

## Areas of Emerging Policy Concerns for the RTA

1. Control of soft costs. Recent bid openings have shown that construction costs are declining, but planning, design and other soft costs are increasing, far exceeding AZ Benchmark averages for similar work.
2. Ability of jurisdictions to meet their local funding commitments. The construction decline has substantially reduced impact fee, construction sales taxes and anticipated developer contributions.
3. Annexations and local funding commitments. Annexation may result in portions of Roadway Element projects moving into incorporated communities, shifting funding responsibility and may also shift impact fee revenue production.
4. Right of Way acquisition. Pros and Cons have been expressed about early acquisition. Also concerns about uses of acquired properties, ultimate disposition of remnant parcels, and the disposition of early acquisitions found to be unnecessary.
5. Choice of project delivery method. Concerns have been raised about the merits of using delivery methods other than design-bid-build.
6. Project signage. Concerns about projects which have not been signed as RTA projects, have inadequate signage, or unmaintained signage; duration of signage.
7. Soft costs on multi-jurisdictional projects. Need to establish expectations, reimbursement policies for jurisdictions other than the Lead Agency on multi-jurisdictional projects.
8. Reimbursement limitations. There is ongoing concern about the reimbursement of travel expenses by both contractors and jurisdictional staff. This is a frequent topic of interest by the media. We have begun suggesting jurisdictions use federal per diem rates, rather than providing detailed reimbursement reports which can prove embarrassing at times.
9. Unexpended funds/scope changes. With recent price declines on projects, many projects will be completed under the programmed funding amount. We are beginning to field requests for scope expansion, and in some cases have been billed for unapproved additional projects.
10. Public/Private Projects. Collaboration with the private sector may enable RTA objectives to be reached sooner, and/or create other public benefits. This said, there has been concern expressed about the use of partnerships.
11. Phasing of project implementation. It may make sense to partially construct RTA projects, phasing the scope of work to match available funding and or needs of the community.
12. Extent of Public Outreach. The extent of public outreach varies by jurisdiction, and on occasion by project within the jurisdictions. Some feel the public outreach may be unnecessarily burdensome, costly, time consuming and prone to create undesirable scope changes and/or unrealistic project expectations.

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13. Acceleration of Planning and Design. The RTA has policy that ties construction expenditure to the implementation period identified in the RTA Plan approved by the voters. The RTA has encouraged early planning and design efforts so the jurisdictions can implement projects early in their implementation period.
14. Definition of Local Funding Eligible Expenses. Local jurisdictions control the funds they have committed to RTA projects, and want to ensure expenditures made of those funds can be considered as meeting the local funding requirement.
15. Definition of Local Funds. Concern has been raised about whether funds brought from outside the region (esp. federal earmarks) can be considered as meeting the local funding requirement.