

TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE MINUTES

October 19, 1999

The Transportation Committee of the City of Mesa met in the lower level meeting room of the City Council Chambers, 57 East 1st Street, on October 19, 1999 at 6:00 p.m.

COMMITTEE PRESENT

Keno Hawker, Chairman
Pat Pomeroy

COUNCIL ABSENT

John Giles

STAFF PRESENT

C.K. Luster
Anthony Araza
Candace Cannistraro
Linda Crocker
Mike Hutchinson
Peter Knudson
Ron Krosting
Keith Nath
Bryan Raines
Others

OTHERS PRESENT

Others

Chairman Hawker excused Committeemember Giles from the meeting.

1. Hear a report on the update to the MAG Regional Aviation system Plan (RASP).

MAG Aviation Program Manager Harry Wolfe provided an overview of the update to the Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG) Regional Aviation System Plan (RASP). He stated that MAG is comprised of 27 member agencies, 24 cities and towns, 2 Indian communities and Maricopa County and its purpose is to provide a forum for sharing information and addressing significant regional issues that basically cross jurisdictional boundaries.

Mr. Wolfe said that the scope of MAG's responsibilities include not only transportation planning, but also land use planning, including working with the Growing Smarter initiatives, environmental planning, including air quality modeling, water quality planning, solid waste planning, and provides human services. He explained that one of the reasons MAG is involved in aviation planning is because the Federal Aviation Administration has a regulation that states that metropolitan planning organizations should sponsor regional aviation system plans. MAG is a metropolitan planning organization, meaning that it has certain transportation responsibilities in accordance with Federal law and certain responsibilities for allocating funds for transportation improvements. He said that the more practical reason for MAGs involvement is the need for more practical consensus among governments on the types of airport improvements that should be done. Mr. Wolfe commented that unless local support exists for airport improvements, the work will not occur.

Discussion ensued relative to MAGs involvement in aviation planning, the fact that Regional Aviation Systems Plans are strategic, long-range plans which focus on the major types of improvements that are needed in the region, such as new airports, new runways, expanded airfield projects, additional terminals, and more aircraft parking spaces. He stated that RASP does not become involved in the details of individual airport master plans, such as fencing and resurfacing.

Mr. Wolfe said that the objective of the plan that MAG is working on right now is to meet the long-term air transportation needs of the region in a safe and efficient manner, both in terms of commercial and general aviation. Mr. Wolfe referred to overheads displayed in the Council Chambers and discussed "public use" airports, which is the focus of MAGs study.

Additional discussion ensued relative to the fact that in addition to Sky Harbor Airport, there are seven general aviation airports, known as reliever airports, the fact that Falcon Field and Williams Gateway are two of the reliever airports, the size and scope of Sky Harbor, Chandler, Deer Valley, and Glendale airports as well as smaller airports in the remote portions of the region including Buckeye and Memorial Airfield on the Gila River Indian Community.

Mr. Wolf reviewed the major recommendations from the last plan, adopted in 1993, and which included a third runway at Phoenix Sky Harbor Airport, developing Williams Gateway Airport to supplement Sky Harbor as needed, building new runways at Glendale, Municipal and Goodyear Airports and extending the runways at Glendale, Mesa, Wickenburg and Buckeye. He explained that the recommendations are forwarded to the individual jurisdictions for implementation and it is up to them to decide whether to go forward with the recommendations.

Mr. Wolf also stated that sites for new general aviation airports have also been discussed and identified. He said that the plan is being updated because of the significant amount of changes that has occurred since the last update. He stated that the changing conditions require that the forecasts be re-evaluated and that financial considerations be reviewed, and possibly revise some airport initiatives.

Mr. Wolfe outlined the proposed contents of the issues that will be reviewed in the upcoming plan and future forecasts out to 2020 that will be developed.

Additional discussion ensued relative to an upcoming State Aviation Needs Study that is mandated by State Law, local airport master plans and noise studies, the fact that a consultant will undertake the work associated with the planning process following an RFP process, and the importance of public input and plans to solicit public participation and input at various phases of the process.

Chairman Hawker thanked Mr. Wolfe for his presentation.

2. Hear an update on light rail planning – amendment to the minimum operating segment to extend it to Dobson Road.

Assistant to the City Manager Jeff Martin addressed the Committee relative to this agenda item and stated that Council has expressed support for extending the light rail operating segment into Mesa, particularly into the downtown area, and has discussed the possibility of having the light rail system extend all the way over to Mesa Drive. Mr. Martin said that progress has been made towards achieving this goal and said that the RPTA (Regional Public Transit Authority) has started the process of amending the minimum operating segment, which is the first section of the light rail corridor that will be built. Initially the plan called for a 13-mile segment to be built, which would have run from McDowell in central Phoenix to McClintock in Tempe and would have run along Main Street in the east valley. Mr. Martin advised that the City of Phoenix expressed

an interest in possibly amending the minimum operating segment and extending it further in an effort to add additional ridership. He said that the proposed amendment was from McDowell further north into Phoenix to Indian School. Mesa also expressed an interest in extending it also to the east and RPTA did recently amend the plan and submitted an application to the Federal Transit Administration which we believe will act favorably upon it because it does provide for additional ridership.

Mr. Martin said this would provide for the first mile that would come into Mesa to Dobson Road and said discussions have been help between RPTA and EVIT regarding the possibility of terminating the first section at that location. Mr. Martin said that staff will keep the Committee updated on this process and added that the extended segment would be completed within the 2004 to 2006 timeframe and would require funding. Mesa would have to identify a funding elements, as will Phoenix, since the process is a 50/50 match with the Federal government providing 50% and the individual local governments matching that amount.

Committeemember Pomeroy asked why the City of Mesa is not requested that the segment be extended even farther. Mr. Martin said that the thinking was that the initial segment should be able to be built within a 5 to 7 year timeframe in order to demonstrate to the Federal funding authority that the extension is warranted and provides improved public benefit.

Chairman Hawker thanked Mr. Martin for his update on this issue.

3. Adjournment.

Without objection, the meeting of the Transportation Committee adjourned at 7:13 p.m.

I hereby certify that the foregoing minutes are a true and correct copy of the minutes of the Transportation Committee meeting of the City of Mesa, Arizona, held on the 19th day of October 1999. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held and that a quorum was present.

Dated this ____ day of _____ 1999

BARBARA JONES, CITY CLERK