

South Mountain Freeway Gains Final Federal Approval

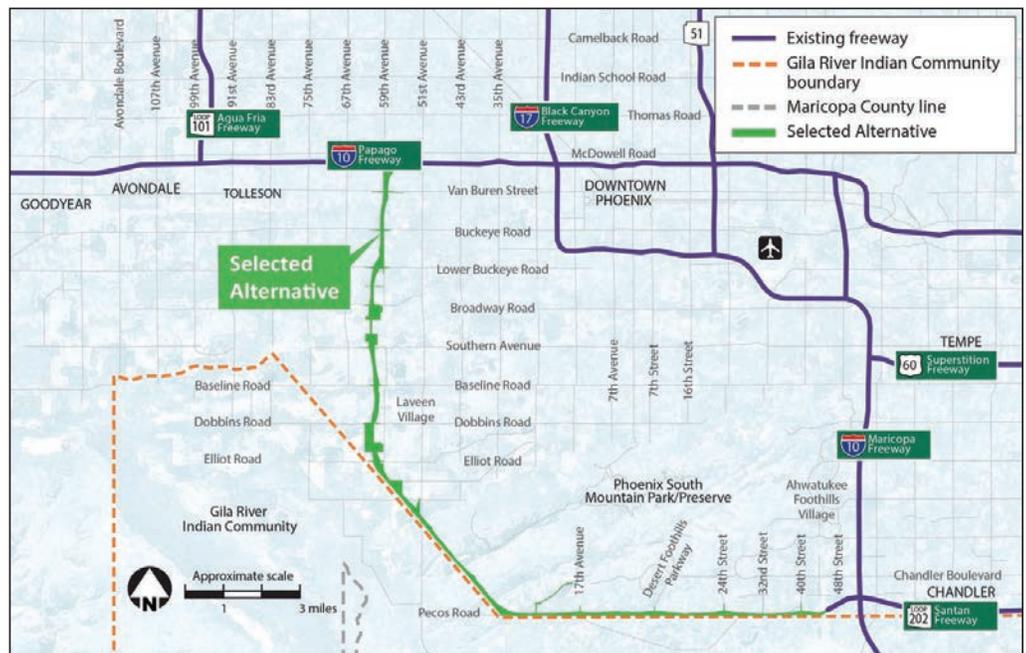
Record of Decision Signed for Long-Proposed New Freeway

The South Mountain Freeway, a critical piece of the Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG) Regional Transportation Plan since the 1980s, has received final approval from the Federal Highway Administration, paving the way for the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) to move the project forward.

The Record of Decision, signed March 5, 2015, by the Federal Highway Administration, grants the final approval necessary for ADOT to acquire right-of-way, complete the design, and begin construction of the 22-mile-long freeway to serve the metro Phoenix region.

The South Mountain Freeway is the last piece to complete the Loop 202 and Loop 101 freeway system necessary for high-quality regional mobility. It will significantly improve traffic movement between the southeast and southwest areas of the Valley and help reduce congestion on Interstate 10.

“This is a great day and an important milestone in the history



of the Valley’s transportation system,” said MAG Chair Michael LeVault, mayor of Youngtown. “It has been a long time coming, and we look forward to the improved mobility and economic opportunities that this freeway facility will bring to our region.”

The Record of Decision allows ADOT to begin final design and subsequent construction of the

South Mountain Freeway. Acquisition of right-of-way is underway. ADOT has determined that, pursuant to an unsolicited proposal submitted to construct the freeway, construction will follow a public-private partnership path, helping to speed construction and reduce overall costs. The freeway would not be tolled, but would allow a private group to design, build and maintain the freeway for 30 years.

The selected alternative for the South Mountain Freeway runs east and west along Pecos Road and north and south between 55th and 63rd avenues, connecting with Interstate 10 on each end. *Courtesy of ADOT*

Continued on page 11

INSIDE
this issue

Message From the Chair	2	Litter Prevention	8
Voices from the Council	3	Vapor Recovery Nozzles Phased Out... 10	
Regional Profile: Supervisor House	4	Point-in-Time Homeless Street Count .. 10	
JPAC Meeting	6	I-11 Project	11
Online Bike Map	7	South Mountain Freeway (continued) . 11	
Household Travel Study.....	7	Calendar	12



Message From the Chair



Mayor Michael LeVault, Town of Youngtown

It has been an honor and a privilege to serve as MAG chair since April of 2014. I was told when I assumed the role that I would be surprised at how quickly my time of service would fly by. How true! Yet it is just as surprising to think about the many incredible opportunities I have had during this time to represent MAG and our region. This role has encompassed everything from spearheading critical policy discussions to serving as a facilitator and spokesperson on issues ranging from domestic violence to transportation to air quality to growing the economy.

