

# TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE MINUTES

November 21, 2002

The Transportation Committee of the City of Mesa met in the lower level meeting room of the Council Chambers, 57 East 1st Street, on November 21, 2002 at 10:35 a.m.

## COMMITTEE PRESENT

Rex Griswold  
Janie Thom  
Mike Whalen

## COMMITTEE ABSENT

None

## OFFICERS PRESENT

Mike Hutchinson

## COUNCIL PRESENT

Keno Hawker

1. Discuss and consider a proposal by the Maricopa Association of Governments for Williams Gateway/General Motors Proving Grounds Land Use/Infrastructure Needs Linkage Study.

Chairman Whalen welcomed everyone to the meeting and called upon Dennis Smith, representing the Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG), to present his remarks. Mr. Smith thanked the members of the Committee for the opportunity to address them and commented that the organization is pleased to be able to respond to Mayor Hawker's previously request that MAG become more involved in City of Mesa issues such as this. He commented on Mayor Hawker's extensive experience in the transportation area and added that Jack Tomasek would now highlight a brief presentation for the benefit of the Committee.

Jack Tomasek, Regional Development Division Manager at MAG, said that he would like to take this opportunity to present a brief overview of a "pre-proposal" his organization has prepared, which outlines methods whereby MAG can assist the City of Mesa on issues such as this affecting Williams Gateway Airport and the General Motors Proving Grounds.

Discussion ensued relative to the fact that the information can be used for both a market analysis and as a planning tool, the important information that can be obtained as a result of MAG's databases and the fact that a market analysis on land use composition can be provided, the possibility of analyzing different land use configurations in an effort to test the fiscal impact of them on Mesa's operating budget, extremely accurate "model" projections that have been prepared for both Maricopa and Pinal Counties to the year 2035, the benefits of preparing a supply/demand analysis on a County level to determine market absorption rates at Williams Gateway Airport, the possibility of performing a market analysis on REMY and the vast amount

of detailed, accurate information that can be obtained, and an effort that has been expended by MAG to identify regional job centers.

Mr. Tomasek noted that as a result of the Southeast Valley and Northern Pinal County Regional Transportation Study, efforts are being expended to develop traffic analysis zone level projections for the area immediately adjacent to Pinal County, the same area that WGA would serve as a job center. He commented on the fact that various municipalities as well as Counties have been cooperating in these efforts and added that this is a perfect example of multiple agencies working together to achieve common goals. He reported that the information that will be obtained will involve land use by type, population, households, jobs and major sectors, and projections will span 2010, 2020, 2030 and 2040.

Mr. Tomasek stated that the goal is to be able to provide a vast amount of regional information on both land-planning alternatives and economic development implications that could factor into the City's strategy. He added that they will also be able to look at regional transportation needs/impacts and can prepare fiscal impacts on alternative land plans to determine what the net impacts will be on the City's operating budget.

Mr. Tomasek expressed the opinion that in order to best accomplish the stated goals, MAG should be a part of an overall planning team within the City and added the opinion that the process should be treated as a consulting project. He said that they would develop a work scope for the kind of information that will be provided and then establish a timeline on deliverables. He thanked the members of the Committee for the opportunity to present his remarks.

Committeemember Griswold said that the model presented by Mr. Tomasek is very impressive and he would like to see it come to fruition.

Mayor Hawker commented on the fact that MAG has acquired a new model, REMY, which has been used successfully throughout the country in providing cities, municipalities and various regions useful information upon which to prepare in-depth plans. He spoke in support of the Transportation Committee endorsing this proposal and directing that studies be prepared on the General Motors Proving Ground/Williams Gateway Airport area. He stated the opinion that the financial impact of various plans alone should justify proceeding and added that the information would also reveal whether current plans are appropriate or if changes are necessary and should be made.

Mayor Hawker said that he would like to see the City of Mesa serve as a test project so that MAG can analyze the region surrounding Williams Gateway Airport and use the information obtained to sell other municipalities on the idea of conducting a similar analysis.

In response to a question from Chairman Whalen relative to costs involved, Mayor Hawker said that it is his understanding that the MAG region is buying the model and they are simply looking for a municipality to participate as a test pilot. He added that as the process progresses there may be some staff costs involved based on the fact that MAG will require a significant amount of City generated data.

Mr. Tomasek said that if the City of Mesa and MAG work together as a team, his organization is fully prepared to proceed with a clearly defined project. He agreed that the study may reach a point where additional staffing is necessary but emphasized that all of these issues will be discussed in detail as needs arise.

Councilmember Thom cautioned against "volunteering" City staff to work on the study at the expense of City projects and said that volunteers should be offered only when it is appropriate to do so.

