



Transportation Technical Advisory Committee

November 18, 2021 Meeting Minutes

DATE: November 18, 2021
TIME: 10:00 a.m.
LOCATION: Via ZOOM Webinar

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Larry Halberstadt - *Chair*
(Payson)

Scott Warren
(Gila County)

Rick Powers
(Globe)

Lana Clark
(Superior)

Nina Arredondo
(Pinal County)

Jason James
(ADOT - MPD)

Sharon Jakubowski Wolz
(Kearny)

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Tim Grier
(Star Valley)

Sandra Shade
(Ak-Chin Indian Community)

VACANT
(Hayden)

Tara Chief
(White Mountain Apache Tribe)

John Schempf
(Mammoth)

Micah Gaudet
(Miami)

Amanda Kenney
(Kearny)

Sylvia Kerlock
(Winkelman)

Barney Bigman
(San Carlos Apache Tribe)

GUESTS PRESENT:

Jeff Minefee
(ADOT Southeast District)

Dylan Renner
(ADOT LPA)

Jennifer Hobert
(ADOT LPA)

Keith Christian
(Kimley Horn)

CAG Staff:

Travis Ashbaugh
(Transportation Planning Manager)

I. Call to Order

Chair Halberstadt called the meeting to order at 10:09 AM.

II. Pledge of Allegiance

Chair Halberstadt led the Committee in the Pledge of Allegiance.

III. Roll Call

Roll call was taken. Seven (7) voting members were present, constituting a quorum as established by the CAG TTAC Bylaws.

IV. Introductions & Title VI Notice

Introductions were made individually on the Webinar. Mr. Ashbaugh, at this time, read a statement of where and how to file a complaint regarding Title VI violations.

V. **Approval Of Minutes – (September 23, 2021)**

Chair Halberstadt asked if corrections to the draft minutes were in order. No corrections were needed.

Mr. Warren made the motion to approve the September 23, 2021 minutes as presented. Mr. Powers seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

VI. **Call to the Public**

No one answered the call to the public.

VII. **Standing Reports**

A. **Member Jurisdictions**

Payson

Chair Halberstadt reported on one (1) item:

1. The design plans are about 60-70 percent complete for the “**Granite Dells Road**” project (**Project # PAY 19-01D**) and are expected to be completed within the next three weeks and planning to bid by late December 2021

Gila County

Mr. Warren reported that there were no new updates since the September 23, 2021 meeting.

B. **Multi-Modal Planning Division, ADOT**

Mr. James reported on two (2) items:

1. The first ADOT Freight Advisory Committee meeting took place on October 12, 2021. ADOT is required to update a Statewide Freight Plan at least every five years with the purpose of identifying trends/needs regarding freight flow within the State of Arizona. The data will be used to formulate policies, measures, guidance, assessments, etc. The next Freight Advisory Committee meeting is scheduled on December 7, 2021 to discuss primary highway freight system redesignation, freight forecasts update, and the draft Arizona State Plan Vision, and Goals.
2. ADOT will be starting the Long-Range Transportation Plan update soon. Advertisement will be published in January 2022. The Scope of Work is currently being worked on. Mr. James will be the Project Manager on the update.

Mr. Warren asked how the Long-Range Transportation Plan Update ties within ADOT’s five-year construction plan. Mr. James responded that the Long-Range Transportation Plan Update targets the funding towards the categories of projects, such as pavement preservation, bridge preservation, modernization, etc. based on fiscal constraints. The five-year plan provides the specific projects in which they will be carried out.

C. Local Public Agency, ADOT

Ms. Holbert reported on three (3) items:

1. Dylan Renner is the newest staff member at ADOT within the LPA section as a project coordinator. He will be the point of contact for project initiations and will be sending out the establishment letters for new projects.
2. The “Call-for-Projects” for FY23 “Off-System Bridge” funds is expected to be announced very soon. The plan is to send out the email by the end of November 2021. Applications are expected to be due late February 2022 with an anticipated available amount of \$3.9 million (\$1 million max per eligible project). Projects must be submitted through CAG.
3. A Federal Delivery Academy (formerly known as the “Every Day Counts”) meeting is scheduled for December 9, 2021 and will be focusing on the benefits of Pre-Scoping and Statement of Interest (SOI).