As an elected official, it has been an extraordinary experience for me to learn more about the functions and internal workings of MAG. I have gotten a firsthand, intimate look at the many ways MAG is committed to providing outstanding service to the residents of our region. A high-performance, talented and focused staff has been a key to shaping and molding MAG into a fiscally frugal organization that continues to search for innovative solutions to the myriad problems we face as a region, and to finding added value in the activities we undertake.

There are too many examples to name here, but one of the most recent came when MAG repurposed its tools for transportation planning to provide better data analytics to the economic development departments throughout the region thus directly assisting in growing the economy and helping our state better compete globally.

One of the “perks” of the chair position has been being able to

meet so many impressive people throughout the region. There is a true culture of collaboration at MAG. It has been a pleasure to see—and to help foster—the increased engagement we have had with so many regional players, from state, regional and local agencies to the private and nonprofit sectors and academic institutions. All have been valuable partners to MAG, especially in our policy efforts in the areas of economic development and transportation.

I have specifically enjoyed being involved in the economic development activities at MAG, helping to forge partnerships not only within our region but within our “mega-region” that encompasses Sonora, Mexico. We are building bridges across the border with Mexico, as well as with our second top trading partner, Canada. It has been fascinating to be a key player in this relationship-building process.

I want to thank my fellow Regional Council members for entrusting me with this responsibility and for their ongoing support over the past year. While my term as chair is ending, I will remain active and involved in MAG. I also assume the role of past chair knowing that the organization remains in good hands. Because the best thing I have learned is that this region has a lot of highly talented, conscientious people who care deeply about the legacy we leave our successors: meaning not just the leaders who follow in the chair position, but our “true” successors—our children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren.



MAGAZine is a quarterly newsletter of the Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG). It focuses on the issues and concerns of the cities, towns and tribal communities of the MAG region. If you know of a friend or colleague who would like to receive MAGAZine, please call the MAG office, (602) 254-6300.

- Mayor Michael LeVault**
Town of Youngtown, Regional Council Chair
- Dennis Smith**, *Executive Director*
- Eric Anderson, Lindy Bauer, Ted Brown, Valerie Day, Leila Gamiz, Bob Hazlett, Vladimir Livshits, Denise McClafferty, Brande Mead, Alex Oreschak**, *Contributors*
- Kelly Taft**, *Editor, Gordon Tyus*, *Graphics*

MAG Regional Council Members

Executive Committee Members

- Mayor Michael LeVault**
Youngtown, *Chair*
 - Mayor W. J. “Jim” Lane**
Scottsdale, *Vice Chair*
 - Mayor Greg Stanton**
Phoenix, *Treasurer*
 - Mayor Jackie Meck**
Buckeye, *At-Large Member*
 - Mayor Lana Mook**
El Mirage, *At-Large Member*
 - Mayor Gail Barney**
Queen Creek, *At-Large Member*
 - Mayor Mark Mitchell**
Tempe, *At-Large Member*
-
- Vice Mayor Robin Barker**
Apache Junction
 - Mayor Kenneth Weise**
Avondale
 - Councilmember Mike Farrar**
Carefree
 - Councilmember Dick Esser**
Cave Creek
 - Mayor Jay Tibshraeny**
Chandler
 - Mayor Tom Rankin**
Florence
 - President Ruben Balderas**
Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation
 - Mayor Linda M. Kavanagh**
Fountain Hills
 - Mayor Chuck Turner**
Gila Bend
 - Governor Stephen Roe Lewis**
Gila River Indian Community
 - Mayor John Lewis**
Gilbert
 - Mayor Jerry Weiers**
Glendale
 - Mayor Georgia Lord**
Goodyear
 - Mayor Rebecca Jimenez**
Guadalupe
 - Mayor Thomas Schoaf**
Litchfield Park
 - Mayor Christian Price**
Maricopa (City of)
 - Supervisor Denny Barney**
Maricopa County
 - Mayor John Giles**
Mesa
 - Mayor Michael Collins**
Paradise Valley
 - Mayor Cathy Carlat**
Peoria
 - Supervisor Todd House**
Pinal County
 - President Delbert Ray**
Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community
 - Mayor Sharon Wolcott**
Surprise
 - Mayor Adolfo Gamez**
Tolleson
 - Mayor John Cook**
Wickenburg
 - Joseph E. La Rue & Jack Sellers**
Arizona Department of Transportation
 - F. Rockne Arnett**
Citizens Transportation Oversight Committee



Visit www.azmag.gov and click on Regional Council.



Each May, new terms begin for those hundreds of unsung volunteers who serve on our city's more than two-dozen boards and commissions. These residents selflessly volunteer their time to address issues, challenges and opportunities important to the successful development of the community as a whole. They are a group that deserves our thanks for the positive impact they make each and every day.

—Chandler Mayor Jay Tibshraeny

Economic development is a priority in Fountain Hills. When pursuing our economic development efforts, we understand the success of one creates success for the whole. Fountain Hills is proud to be a part of that whole that makes this region great.