Chairman Whalen stated the opinion that this proposal is extremely timely, particularly in view of the fact that he and Mayor Hawker will attend a meeting next week with representatives from the State Land Department, Apache Junction and Pinal County. He added that they will begin to look at changes in the Flood Control District, conversion dams that also tie closely into this matter. He suggested that a representative from MAG also plan to attend that meeting.

Chairman Whalen said that he would like to entertain a motion at this time to proceed with the linkage study.

Committeemember Thom commented that she would support proceeding but only based on the understanding that there will be no direct costs to the City involved.

It was moved by Committeemember Griswold, seconded by Committeemember Thom, to recommend to the Council that the Maricopa Association of Governments Infrastructure Needs Linkage Study for Williams Gateway Airport and General Motors Proving Grounds be conducted, contingent on the fact that there are no direct costs to the City involved.

Carried unanimously.

Chairman Whalen thanked everyone for their input regarding this important issue.

2. Hear a status report on the Maricopa Association of Governments Freeway Bottleneck Study.

Mark Schlappi and Jim Schoen, Senior Engineering Manager for Catalina Engineering, Inc., MAG consultants, addressed the members of the Committee relative to this agenda item.

Mr. Schlappi advised that a two-part study is already in progress and consists of a Freeway Bottleneck Study and a Freeway Capacity Enhancement Study. He commented on the fact that the region is growing so fast that in 20 years the bottlenecks will be completely overwhelmed by estimated traffic volumes and explained that for this reason, MAG is also pursuing freeway capacity enhancements in an effort to satisfy and meet the projected demands.

Mr. Schlappi briefly discussed the results of a household survey that was conducted and noted that 50% of the citizens who live in Mesa work in Mesa and added that 15 to 16% of the people who live in Mesa live in Tempe and 10% of the people who live in Mesa work in East Phoenix,

followed by Chandler and Gilbert. He noted that many of those people drive to work on the 101, the 202 and US 60.

Discussion ensued relative to the fact that population estimates show that the City of Phoenix will be as populated as Chicago 20 years from now, significant traffic demands that will result because of extreme growth, the fact that although capacity miles of roadway increased by approximately 29% between 1989 and 1998, traffic volumes increased by 42%, the fact that approximately one million people were added to the population in that region during that timeframe; extreme traffic congestion levels that currently exist in the mornings and during the evening peak period, and estimates that in the future I-17 will require 20 lanes, and the 101 will require 16 through southern Scottsdale and up to 18 on the Superstition Freeway.

Mr. Schlappi noted that there are three area studies contained in the Regional Transportation Plan, an HOV Study that is in the final stages, a Regional Transit Plan and a High Capacity Transit/East-West Mobility Study that is part of the Bottleneck Study. He discussed efforts to research what other regions have done to address problems such as this and reported that Los Angeles built structures to move traffic above the freeway. He added that another project in Dallas/Fort Worth widened the existing freeways to handle more lanes and built tunnels underneath to increase capacity even more. He added that San Antonio has built freeways up on structures in order to meet that city's growing demands.

Mr. Schlappi reported that one of the consultants involved in the Bottleneck Study has drawn up some sketches of methods to incorporate more lanes into the existing right of way and said that some of the thoughts include segregating trucks.

Chairman Whalen commented that he does not see any new freeway loops being built and asked if there were any plans to do this. Mr. Schlappi said that their charge was to look at just the existing freeways but added that as part of this, instead of undertaking a massive reconstruction on I-10 to the west, they were instructed to look at the possibility of constructing a parallel freeway to the south.

Committeemember Thom noted that in the City of Austin, the I-35 has express lanes that are elevated and she said that she has had citizens speak in support of proceeding in a similar manner here. She added the opinion that citizens would support express lanes on the US 60 that go all the way into downtown Phoenix.

Mr. Schoen addressed the members of the Committee and reiterated that the first phase of the Bottleneck Study involved looking at existing bottlenecks and attempting to identify solutions to the problems that currently exist. He said he would like to address specifically the three freeways that impact Mesa, the Superstition, 101 and 202 and highlighted a brief slide presentation for the benefit of the Committeemembers. He discussed efforts that were expended to identify bottlenecks on the three listed freeways and said that the first one they analyzed was US 60 westbound, the interchange with I-10. He explained that one of the larger bottlenecks exists just to the east of that interchange when you are approaching the downtown area. He advised that they looked at a variety of alternatives including meter ramping and adding additional lanes in the Tempe section where a narrow section currently exists. He

reported their study showed that adding additional lanes would reduce travel time and delays on the 202 by approximately 22% but explained that they would be opening up a bottleneck and therefore more traffic would be “dumped” onto the I-10 and the travel time/delays on I-10 would increase by approximately 29%. He added that although they would be moving through one bottleneck, other problems would be created.