D. District, Engineers, ADOT

Mr. Minefee from the Southeast District reported on four (4) items:

1. Repairs, due to the floods over the summer, on the slope, guardrail replacement, and end treatments on US-60 from MP-242 to MP-243 outside of the Town of Miami are underway. Hunter Guardrail has been selected to make those repairs.
2. Granite Construction was selected to replace the guardrails on SR-77 and SR-177 that were damaged due to the Telegraph/Mescal fires. ADOT is waiting on the purchase order to be approved so the project can begin.
3. Nesbitt Construction was selected to repair the electrical panels that were washed out along the US 60 near Regus Road. ADOT is waiting on the purchase order to be approved as well.
4. Nesbitt Construction was also selected for slope/bank repairs along SR-188.

E. CAG Transportation Planning Update

Mr. Ashbaugh reported on two (2) item:

1. The hiring process for the “Mobility Management Coordinator” position continues.
2. CAG will be entering in the final year of the current contract with All Traffic Data (formerly known as Traffic Research and Analysis) to conduct the seventeen (17) “Growth Counts.” The counts will be conducted between January 2022 and March 2022. If there is a need for traffic counts in addition to the “Growth Counts,” make the request known within the next few weeks to see if there is the budget to do so.

VIII. Old Business

Transportation Improvement Program

Mr. Ashbaugh understood that the City of Globe would like to remove the Design and Construction of “**Hill Street (Mill & Fill / Sidewalk Replacement)**” project (**Project # GLB 27-01D & GLB 29-01C**) from the TIP to release the funds for reprogramming. He stated that during the September 2021 meeting, Jerry Barnes stated he would provide confirmation to take this action by the next TTAC meeting as he expects the IGA to be in place with ADOT to transfer over the funds. Mr. Ashbaugh hasn’t received any confirmation to date and asked Mr. Powers if he had

an update regarding removing this project from the TIP. Mr. Powers stated he had no new updated information regarding this request.

Mr. Powers made the motion to table the decision of removing the Design and Construction of the **“Hill Street (Mill & Fill / Sidewalk Replacement) project (Project # GLB 27-01D & GLB 29-01C)**. Mr. Warren seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

IX. New Business

A. ADOT Highway-Rail Grade Crossing Action Plan

Keith Christian, with Kimley-Horn, presented on behalf of ADOT. Mr. Christian stated that the State Highway-Rail Grade Crossing Action Plan (SHRAP) is to determine how best to improve safety at approximately 700 public highway-railroad crossings in Arizona. He stated that safety is the top priority for ADOT and the plan would provide recommendations for future programming of rail crossing safety improvements. He also mentioned that there is a federal requirement for all states to have a SHRAP by February 14, 2022.

Mr. Christian provided a high-level map of railroad crossings within the CAG Region and asked the Committee to review for missing crossings. He also was seeking additional stakeholder input such as:

1. What safety concerns does one have at rail crossing within one’s jurisdiction?
2. Which rail crossing locations or types of the most safety concerns?
3. What has been done over the years at rail crossings that one feels has improved safety?
4. What suggestions does one have for how to improve safety at rail crossings?
5. What are the institutional challenges to improving rail crossing safety?
6. How should rail crossing safety priorities be determined?

Mr. Ashbaugh brought up the railroad crossing across Golf Course Boulevard, along SR-177, in the Town of Hayden. He stated that he is not sure how much traffic runs through the area but understands the area needs a lot of work. Mr. Powers confirmed by stating that the crossing is a dirt road without gates and obviously no pavement markings. He said the only item he recalls that is at the crossing are the crossbuck signs.

Mr. Ashbaugh asked what the ultimate end game was once the SHRAP was completed. He asked will ADOT be upgrading the crossings, based on prioritization, with the funding that is available. Mr. Christian stated that once the SHRAP is complete, the intent is having a prioritized list of crossings for safety upgrades that have well known issues of reoccurring incidents, pending the Federal Railroad Administration’s (FRA) approval. However, reoccurring incidents isn’t the end-all-be-all deciding factor. A risk assessment is part of the process in which will help determine the priority, but ADOT is looking at being able to fund the top twenty (20) locations.

Mr. Ashbaugh asked if ADOT has looked into the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) that was passed on November 15, 2021 to see if there are funds allocated specifically for railroad projects. Mr. Christian stated that ADOT is mainly looking at projects that can use the Section 130 funding and is the focus for the SHRAP, however, they do realize that there may be other funding opportunities elsewhere and will be cognitive about them.

Mr. Ashbaugh also asked for clarification purposes, that one of the priority railroad crossings fell within a local jurisdictional boundary, that ADOT would be covering the costs with the funding they secure, and therefore

not requiring any form of local match from the local agencies to complete the project. Mr. Christian stated he could not answer that question on behalf of ADOT. Mr. Powers stated that he understands that the improvements must be done by the railroad and that the local jurisdictions are only involved by permitting access for the improvements on their facilities. The railroad may have to pay a ten (10) percent match.