—Fountain Hills Mayor Linda Kavanagh



Gilbert is honored to partner with Arizona Wall Project, a Gilbert Operation Welcome Home initiative, to build a unique park experience that honors and recognizes our country's veterans. The park will proudly showcase a tribute Vietnam Memorial Wall, along with an education center, space for future installations honoring past and present veterans, and an administration building for veterans' services. This project will be a gift of healing, education and inspiration for citizens in Gilbert, the region, Arizona and the Western United States.

—Gilbert Mayor John Lewis

In Surprise, we have introduced a campaign that encourages residents to “Shop Surprise, Shape Surprise” by educating them on how much of their sales tax dollars go to the city's general fund and how that money supports services on which they rely. In the age of online shopping, this is a message that is also critically important to share at a regional level—support your city, your region, and your state by making a conscious effort to shop local!

—Surprise Mayor Sharon Wolcott



We are currently updating our Transportation System Plan (TSP) which establishes a framework for the future transportation needs of Maricopa County through 2035. Although many of our transportation projects in the TSP are determined and prioritized based upon technical data, it is vital to hear personal opinions from those who use our transportation routes daily. It is the combination of numbers and narrative that create a holistic picture and allow us to make wiser, more proactive decisions about transportation now and into the future.

—Maricopa County Supervisor Denny Barney

For more than 25 years, I have been fighting salt cedar issues in Buckeye. This gross overgrowth of trees has made for major fire and flood concerns for our entire region. Today, I am excited to report that the stars have aligned and we have commitments from local, county, state and federal agencies, including the offices of Senators John McCain and Jeff Flake, to look for funding options to remove the salt cedars and build a levee to prevent these dangers. I encourage you to join me in this effort. Visit www.gilariverprojects.com for more information.

—Buckeye Mayor Jackie Meck





Supervisor Todd House, Pinal County



Garages, Gardens, Guests, Guns: Supervisor's Life Far From Dull

He's been an auto mechanic, a sales rep, and owner of a garden nursery. He's hosted 16 foreign exchange students from five countries over two decades, and serves as treasurer for a nonprofit organization that helps people train service dogs. But where Pinal County Supervisor Todd House may excel is serving in the role of negotiator.

"I get people who come to me and they have tried this or that, and they are at wit's end because they can't figure out how to solve a problem. And what I can do is I can get involved, and often we can get things fixed."

House's entry into politics came when he joined a coalition of 200 homeowners living near the Superstition Mountains who shared his concern over a road closure. He was asked to serve as their spokesperson. In 2012 he was elected as a Pinal County supervisor.

"As supervisor, whenever there are issues with roads, I go and see if I can get a firsthand look at the situation. I can say from experience, 'I've been there, I know what the problem is, and here's how we have to fix it.'"

Some members in his district lean toward the legacy of the Wild West—such as when he was called to intervene in a dispute between two homeowners over property lines.

"When I showed up at the situation, both homeowners had weapons—guns out. And I went in there and I said, 'First of all, nothing's going to happen until the guns go back in the houses. We're civilized people here, we're going to try to work out a remedy,'" recalls House, who gave the two parties a choice of sitting down and talking or having him call the sheriff.

"They put the guns away and I had them sit down at a table across from each other. And basically, they told each other what they didn't like about the situation. And they actually ironed it out with me just sitting there," recalls Supervisor House. He says his negotiation skills were likely honed while serving as a sales representative for manufacturers of electrical products, where he often served as a middleman between buyers and sellers.

"I learned how to talk with people who were irate and upset and basically find something that would work out for everybody," says House, who claims he was called "every name in the book." But he says those experiences taught him how to handle difficult issues.

"I'll go into a bad situation, and I'll listen to all sides and bring all parties together and come up with an answer everyone can live with," he says.

When he's not solving residents' issues, House is focused on bringing economic development opportunities to Pinal County.

"I think that is the biggest issue. We need to keep our competitive edge, and keep bringing in businesses for



Supervisor House meets with Southwest Rock Products business owner Chris Reinesch to learn more about his business and discuss flood plain issues.

Continued on page 5



Supervisor Todd House (left) and Avalon K-8 Executive Director Michael McCord stand with students after Pinal County donated used computers to the school.

Supervisor House (continued)

jobs. Adding new jobs is number one for our people, because unemployment is a big issue in my county.”

If he could give one gift to Pinal County, House says it would be to lower property tax rates, which were recently raised to address budget shortfalls and are nearly double those in Maricopa County. He hopes the addition of new businesses will bring in new revenue sources. “I’d love to see our tax rate cut in half if we can possibly do it. The only way we can effectively do that is through economic development,” he says.

Working collaboratively on economic development initiatives is one reason House is glad that Pinal County joined the Maricopa Association of Governments as a member agency.