Mr. Schoen stated that MAG’s recommendation as far as increasing capacity is to take an in-depth look at what needs to be accomplished on the I-10 and said that ADOT is in the process of preparing a study on that at the current time. He added that another recommendation that would apply to all of the sections that they’ve looked at is the implementation of a system wide balanced ramp-metering program. He noted that although some ramp metering exists today, it appears to be scattered, and explained that a more balanced metering program would significantly improve traffic/travel on the freeways.

Discussion ensued relative to 101 northbound in the morning and congestion that occurs at the 101 and 202 interchange on the connector ramp, the possibility of adding auxiliary lanes from McKellips to Thomas Roads and the fact that this would provide some measure of relief; the fact that adding another HOV lane would result in a 15% reduction in congestion/traffic; the fact that adding a third lane to the connector ramp where the congestion occurs would reduce the amount of delay on the ramp but would increase the amount of travel time on the 202 by 60%, the fact that congestion occurs particularly in the mornings and impacts travelers heading towards the downtown area, the fact that insufficient capacity exists where the 202 and 101 merge and then further down where the 51 comes in as well; the fact that the 202 is congested in the mornings from the short stack to the 51, I-10 and 202 interchange and then back to the 101 and the fact that eliminating that bottleneck would flood the downtown area and increase the amount of delays that commuters are already experiencing.

Mr. Schoen informed the Committee that several minor solutions are being recommended, particularly in the downtown area that would benefit all of the 202. He added that MAG has also looked at adding an auxiliary lane on the 101 to Scottsdale for commuters merging from the 101 to the 202. He explained that the additional lane would eliminate some of the congestion that is the direct result of merging at the location.

Mr. Schoen reported that the first phase looks at what currently exists and what can be done in the near term, over the next four to five years, to improve traffic.

Mr. Schlappi commented on the fact that their forecast reflects the fact that major employment is anticipated for the entire southeast valley and said that peak flow over the next 20 years could change and move more into the east valley rather than towards Phoenix in the morning. He explained that the model takes into account the forecast, employment locations and population.

In response to a question from Chairman Whalen, Mr. Schoen stated that the model also looks at air quality issues and added that eliminating the bottlenecks will improve air quality.

2. Hear a status report on the Maricopa Association of Governments High Capacity Transit Study.

Steve Schibuola, Associate Director of the IBI Group, addressed the members of the Committee relative to this agenda item and noted that copies of the presentation have been distributed for review. He stated that he would like to provide a brief overview of the High Capacity Transit Plan and noted that the plan relates to the Regional Transportation Plan and the goal is to identify forms of effective high capacity transit service. He said that they are focusing on three major modes, with the first being commuter rail, a service that operates primarily on existing freight lines. He added that in Mesa it would run on the existing UP freight lines and would have stations approximately every five miles. He noted that commuter rail is really meant for the longer distance commute to downtown Phoenix and potentially in the reverse to the Williams Gateway area. He explained that light rail is being implemented as far as the Central Phoenix/East Valley project. He added that bus rapid transit is an emergency high capacity mode and is really an "umbrella" term for using buses to do what has traditionally been accomplished by rail systems in the past.

Mr. Schibuola reported that they looked at two types of bus rapid transit for the MAG region, the first, the BRT Express, which is similar to what the City of Phoenix is in the process of implementing, and is basically a longer distance commuter express type service that remains mostly on the freeways. He added that they also looked at something that is more like a light rail system (BRT Dedicated) that would run on arterial streets and a dedicated guide way. He noted that this type of transit would most likely stop every mile or so.

Discussion ensued relative to the fact that the project vision is to look at commuter rail service along the region's three corridors and the fact that they are looking at light rail and BRT on other corridors that are potential candidates for this kind of service, the importance of implementing a very strong local bus system to "feed" whatever kind of network is developed, the fact that the study has been ongoing for a year and should be completed by the end of December, the fact that agency interviews were conducted with all of the cities in the MAG region to discuss transportation problems and identify potential corridors to be reviewed, and evaluations that were conducted on a number of peer systems around the country and places that already have commuter rail, light rail and some BRT in an effort to identify existing strengths and weaknesses.

Mr. Schibuola referred to a map displayed in the Council Chambers and noted the various corridors that were selected, Power Road (LRT or BRT), Main Street (potential light rail or potential bus rapid transit corridor) and the Union Pacific. He said that the next step they embarked on was combining the corridors into specific transportation networks in order to determine ridership and costs and the overall cost effectiveness of the services. He advised that they also looked at environmental justice, future transit-dependent populations, land use opportunities for redevelopment or transit development along these lines, and a number of constraints that might have to be overcome in terms of right-of-way and impacts on natural resources.

