into the analysis. He also said that the maps reflected if the cities had reached/met/saturated general plan capacity and existing known development projects. He noted areas of concern were redevelopment areas and distressed projects.

A few final questions were taken. One was a clarifying question on if the maps reflected general plans. Mr. Bagley replied that Base Case revealed the general plan designations as 'maxed out.' He noted that for example, if the general plan called for five ppl/mi<sup>2</sup> and it was met, then it was fully saturated.

Another attendee asked about high-rise zoning, particularly Phoenix and Tempe. Ms. Greenberg replied that those were in the analysis even though some planned projects had fallen through. Some in the audience commented that the previously mothballed Tempe high rise towers projects had been resuscitated and that occupancy was now 100%. One also inquired if MAG could clearly define the saturation maps and provide a density maps as well as including the Mesa BRT on the maps. Ms. Greenberg responded that these requests would be done.

#### **4. Market Analysis**

Ms. Greenberg continued with an overview of Market Analysis and referred the attendees to her presentation. She added that the information would be input into a later scenario model run. She discussed how market demand, uneven feasibility and trends of projects and a residential market timeline would assist in focusing Transit Oriented Development and transit supportive outlook levers.

She then received a variety of questions. One was how was MAG using the market analysis in the model. She replied that it was to be used in the productivity scenario. Another question was what were scenario indicators and were they what defined sustainability, as well as what the most sustainable corridors would be from the highest of all indicators. She noted that defining sustainability was dependant on the respondents. She had a final question regarding indicators and how the scenarios would perform on the size of the network and at what cost. Ms. Greenberg replied that it was to be relayed in transit supply and more extensive coverage of the network, and that it would be a transit feedback loop from indicators and findings.

#### **5. Next Steps**

Ms. Greenberg concluded the meeting and heard requests to get a demonstration of IPLAC3S as well as a financial analysis of transit supply. She also noted that in regards to defining sustainability within these corridors, it would be up to the Stakeholders to define over time. Ms. Yazzie and Ms. Greenberg thanked the attendees for participating and noted that MAG would inform the stakeholders of the upcoming ULI and Stakeholders meetings scheduled for after the holiday season. The meeting adjourned at 12:05pm.