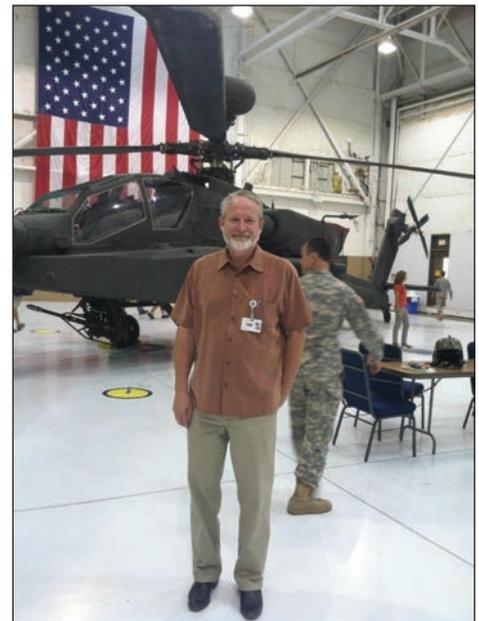
“I think everybody understands that it is not just what is happening in my county anymore, it is what is happening in the region that’s important.”

In his spare time, House likes working in his yard. He says he knew nothing about gardening 30 years ago, but his wife, Tuni, told him, “You’re going to have to learn, because I like plants.” He did, and the couple owned their own nursery for several years.

After moving to Arizona from California, Tuni found another love: helping people train service dogs. House serves as treasurer of her nonprofit organization, Paws 4 Life. Rather than train the dogs and providing the service animals, the Houses help people train their own dogs and get their certified Class 1 training certificates. More than 100 dogs have been certified as service dogs in the past six years.

“It’s very enlightening, very enriching, to watch what happens when these dogs get into these people’s lives and change their lives for them,” says House.

When asked what fellow Regional Council members would be surprised to learn about him, House notes that he was a certified auto mechanic for six years. He and his wife also sponsored 16 foreign exchange students over 20 years, and they stay in contact with many of them.



Supervisor House at an event hosted by the Arizona Army National Guard at Silverbell Army Heliport at the Pinal Air Park in Marana.

House, who is serving his first term as supervisor, says he hopes to serve several more if voters see fit to keep him in office. He often advises other potential candidates to keep trying, even if they are not successful the first time. “I meet a lot of candidates who run once and give up. I ran for office three times. I persevered. If you want something badly enough, if you really want to make that difference, you’ll try until you succeed.”

MAG Moment



Elected officials and business leaders participate in the Stand Up 4 Transportation event to support federal funding of Arizona’s roads, bridges and public transit. MAG was a partner in the event, which was held in downtown Phoenix on April 9, 2015.

Mining, Automotive Supply Chain Focus of JPAC Meeting



SCMPO

Growing Arizona's economy continues to be a focus for the Joint Planning Advisory Council (JPAC), a partnership among regional planning agencies in the Sun Corridor who jointly coordinate planning efforts to enhance the competitiveness of the regions and the state of Arizona. The group met in February to discuss advanced manufacturing opportunities, including issues focused on the mining industry supply chain and opportunities for Arizona's automotive industry.

The Central Arizona Governments (CAG), Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG), Sun Corridor Metropolitan Planning Organization (SCMPO), and Pima Association of Governments (PAG) hosted the meeting. Assistance was provided by the Arizona Commerce Authority, which secured the private industry panelists for the meeting.



Mayor Michael LeVault, MAG Chair

"Arizona's economy continues to improve, but challenges remain to significantly boost our local, regional and statewide economies," said MAG Chair Michael LeVault in opening the meeting. "Many sectors, including transportation, are requiring strategic vision and support to operate and compete at the global level."

PAG Chair Duane Blumberg, mayor of the town of Sahuarita, said one area of concern arising from the discussion has to do with matching labor and business needs.



Mayor Duane Blumberg, PAG Chair

"My biggest takeaway from the meeting was the consistent report from the private sector that the most significant limiting factor to their business growth is difficulty in finding qualified employees," said Mayor Blumberg. "It would seem that there is something of a mismatch between the available workforce and employer needs."

Casa Grande Mayor Bob Jackson, member of SCMPO, found the personal stories from the private sector of special interest. "I have been to all of the JPAC meetings and this one by far was the best. The information sharing from people working to increase their business and the opportunities across the border were insightful and can help anyone looking to expand their business," he said.



Mayor Bob Jackson, SCMPO Member

Canada Arizona Business Council President Glenn Williamson, honorary consulate of Canada, discussed mining industry opportunities. He said he is glad to see Canada recognized as an important trading partner.

"I was thrilled to see such interest in the trading block of North America. Our Council spends a lot of time working on Canadian advocacy and explaining Canada's large connectivity to the state of Arizona," said Williamson. "I found the subjects very progressive and the group interested in thinking larger and more globally, which is what will help shape the state of Arizona going forward. I was also encouraged to see Canada being treated the same as Mexico in the degree of economic interest for the state."