Mr. Powers mentioned that the railroad crossing near the bridge relocation project that the City of Globe is working on at Broad Street and Jesse Hayes Road and that it is not eligible for Section 130 funding, as an exception, since the City of Globe is paying for the costs, primarily through State Fund Surplus funding. The new bridge is being relocated to Broad Street and Hill Street.

Mr. Ashbaugh asked, with regards to the plan identifying the top twenty (20) projects to be funded, what the likelihood that any of the rural railroad crossings would be selected? Will there be a balance of rural versus urban crossings being upgraded/funded? Mr. Christian stated that this question has been brought up in several other meetings as well and the current solution that is floating around is to have a separate prioritized list of urban and rural areas.

B. ADOT Traffic & Certified Mileage Changes

Sage Donaldson, the Data Analytics and HPMS Program Manager with ADOT, presented how to use the AZGEO Tool that allows agencies to view their Certified Public Mileage (CPM) within their own jurisdictions and make edits to Ownership/Maintenance responsibility information and is reported annually as part of HPMS. CPM is defined as:

“The sum of all public roads in the state that are, passable with a standard passenger car, not restricted by any gates or other barriers, publicly accessible, and includes BIA lands.”

ADOT is making the request to the local jurisdictions to validate and certify what has been reported. The final report is due in June 2022. Ms. Donaldson then went over detailed figures within the CAG Region and provided a demonstration of how to utilize the AZGEO tool to make changes in ownership, etc.

Ms. Donaldson announced that the HPMS Traffic Coordination efforts was sent the previous work and discussed how to address traffic data gaps within the CAG Region. She presented an interactive map displaying where the gaps were within the CAG Region. She stated that the CAG region does an extremely good job of obtaining the traffic counts, however, there is a small area that lacks data. After viewing the interactive map, Mr. Ashbaugh explained that the areas missing counts are primarily on BIA roadways. Ms. Donaldson confirmed that was the case. She also stated there are just a few local roadways that are due to be counted. Mr. Ashbaugh stated that as CAG has been working on developing a cyclical schedule for these counts. He stated that when ADOT was conducting the reclassification efforts of the Federal Functional Classification System that was completed in 2019, he had scheduled all counts that were in need to be updated. He stated that CAG is currently in the last year of its contract, in which a new contract will be needed for the next six-year period. He asked if the few roadways that need to be counted could wait a few years so that it's consistent with the contract. Ms. Donaldson stated that it would probably be okay if they are lower class road classifications but would need to look at the data in more detail for determination. She stated if they were lower classifications, then data could be pulled from nearby counted roadways until it was scheduled within the next cycle.

Ms. Donaldson stated the following overall takeaways from the presentation provided:

1. Certified Public Mileage has increased overall statewide. This will affect funding from FHWA to the stat, so our CPM needs to be as close as possible.

2. Coordination and input are needed in order to gain input from road owners regarding their CPM in the region.
3. The ADOT Traffic Count Status Map will allow ADOT to inform LPA's on where they are not in compliance with HPMS needs.
4. Coordination for sharing traffic data is needed for successful HPMS submittal. Please contact Sage Donaldson (sdonaldson@azdot.gov) for training for sharing traffic data.

C. STBGP Application – Revision/Process Discussions

Continuing from the previous meeting, Mr. Ashbaugh asked if anyone within the Committee had any suggestions that they would like to bring forward on how to make the process fairer for everyone.

Mr. Warren suggested having a work session or extended TTAC meeting, to comb through the application, line item by line item again, as was originally done back in 2018, to determine which areas applicants had struggles with since the application was first implemented.

Mr. Powers asked what the other rural COGs throughout the state were doing with regards to their application process. Mr. Ashbaugh stated those efforts were done back in 2018 and ultimately chose to look at the MAG application as it had items that allowed for a more accurate cost estimate in comparison. He stated that since that was the primary issue prior to implementing the 2018 application, everyone then agreed to go that route and give it a try. He stated that there were many areas of the MAG application that were not utilized for the CAG application due to the hefty lift it would require for small communities to apply.

Ms. Clark suggested there needs to be a way to quantify the level of need in comparison to the other applications within the rankings. She stated that the application does ask for the need description not captured within the rankings.

Ms. Clark also suggested that for specific application requests, perhaps require smaller studies to be done, such as sidewalk projects. Having a study to determine how many people would use the sidewalk as an example. Mr. Ashbaugh stated that this would be burdensome for the smaller communities and was one of the largest complaints when developing the 2018 STBGP application, and therefore will most likely not gain traction for the revised application. However, he did state that Todd Pryor, the Town Manager for the Town of Superior, brought up a good suggestion in a past meeting to set aside STBGP funds for pre-scoping studies where it may be needed.