Mr. Schibuola informed the members of the Committee that they also looked at extending BRT Express-type services on every freeway that would be of interest to the City of Mesa, including the 202, US 60 and the 101. He said that they found these services to be very cost effective and valuable. He added that in conducting an "apple to apple" comparison to some of the other

modes that carry a lot more people, they determined that the express buses really didn't fit into that mold. He stated that their recommendation is that express buses be brought forward for further consideration in the plan but added that they believe they represent more of an extension of the local bus service as opposed to a true high capacity mode that can move a large number of people. He also commented on commuter rail and said that in terms of ridership they found that all the corridors did very well in comparison to a number of recent commuter rail startups in the California/Seattle area. He discussed the extensive amount of repairs that would have to be done in order to upgrade the rail lines to an acceptable condition and added that in order for them to be usable 20, 30 and even 40 years in the future, upgrades and "double-tracking" would have to occur. He also discussed the importance of upgrading the signal system to the point where it would provide very reliable on-time operations.

Mr. Schibuola advised that unlike many other parts of the country, in order for Mesa to implement an effective, efficient commuter rail system, a significant amount of money would have to be spent. He added that cost comparisons do not show light rail as being as financially attractive as some of the BRT and LRT options but noted that much more than costs have to be considered when looking at systems. He said that he is aware of the strong regional interest that exists in making good use of the rail lines and providing commuter rail service.

Additional discussion ensued relative to the fact that Peggy Jones from Avondale is part of a group that believes they can run a limited commuter rail from downtown Phoenix to Palo Verde for approximately \$1 million total if they can form a partnership with the railroad, the fact that a number of safety issues would need to be addressed, cost estimates of \$11 million per mile for commuter rail that were discussed, single track versus double track requirements, and the importance of keeping costs down so that the project can compete for Federal funds.

Mr. Schibuola also advised that traditional trains, heavy locomotives, were also looked at and reported that recently a smaller, faster, lighter product has been marketed. He said that one manufacturer has been certified by the Federal Government to operate and added that this may result in lower overall costs. He indicated their intention to pursue this area and obtain additional information.

Mr. Schibuola noted that both the Main Street and the Power Road corridors performed very well in terms of cost effectiveness and said that they will be recommending that they continue to move forward for consideration throughout the regional transportation planning process. He added that they are finishing up the 5<sup>th</sup> Milestone, finalizing the network evaluation and continuing to refine commuter rail costs. He said that after this is accomplished, discussions will take place regarding implementation and the next steps to be taken. He advised that a draft will be forwarded to MAG approximately the middle of December and will be released to an agency working group, which contains Mesa staff members, probably in early January.

Committeemember Thom stated the opinion that if any of the aforementioned is incorporated into Mesa's transportation plan, it should be funded by an alternative funding source. She added that all of the monies obtained from the transportation tax will be needed to build freeways and major streets.

In response to comments from Chairman Whalen and Committeemember Thom, Mr. Schibuola stated that typically it is difficult to build these kinds of projects without at least some local funding. He added that monies may be matched by regional funds and should be matched with Federal funds, but said that without local participation, the process is very difficult and success is unlikely.

(Chairman Whalen declared a brief recess at this time and the meeting reconvened in approximately five minutes.)

4. Discuss and consider the City of Mesa's regional transportation funding priorities.

Assistant Development Services Director Jeff Martin addressed the members of the Committee relative to this agenda item. Mr. Martin stated that approximately four weeks ago, Staff presented Council with a similar list but noted that many changes have occurred since that time. He advised that a significant amount of discussion has occurred on the regional level relative to a concept developed by a group of Mayors from different municipalities. He explained that the Mayors' concept, referred to by some as the "return to sender" concept calls for half of the funding to remain in place for regionally significant projects and be funded by the region. He added that the other half of the funding would be distributed back to the cities in the region based on population. He said that the following list has been developed based on that concept and noted that staff has identified four regionally significant projects:

1. Williams Gateway Airport Parkway; Cost: Approximately \$271 million;
2. HOV lanes on the Red Mountain and San Tan Freeways;
3. Rubberized asphalt on the Red Mountain, San Tan and Superstition Freeways;
4. Funding for Quality of Life/Freeway Mitigation Measures

Mr. Martin reported that the total cost of the proposed priorities is approximately \$480 million, which, when calculated on a regional equity basis, comes pretty close to the \$500 million figure that staff believes would be Mesa's share of the funds. He added that the remaining projects that have been identified by staff as "other priorities" would then be projects to be funded at the City's discretion with the understanding that the remainder of the regional monies would come back to the various cities based on population and the City Council would render allocation decisions.