Williamson noted that during a recent seminar in Cochise County, he learned that nearly 45 percent of tourists in Tombstone, Bisbee and Benson were from Canada, and most of the mines in the region are Canadian. "So my hat is off to JPAC for holding this meeting and allowing Canada to participate," he said.

Arizona Commerce Authority STEP Program Manager Kevin O'Shea discussed opportunities in the automotive industry supply chain.

"Mexico provides great export opportunities for Arizona companies in the automotive industry," said O'Shea. "With a rapidly growing middle class, Mexico represents a significant market for Arizona companies who produce after-market auto parts and accessories. And with so many European, Asian and U.S. automakers building cars in Mexico, there are significant opportunities for Arizona manufacturing companies to sell into this automotive supply chain."

The keynote speaker at the event was Luis A. Mendoza, senior purchasing manager for the Ford Motor Company in Mexico City. Mendoza reported Mexico saw a 9.6 percent increase in export production from 2013 to 2014. Sales of light vehicles increased in Mexico by 6.2 percent. Mendoza noted that the stamping and assembly plant in Hermosillo



Luis A. Mendoza, Ford Motor Company

Continued on page 9

Bike Riders Shifting Gears to Online Bike Map

Valley cyclists can now find their way around the region's bike trails without the need for map-folding skills. The Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG) has upgraded its online bike map to make finding the perfect bike trail a click away. Using a smart phone, computer, or tablet, bicyclists can access the map at www.azmag.gov/bike and quickly search for the nearest trails, bike lanes, canal routes, paved paths, crossings—even bike rental or repair shops.

"The paper MAG Bikeways map has been around since 1992 and is still available, but this puts the bike map right at your fingertips," said MAG Chair Michael LeVault, mayor of Youngtown, himself an avid cyclist. "The region has grown from 435 miles of bike facilities in 1992 to more than 3,500 miles of on- and off-street options. If you need a bike helmet or a tune-up, you can also find the nearest bike shops to your current location. We believe this is the most comprehensive bikeway resource in the Valley."

The improved website gives users the option to turn features on

and off to reduce clutter, with a new feel that is closer to that of Google maps. Those unfamiliar with the Valley can even preview some routes through added videos and photos, and locate a GRID bike share station. While the bike map is not a separate downloadable app, it is designed for smart phone users. It also can be accessed in advance of a ride through any tablet, laptop or desktop computer.

Phoenix Mayor Greg Stanton, a strong proponent of making the city and the region more bicycle friendly, noted that it is easy to plan a trip that is more than just a bike ride.

"The online MAG Bikeways map shows all of the region's transit centers, light rail stations, and park-and-ride lots and other ways for residents to connect to get to where they're going," Stanton said. "Whether you're traveling to work, heading to a special event, running an errand, or just enjoying our gorgeous climate and environment, you can find what you need through this online tool."



The MAG online bikeways map is available at: azmag.gov/bike



Mayor Greg Stanton, City of Phoenix

Cyclists needing quick repairs can also turn on a feature that shows the locations of the nearest bike shops.

"The new online bike map is a great alternative," said Sun Cyclery Assistant Manager Adam Chavez. "To be able to access routes while riding is a very useful tool, especially for visitors who are unfamiliar with our bikeways. We have so many people that come to the Valley to enjoy the weather and they are always asking me where they should go and how to get there. Now, instead of handing them a bike map, I can point them to the online map. I'm really excited to be able to provide my customers with this new way of accessing our bike trails system." 

MAG to Undertake Innovative Household Travel Survey

The Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG) is conducting the 2015 MAG Household Travel Survey to understand the travel behavior of Valley residents. Residents who choose to participate will be asked to provide details of the travel patterns of those living in the household.

The survey is an important component in the regional transportation planning process. Information from the survey is used to understand commute patterns and other aspects of travel behavior in the region. The last travel survey was conducted in 2001. An update is required to provide data on the travel choices, preferences, and needs of the public.

"The MAG Household Travel Survey is a critical source for developing sound transportation policy," said MAG Chair Michael LeVault. "We need a strong factual foundation in making transportation infrastructure investment decisions."

Beginning in the summer of 2015 and through the spring of 2016, advance letters for the MAG Household Travel Survey will arrive at randomly selected households asking residents to go online and answer survey questions. Respondents will be offered a choice between different survey methods, including a specially-designed GPS device and a smart phone application. The use of a smartphone application to collect

household travel information will be the first of its kind in the nation and will reduce the burden on respondents while increasing the accuracy of the information received.

"About one in 200 Valley households will be surveyed," said MAG Transportation Policy Committee Chair Jack Sellers, Councilmember of Chandler. "Each selected household will represent hundreds of other households in the area, so participation, while completely voluntary, is very important for the overall success of the survey."

Residents wishing to learn more about the survey may visit the MAG website at www.azmag.gov.