Ms. Clark also suggested to get rid of the local match requirements. Mr. Ashbaugh stated that the local match, currently at 5.7 percent, is a federal requirement. He did state that ADOT has the HURF Exchange program where ADOT swaps out the federal funds with HURF funds which does not require a local match. He stated this strategy is where the smaller communities would want to do to bypass the federal local match requirement.

Another suggestion Ms. Clark made was that after an agency is awarded with a project, then they should be at the “back of the line,” so that the other agencies have an opportunity to capture funding for their projects.

Mr. Ashbaugh then provided some ideas that he had drawn up for discussion. First, he stated that Todd Pryor's idea of setting aside some funding to conduct Pre-Scoping activities is a good idea. He stated that the Committee would need to agree upon how much of that funding could be set aside to do such activities. Second, he stated that the “Call-for-Project” periods can be broken down into two groups, one for the large

communities and another for the small communities, in which they would only compete against the agencies within your own group. The two groups would alternate “Call-for-Project” periods. Mr. Ashbaugh cautioned that if the Committee decided to go in this direction, it will take many years for an agency to get their project through. He stated it depends on how the Committee would like to structure the process, however, by allowing the smaller communities to compete only with other smaller communities, it allows for a better chance for their project to be funded.

Ms. Clark stated that she would rather see a rotating basis, even if it means that an agency only receives funding at least once every fourteen (14) years. Mr. Ashbaugh stated if that is the direction, then the committee would need to establish some sort of annual deadlines and stick with them, as well as define the process of how/when to move on to the next agency if the next agency to receive funding is not ready with a project. He asked, does the agency who missed out their turn go to the back of the line or are they simply the next one in line until they are ready? These are the questions that need to be hammered out.

Ms. Hobert stated that one issue with a rotation schedule is that it doesn’t take in consideration the “needs base” aspect. She also stated that one would have to take in consideration that the formula for federal funds received are population based, therefore the larger Cities/Towns are bringing in those funds for the region. By committing to a straight rotation and having every agency have the same amount to program a project with, the equitability of the process, based on proportions wouldn’t be fair based on their populations. She stated the point that is being made is that these are regional funds, and they need to be looked at regionally since one of the foundations of programming the funds are based on a regional prioritization.

The Committee discussed several scenarios in which the suggestions above would work. Mr. Ashbaugh stated that a ranking system still appears to be the best solution, however the areas to be ranked of the application would need to be reevaluated to allow the “needs base” aspect to play a role. Mr. also reminded the Committee that if they stick with a ranking system, the rankings do not necessarily determine which project is the priority. He stated that is the reason he requests all applicants to provide a presentation at the Committee meeting where the decision of which projects are being recommended to be programmed is so that additional information can emerge that may not be able to be captured within the application. He stated just because a project scores at the top, doesn’t necessarily mean the Committee has to recommend it. The rankings are used as a guideline and should direct the conversation, but they are not the final decision maker.

Mr. Warren stated that changes to the application appear to be a two-prong approach. He stated that he likes the ADOT Cost Estimate Tool that is built within the current application and wouldn’t make many changes there. He stated we should look at the application process and make a bit simpler and to reevaluate the ranking sheets so that they are based more on merit.

Mr. Ashbaugh then summarized the next steps based on the overall discussions. He stated that a workshop (or extended TTAC meeting) would be scheduled to begin tearing down the ranking sheet and figure out what areas the Committee would like to make rankings on. Once determined, the application questions can then be created to fit the ranking criteria more specifically. He stated that the Committee would need to methodically comb through the existing application and deciding what works and what doesn’t.

D. 2022 CAG TTAC Schedule

Mr. Ashbaugh announced the Calendar Year 2022 CAG TTAC Schedule. He stated he will only send out placeholders for up to three (3) months at a time due to constant distribution list updates.



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E. Round Table

No round table discussions were made.

F. Future Agenda Items

Mr. Ashbaugh stated that the CAG/SCMPO Human Services Transportation Coordination Plan 2022 Update will need approval, as well as removing the Design and Construction of “**Hill Street (Mill & Fill / Sidewalk Replacement)**” project (**Project # GLB 27-01D & GLB 29-01C**) off the TIP.

X. Scheduling of Next Meetings

The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for December 16, 2021.

XI. Adjournment

Chair Halberstadt adjourned the meeting at 12:19 PM.