Mr. Martin informed the members of the Committee that staff's recommendation is that the list, if approved, be forwarded to MAG and that they be asked to rate the various projects. He noted that items have been added to the list since the initial go around, including (under Transit Priorities) a high capacity transit corridor on Power Road. He added that staff also put back in the light rail concept so that the project can be considered and rated. Mr. Martin reiterated that the priority projects, which represent three-quarters of the list, would be funded at the discretion of the City Councils. He added that MAG is in the process of putting together a survey instrument and intends to conduct extensive polling for the region in an effort to determine projects that would receive voter support if an election was held within a couple of years.

In response to a question from Chairman Whalen, Mr. Martin confirmed that the Committee will vote on recommending the various priorities to the Council and will then forward the list on to the entire Council for their review and consideration.

Chairman Whalen recommended that the Committee consider each category in an effort to arrive at a consensus. He asked whether the Committee agreed that the Williams Gateway Airport Parkway should be included as part of the regional plan.

In response to a question from Committeemember Thom, Chairman Whalen stated that this would be part of the half-cent sales tax extension. Committeemember Thom said that she would support proceeding in that manner.

Chairman Whalen then asked whether there was consensus among the members of the Council relative to the inclusion of the HOV lanes on the Red Mountain and San Tan Freeways.

Committeemember Thom indicated that she would not support this proposal and Chairman Whalen said that it might be better to consider the issues one at a time as follows:

1. Williams Gateway Airport Parkway:

Committeemember Griswold:	Aye
Committeemember Thom:	Aye
Chairman Whalen:	Aye

2. HOV Lanes on the Red Mountain and San Tan Freeways:

Chairman Whalen:	Aye
Committeemember Thom:	Nay
Committeemember Griswold:	Nay

Committeemember Thom stated the opinion that all of the taxpayers will pay for that lane regardless of who uses it and therefore all of the taxpayers should be able to use the lane, whether they are alone in the car or not. She stated the opinion that HOV lanes are underutilized. In response to a question from Committeemember Griswold, Committeemember Thom said that if they were considering the addition of just another lane rather than a HOV lane, she would support the proposal but added the opinion that HOV lanes are unfair to every taxpayer.

Committeemember Griswold said that he doesn't have a problem with it either way but would prefer the addition of a regular lane over a HOV lane.

Chairman Whalen expressed the opinion that there will be problems with MAG if the City decides not to go forward with the addition of a HOV lane.

Mr. Martin stated that MAG's long-range plan contains a HOV component, which calls for the addition of HOV lanes to the entire regional freeway system. He added the opinion that there is

likely to be consensus for HOV lanes along the entire system. He said that if the Committee wants to try to add regular lanes, that constitutes an entirely different issue.

Councilmember Thom commented that it is her understanding that the membership of MAG is composed of members from each City and therefore it is the duty and responsibility of the member cities to instruct MAG to carry out what they would like to see done and not the other way around. She added that MAG should be following instructions given by the member cities and therefore Mesa should provide direction and if the other member cities disagree with Mesa's point of view, negotiations can then take place.

Mr. Martin clarified that the cities adopted the HOV Plan, not MAG, and added that MAG's staff is not the driving force behind this issue. He said that currently there is a HOV Plan in the long-range MAG adopted plan and this has been included on the list because a number of the informal discussions that have taken place relative to this issue indicate that there is support on the part of the entire region, of all the cities, for HOV lanes.

Mr. Martin responded to a question from Committeemember Thom and explained that HOV lanes are not funded by CMAQ. He added that CMAQ is really used for air quality mitigation and in similar areas and added that he believes the HOV lanes would be funded by the STP monies.

Chairman Whalen recommended that the Committee move on to the next item on the list at this time.

3. Rubberized Asphalt on the Red Mountain, San Tan and Superstition Freeways

Committeemember Thom:	Aye
Committeemember Griswold:	Aye
Chairman Whalen	Aye

4. Funding for Quality of Life/Freeway Mitigation Measures

In response to a request for input from Chairman Whalen, Mr. Martin explained that this item could be many things, such as sound walls and other such products/projects to mitigate noise from the freeways.

Chairman Whalen:	Aye
Committeemember Griswold:	Aye
Committeemember Thom:	Aye

Chairman Whalen noted that three of the four items have received the approval of the Committee.

In response to a question from Mr. Martin, Chairman Whalen said that rather than forward a recommendation onto the Council calling for the construction of additional "regular" lanes

instead of HOV lanes, he would prefer to leave HOV lanes as the only option despite the 2 to 1 vote in opposition to proceeding in this manner.