Elected Officials Talk Trash For Litter Prevention

Don't Trash Arizona Partners With Whataburger to Raise Awareness



Hungry motorists visiting Whataburger restaurants in April found they could order a burger, celebrate the environment, and talk trash with Valley mayors—all in one drive-thru visit. In preparation for Earth Day, a partnership between *Don't Trash Arizona* and Whataburger resulted in an innovative approach to remind motorists that fast-food trash is one of the most commonly littered items on Valley freeways.

Glendale Mayor Jerry Weiers, Goodyear Mayor Georgia Lord, and Chandler Vice Mayor Kevin Hartke greeted hungry drivers at the drive-thru window of Whataburger locations in their respective cities. While patrons waited for their orders to be delivered, the elected officials used the opportunity to discuss the harmful effects of litter and the simple steps needed to prevent it.

Don't Trash Arizona is a litter prevention program conducted by the Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG) and the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) to address the environmental, economic, health and safety impacts of roadway litter. The partnership with Whataburger was conducted to coincide with Earth Day events. It also marked the launch of a new “trash talk” campaign for the anti-litter initiative.

“We already know that some of the most-commonly littered items are cups and wrappers, many of which originate from fast food establishments,” said MAG Chair Michael LeVault, mayor of Youngtown. “This partnership allows *Don't Trash Arizona* to deliver its litter prevention message in a direct and memorable way. It's not every day that a mayor hands you your cheeseburger.”

As part of the day's events, Whataburger distributed *Don't Trash Arizona* educational materials to patrons at each of its 18 Valley locations. In addition, it agreed to display the new-look *Don't Trash Arizona* signage at its drive-thru windows indefinitely in an effort to continue to educate drivers about litter prevention. The new look includes bright-colored, bold graphics to better target younger males (aged 18-35), who make up the largest percentage of litterers.

“Whataburger is dedicated to the communities we call home, and we're honored to be the first restaurant to partner with *Don't Trash Arizona*,” said Whataburger Director of Operations Delson Montes.

Goodyear Mayor Georgia Lord with the Whataburger crew.



Continued on page 9

Litter Prevention (continued)

“Whataburger is looking forward to working with the Valley community to decrease the amount of freeway litter in Arizona, and we hope to see some familiar faces stop by to visit with our local mayors.”

Glendale Mayor Jerry Weiers, once in the restaurant business himself, enjoyed his stint at the drive-thru. “One of my messages was that we don’t want to see anyone get a \$500 fine over a little \$5 hamburger wrapper being tossed out the window,” said Mayor Weiers.



Glendale Mayor Jerry Weiers hands a customer change after “talking trash.”



Mayor Lord helps fill an order.

highway littering. “We appreciate that we have found an enthusiastic partner in Whataburger, as we continue to work to encourage responsible behavior from Valley drivers.”

Statistics indicate that about 111,000 bags of litter are collected from the Valley’s freeways every year, representing about 1.2 million pounds of trash. Along with wrappers and cups, other commonly littered items include cigarette butts, food and small paper items such as receipts and straw wrappers. 



Chandler Vice Mayor Kevin Hartke explains the impacts of roadway litter to a customer.



JPAC Meeting

(continued from page 7)

employs 1,500 people and covers 1.5 million square feet. Each year, approximately 350,000 vehicles are shipped around the world. Forty percent of the materials used for assembly come from the United States.

A number of elected leaders and members of private industry participated in panel discussions throughout the day. The Mining Industry Related Businesses panel was moderated by Sahuarita Mayor Duane Blumberg and included CAID Industries Vice President of Mining Technology and Service Neal Preimesberger, Empire Southwest Executive Vice-President Jim Smith, and Hexagon Mining-MineSight Chief Technical Officer Fred Banfield. The panel on Automotive Industry Related Businesses in Arizona was moderated by Gilbert Mayor John Lewis and included Ksport USA President Nick Jackson, Lightning Strike Founder and Owner Judd Smith, and Reliance Wire President and Founder Lorena Valencia.

Participating in the panel on the Local Government Perspective/Role in Growing Advanced Manufacturing were Surprise Mayor Sharon Wolcott, who moderated the discussion, Casa Grande Mayor Bob Jackson, Douglas Mayor Danny Ortega, Jr., Gilbert Mayor John Lewis, Sahuarita Mayor Duane Blumberg, Arizona Commerce Authority President and CEO Sandra Watson, and Arizona U.S. Commercial Services Director Kristian Richardson. 



Mayor John Lewis, Town of Gilbert



Mayor Sharon Wolcott, City of Surprise

Vapor Recovery Nozzles at Gas Pump Being Phased Out

Those clunky rubber nozzles at the gas pump will soon be going away. The vapor recovery nozzles were originally designed to prevent the escape of harmful ozone emissions, but they have outlived their usefulness as modern-day vehicles now come equipped with their own vapor recovery systems. The nozzles have been in place in the region since 1992.



Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Regional Administrator Jared Blumenfeld signed a Federal Register notice in April approving Arizona's State Implementation Plan (SIP) submittal to discontinue the Stage II vapor recovery program for the Maricopa region.

As vehicles have become cleaner and the use of onboard vapor recovery systems widespread, there is actually a disbenefit in using the gas pump vapor recovery nozzles, because they fight with the vehicle's system. The Clean Air Act

required that beginning with model year 1998, onboard refueling vapor recovery equipment be phased in for new vehicles.

It has been a required control for nearly all new highway vehicles since 2006.

Since Stage II is a duplicative system, the plan revision submitted by the Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG) and the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality requested that EPA remove the requirement for Stage II vapor recovery in this area for new gasoline dispensing facilities beginning in 2014, and for existing facilities beginning in October 2016, before a regional disbenefit begins to occur in 2018.

"With the announcement this week, EPA has agreed that the emissions reductions from the onboard equipment are equal to and will soon surpass those achieved by Stage II gas pump nozzles," said MAG Chair Michael LeVault, mayor of Youngtown. "The revision will also eliminate an

unnecessary economic burden to Arizona businesses, since Stage II nozzles at gas stations are redundant systems," he said.

MAG is responsible for developing regional ozone air quality plans. Under the Clean Air Act, the Maricopa region was required to implement the use of "Stage II" vapor recovery systems at gasoline dispensing facilities due to concerns about ozone pollution. Since that time, the region has been reclassified to attainment for the one-hour ozone standard and the eight-hour ozone standard established by EPA in 1997.

"U.S. EPA Region 9 would like to acknowledge the efforts of the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality and Maricopa Association of Governments in this process," wrote EPA Region 9 Air Division Associate Director Colleen McKaughan in notifying MAG of the decision. "EPA appreciates the continued hard work of ADEQ and MAG to protect air quality and looks forward to coordinating with you on SIP requirements in the future." 

2015 Point-in-Time Homeless Street Count

In February, hundreds of volunteers spread out across the region as part of a massive annual effort to count and survey people experiencing homelessness. Coordinated by the MAG Continuum of Care, the count utilizes volunteer teams that include city, county and state representatives, faith- and community-based organizations, businesses and private residents.

The homeless street count provides a snapshot of the number of people sleeping on the streets at any given night in the region. Last year, the count identified 1,053 homeless men, women and children on the streets. The point-in-time count includes both a homeless street and shelter count, providing valuable data to help develop strategies to acquire the needed federal funding to end homelessness in the region. Since 1999, the efforts of the MAG Continuum of Care have resulted in the region being awarded \$295 million in homeless assistance funding to provide housing and services for people experiencing homelessness. 



Among those participating in the February Point in Time Homeless Street Count were Phoenix Mayor Greg Stanton (left) and a member of the White House, Luke Tate, (right) who serves as special assistant to the President for economic mobility.

Construction Launched on Landmark I-11 Project

The creation of Interstate 11 (I-11) connecting Phoenix and Las Vegas took a major step forward in April, with the groundbreaking of the first new infrastructure on I-11 since its designation as an interstate in 2012. The project involves a 15-mile segment from I-515 to U.S. 93 near the Hoover Dam.

MAG staff joined federal, state and local elected officials, the Regional Transportation Commission of Southern Nevada (RTC), the Nevada Department of Transportation (NDOT), and community and business leaders in celebrating the launch of one of the largest transportation projects in the Western U.S.

The landmark project will support Arizona's and Nevada's continued economic prosperity through enhanced commerce, increased tourism and improved connectivity between Nevada and Arizona, as well as beyond to Canada and Mexico.

I-11 will connect Las Vegas and Phoenix, the only two cities in the nation with populations of more than one million residents not currently linked by an interstate. In addition to significant economic benefits, upon completion, I-11 will relieve congestion and improve safety for the millions of cars and trucks on the road each year traveling between the two metropolitan areas.

"The southwest region has experienced significant economic growth and increased traffic over the past few years, and I-11 is necessary so more people and goods can travel safely and efficiently between Nevada and Arizona, as well as along the entire trade corridor between Canada and Mexico," stated U.S. Senate Minority Leader Harry Reid. 



Flanked by Las Vegas showgirls, U.S. Sen. Dean Heller, Nevada Lt. Governor Mark Hutchison, U.S. Rep. Crescent Hardy, Clark County Commissioner Mary Beth Scow, Nevada Governor Brian Sandoval, City of Henderson Councilwoman Debra March and Boulder City Mayor Roger Tobler, celebrate the I-11 groundbreaking.

South Mountain Freeway *(continued from page 1)*

"The South Mountain Freeway has been approved as a part of two elections that have provided the region with additional transportation funding. Voters recognized the need and the benefits of this project to provide connectivity, travel reliability and route options for a growing region," said ADOT Director John Halikowski. "Both ADOT and the Maricopa Association of Governments agree this is a critically needed project, and ADOT is breaking new ground by moving it forward under a public-private partnership agreement to more closely involve the private sector, helping to save money and speed construction."