Chairman Whalen then asked the members of the Committee to vote on the other priorities (listed below the line):

1. Add Additional Capacity to the 101 and 202 Traffic Interchanges per the Bottleneck Study.

Chairman Whalen commented that a presentation was made to the Committee relative to this issue.

Chairman Whalen:	Aye
Committeemember Thom:	Aye
Committeemember Griswold:	Aye

2. Add General Lanes or Greater Capacity to the Red Mountain Freeway from Price to Higley and on the San Tan Freeway from US 60 to Williams Gateway Airport.

Chairman Whalen:	Aye
Committeemember Thom:	Aye
Committeemember Griswold:	Aye

3. Provide Additional Capacity for Areas Designated at Bottleneck on the Red Mountain Freeway outside City of Mesa limits.

Chairman Whalen:	Aye
Committeemember Thom:	Aye
Committeemember Griswold:	Aye

In response to a question from Committeemember Thom, Chairman Whalen confirmed that these items would come back before the Council and they would be given the opportunity to vote on each issue. Committeemember Thom said that she will vote in support based on the fact that the Council will ultimately decide whether to spend money on these items.

4. Traffic Interchange Improvements: Dual Lefts at Greenfield on US 60, Higley, Sossaman, Ellsworth, Crismon and Signal Butte

Committeemember Thom:	Aye
Committeemember Griswold:	Aye
Chairman Whalen:	Aye

5. Pueblo Crossing at the Red Mountain Freeway

Committeemember Griswold:	Aye
Committeemember Thom:	Aye

Chairman Whalen: Aye

Chairman Whalen commented that this project would be similar to the one that was done on Longmore, across US 60 at Fiesta Mall.

6. Lighting/Red Mountain Freeway: Price to Country Club

Committeemember Griswold: Aye  
Committeemember Thom: Aye  
Chairman Whalen: Aye

7. US 60 Landscaping: Ellsworth to Meridian

Committeemember Thom: Aye  
Committeemember Griswold: Aye  
Chairman Whalen: Aye

8. New Traffic Interchanges as needed

Chairman Whalen noted that the Council would decide which traffic interchange upgrades should occur.

Committeemember Thom asked whether this would be done in lieu of the Lindsay Road interchange. Chairman Whalen responded that rather than specify an interchange on Lindsay Road, the intent is that there may be a number of interchanges that need to be updated.

Committeemember Griswold added that the Council will have the opportunity to vote on the interchanges individually, depending on available funding.

Committeemember Thom: Aye  
Committeemember Griswold: Aye  
Chairman Whalen: Aye

9. Higley Parkway, US 60 to the Beeline

Chairman Whalen: Aye  
Committeemember Griswold: Aye  
Committeemember Thom: Aye

10. Bridge Crossing at Gilbert Road/Shared with MCDOT

Chairman Whalen: Aye  
Committeemember Griswold: Aye  
Committeemember Thom: Aye

11. Bridge Crossing at Dobson shared with MCDOT & Salt River Pima Maricopa Indian Community

Chairman Whalen: Aye  
Committeemember Thom: Nay  
Committeemember Griswold: Aye

Committeemember Thom commented that she does not see any reason for this to take place.

12. Shared Use Path Along Canal Banks & Freeway Right-of-Ways

Chairman Whalen: Aye  
Committeemember Griswold: Aye  
Committeemember Thom: Aye

13. Intelligent Traffic System Improvements for Freeways & City Streets

Chairman Whalen: Aye  
Committeemember Griswold: Aye  
Committeemember Thom: Aye

14. Other Transportation Projects as Identified in the Mesa Transportation Plan

In response to a comment from Chairman Whalen relative to the fact that no dollar figure has been included in this item, Mr. Martin stated that all of these items, the ones listed below the line, will be subject to the Council's discretion and therefore staff did not believe it necessary to place a dollar figure on those items at this time.

Chairman Whalen: Aye  
Committeemember Thom: Aye  
Committeemember Griswold: Aye

15. Transit/Commuter Rail – West Mesa to Williams Gateway Airport

Chairman Whalen: Aye  
Committeemember Griswold: Aye  
Committeemember Thom: Nay

Committeemember Thom stated that she would like the opportunity to study this further before casting her vote. She commented that the Committee has heard discussion today regarding the fact that even the people who own the railroads are not amenable to utilizing them for commuter rail.

In response to a request for clarification from Chairman Whalen, Committeemember Thom stated that she would prefer that this item be removed from the list until some type of commitment has been obtained from the railroad. She said that if Union Pacific Railroad

indicates they are willing to talk about this issue, or about a lease, then she can see pursuing it further.

Mr. Martin noted that this project would evolve over time. He expressed the opinion that the MAG priorities will be set for projects that will not come on line for 20 to 25 years. He stated that if the item is removed from the list entirely, it will not be evaluated and/or studied further. He added that if it remains on the list, then additional study and discussion can take place.

In response to a comment from Committeemember Thom, Mr. Martin said that the project is a priority for the Mesa City Council who want the matter to receive further study and evaluation but explained that in the end if the concept that seems to gain the most momentum is the "return to sender" concept proposed by the various Mayors, then they might decide not to carry through on the matter. He said that staff thought it appropriate to continue to evaluate the issue but added that they will abide by the wishes of the Committee and the Council.

16. Grade Separated Light Rail – Main to Longmore

Chairman Whalen:	Aye
Committeemember Thom:	Nay
Committeemember Griswold:	Nay

17. High Capacity Transit on Main Street – Mesa Drive to Ellsworth

Chairman Whalen:	Aye
Committeemember Thom:	Nay
Committeemember Griswold:	Aye

Committeemember Thom said that she is opposed to this item because it will require the use of one traffic lane in each direction and added that the lanes are now being used by cars and are needed for that purpose. She noted that there are no plans in place to widen Main Street to three lanes in each direction and therefore is opposed to this issue.

Committeemember Griswold commented that it is his understanding that high capacity transit could mean many things, including busses, and might not require the lane taking. Committeemember Thom clarified that the plan states that the lane would come out regardless of what they decided to do.

Mr. Martin explained that high capacity transit could be more like "Express Bus" rather than the true "high capacity transit" that requires dedicated lanes. He said that the City of Phoenix does not have dedicated lanes in every case.

In response to a question from Committeemember Thom, Mr. Martin stated that another possibility would be to restrict one lane to bus use only. Committeemember Thom spoke in strong opposition to this option and stated the opinion that this would result in extreme congestion on Main Street in East Mesa and would get even worse as you travel west of Gilbert

Road. She said that she would not support this option unless there was a plan in place to widen Main Street.

Discussion ensued relative to the fact that the purpose of listing a variety of items is so that additional study and evaluation can occur and the fact that Committeemember Thom noted that the list indicates that the items are "priority" projects.

18. High Capacity Transit – Power Road

Chairman Whalen:	Aye
Committeemember Griswold:	Aye
Committeemember Thom:	Nay

19. Downtown Mesa Transit Center

Chairman Whalen:	Aye
Committeemember Griswold:	Aye
Committeemember Thom:	Nay

20. Additional Express Service/New Routes on the Red Mountain, San Tan and Superstition Freeways; One additional bus purchase and one replacement

Chairman Whalen:	Aye
Committeemember Griswold:	Aye
Committeemember Thom:	Nay

21. Regional Funding for Bus Routes Across Multiple Jurisdictions with one additional bus purchase and one replacement

Chairman Whalen:	Aye
Committeemember Griswold:	Aye
Committeemember Thom:	Aye

22. Park 'N Ride Lots – Red Mountain at Gilbert, Red Mountain at Greenfield, and Superstition at Country Club

Chairman Whalen:	Aye
Committeemember Thom:	Aye
Committeemember Griswold:	Aye

Mr. Martin indicated that staff will keep the list and prepare a staff report to go on top of it noting that the Committee voted "nay" on two of the projects. Chairman Whalen asked that the report also note the 2 to 1 votes that took place.

Mr. Martin stated that the minutes will be attached to the report as well.

Chairman Whalen thanked Mr. Martin for his work on this issue and reiterated that the proposals represent a "road map." He commented on the "return to sender" proposal that is being developed by the Mayors and noted that the proposal reduces regional projects or the possibility of regional projects. He added that the opinion that the proposal would also significantly reduce transit dollars since most communities will opt for roadways rather than transit. He said that he hopes additional proposals will come forward so that there are a number of options that can be evaluated and discussed.

Committeemember Griswold commented that it is his understanding that funding would not be adequate to do all of the projects and the streets. He added that only the top projects and the streets could be done as part of the \$1.4 billion funding total.

5. Discuss and consider modification to the design of the Ellsworth Road Improvement Project, Guadalupe to Germann.

City Engineer Keith Nath introduced Tom Kmetz to the members of the Committee and noted that Mr. Kmetz is the Senior Project Engineer who has been coordinating the project with the County. He said that staff is seeking Committee direction regarding a request that has been received from Williams Gateway Airport relative to delaying a portion of the work on the County led improvement project on Ellsworth Road from ½ mile north of Guadalupe and running down to Germann. He stated that the request is to delay a portion of the project from Ray Road south and advised that the City has been working with McDOT and the Flood Control District over the last several years and has entered in a number of IGA's with them relative to participating in this project. He explained that the project design is rapidly approaching completion and the next step will be the start of construction. He reported that the tentative plan is to bid the project by the middle of next year and said that construction will most likely begin in the fall.

Mr. Kmetz provided the members of the Committee with brief background information relative to this issue and noted that the stakeholders when the project began consisted of the City of Mesa, Maricopa County Department of Transportation, Maricopa County Flood Control District, General Motors and Williams Gateway Airport. He added that several alignment studies were evaluated prior to selecting the one that is currently in place. He noted that since the alignment study was done, General Motors has given notice of their intention to relocate their facility. He added that Williams Gateway Airport has forwarded a letter to the City of Mesa and the County, as lead agencies in the project, requesting that we consider delaying a portion of the project south of the Ray Road alignment. He explained that the purpose of the delay is to allow additional studies to occur.

Discussion ensued relative to the fact that the stakeholders met to discuss the pros and cons of such a delay; feedback that has been received from the County and the Flood Control District relative to proceeding with the current project and avoiding delays on any portion; City staff and County concerns relative to traffic volumes on Ellsworth Road, particularly in the year 2006 when the San Tan Freeway will be completed at that site; existing flooding and liability that exists and General Motors' statement that although the company is still interested in relocating,

it appears that the move will not take place until three years after the company purchases land for the relocation site.

Mr. Kmetz informed the members of the Committee that staff recommends proceeding with the current design and eliminating the full improvements north of Pecos Road for a portion that may be required to bring an altered alignment back into the existing Ellsworth Road alignment.

In response to a question from Committeemember Thom, Mr. Nath noted that many people who live outside the City of Mesa use that road. He added that the road is also the main route to access TRW and the employment area at that location. He stated that the Town of Queen Creek does not intend to participate in sharing the cost for the improvements on Ellsworth Road. He noted that the site is located within the jurisdiction of Mesa and McDOT but added that Queen Creek will have responsibility for Ellsworth Road south of Germann.

Chairman Whalen noted that staff and the Airport Director have recommended that they proceed with the current design and schedule. He added that the design will be modified to eliminate full improvements north of Pecos Road for approximately one-quarter mile with the opportunity to realign this portion without significant improvements.

Mr. Nath clarified that the one-quarter mile could actually expand to one-half mile and asked that this amendment be added.

In response to a request for clarification from Committeemember Griswold, Mr. Nath stated that plans were in place at Williams Gateway Airport for full improvements on the west half of Ellsworth Road to accommodate the future six-lane roadway. He said that all of the pavement, curb and gutter were to be installed. He explained that in accordance with the current recommendations, some of the curb and pavement will be dropped off so they will end up with two lanes in each direction in this section, similar to what is being done south of Pecos. He added that they would continue that concept and then once they got north of that area, approximately one-quarter mile to one-half mile north, full improvements would then continue on the Williams Gateway Airport side.

Chairman Whalen asked for an update on Pecos Road. Mr. Nath reported that they are currently in the archeological investigation stage and explained that an initial evaluation found that quite a few of those sites existed and so as a matter of course the investigation must be conducted. He added that the target date for completing that is January and said that if there are no delays, the plan is to complete the design by early 2003 and then begin construction as soon as possible. He said that additional information on this issue will be presented to the Committee and the Council. He confirmed that all of the land has been acquired and explained that as part of that project, the City is going to add waterlines down Power Road and over on Pecos to Sossaman.

In response to a question from Committeemember Thom, Mr. Nath stated that the City has an IGA with McDOT and that funding participation levels have all been set up in the IGA and are in place.

It was moved by Committeemember Griswold, seconded by Committeemember Thom, to recommend to the Council that Staff's recommendation that the City proceed with the current design, eliminating the full improvements north of Pecos for a portion that may be required to bring an altered alignment back into the existing Ellsworth Road alignment, be approved.

Chairman Whalen declared the motion carried unanimously.

6. Discuss and consider the City of Mesa street median construction policy.

Chairman Whalen stated that this agenda item will be continued to the next meeting of the Transportation Committee.

7. Discuss and consider the City of Mesa's practice regarding leading and lagging left-turn signals.

Chairman Whalen stated that this agenda item will be continued to the next meeting of the Transportation Committee.

8. Adjournment.

Without objection, the Transportation Committee meeting adjourned at 12:30 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 21<sup>st</sup> day of November 2002. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held and that a quorum was present.

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BARBARA JONES, CITY CLERK