John Halikowski,
ADOT Director

The proposed South Mountain Freeway has been a vital part of the MAG Regional Freeway Program since it was first included in funding through Proposition 300, approved by Maricopa County voters in 1985. The freeway was also part of the Regional Transportation Plan funding passed by Maricopa County voters in 2004 through Proposition 400.

The environmental review process, which included preparing draft and final environmental impact statements, was conducted in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act and identified the preferred route for the freeway corridor—running east and west along Pecos Road and then north and south between 55th and 63rd avenues, connecting with Interstate 10 on each end. The Final Environmental Impact Statement documented the analysis of potential impacts associated with the freeway and the no-build alternative, and addressed comments received on the draft and final Environmental Impact Statements. The draft environmental report was published in 2013, followed by publication of the Final Environmental Impact Statement in 2014.

The Federal Highway Administration has decided to identify the Preferred Alternative as the Selected Alternative for the South Mountain Freeway project. This decision, along with supporting information that includes responses to public comments received on the Final Environmental Impact Statement, is documented in the Record of Decision.

The freeway will be constructed with four lanes in each direction—three general-use lanes and one HOV lane—and modern features that have made Arizona freeways stand apart from other states for a generation, including rubberized asphalt and aesthetics designed in partnership with the community. The \$1.9 billion project is expected to take about four years to construct.

For more information, or to view the Record of Decision, visit www.azdot.gov/SouthMountainFreeway.



Visit our website:
www.azmag.gov



Follow us on Twitter at:
<http://twitter.com/MAGregion>



Watch MAG videos on YouTube:
youtube.com/magcommunications



Search for the Maricopa Association
of Governments on **Facebook**.



Building an International Economic
Network: www.ConnectBIEN.com

MAG fully complies with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and related statutes and regulations in all programs and activities. For more information on rights afforded under Title VI, relevant activities at MAG, or if you feel these rights have been violated, please visit the agency website at www.azmag.gov or call (602) 254-6300.



A Quarterly Newsletter Focusing on Regional Excellence

May 2015—July 2015  Vol. 20: No. 2

Summer 2015 Calendar

May 2015

- 5th 11:30 a.m. Economic Development Committee (Saguaro)
- 6th 9:00 a.m. Regional Community Network Working Group (Ironwood)
- 6th 10:00 a.m. Intelligent Transportation Systems Committee (Ironwood)
- 6th 1:30 p.m. Standard Specifications and Details Committee (Ironwood)
- 12th 1:00 p.m. Street Committee (Ironwood)
- 13th 9:30 a.m. Continuum of Care Regional Committee on Homelessness (Saguaro)
- 13th 12:00 p.m. Management Committee (Saguaro)
- 14th 10:00 a.m. Transit Committee (Ironwood)
- 14th 1:30 p.m. Human Services Technical Committee (Chaparral)
- 18th 12:00 p.m. Regional Council Executive Committee (Ironwood)
- 18th 2:00 p.m. Continuum of Care Board (Saguaro)
- 19th 10:00 a.m. Solid Waste Advisory Committee (Ironwood)
- 20th 12:00 p.m. Transportation Policy Committee (Saguaro)
- 20th 2:00 p.m. Building Codes Committee (Ironwood)
- 21st 10:00 a.m. Technology Advisory Group (Chaparral)
- 21st 1:30 p.m. Air Quality Technical Advisory Committee (Saguaro)
- 26th 9:30 a.m. Transportation Safety Committee (Ironwood)
- 26th 10:00 a.m. Population Technical Advisory Committee (Chaparral)
- 26th 1:00 p.m. Bicycle & Pedestrian Committee (Ironwood)
- 27th 11:30 a.m. Regional Council (Saguaro)
- 28th 10:00 a.m. Transportation Review Committee (Saguaro)
- 28th 10:00 a.m. Elderly and Persons with Disabilities Transportation Committee (Chaparral)

The newsletter is available at www.azmag.gov.
Click on the MAG Publications link and then
MAGAZine Newsletter link.

June 2015

- 2nd 11:30 a.m. Economic Development Committee (Saguaro)
- 3rd 9:00 a.m. Regional Community Network Working Group (Ironwood)
- 3rd 9:00 a.m. Intelligent Transportation Systems Committee (Ironwood)
- 3rd 1:30 p.m. Standard Specifications and Details Committee (Ironwood)
- 4th 2:00 p.m. Regional Domestic Violence Council (Ironwood)
- 9th 1:00 p.m. Street Committee (Ironwood)
- 10th 9:30 a.m. Continuum of Care Regional Committee on Homelessness (Saguaro)
- 10th 12:00 p.m. Management Committee (Saguaro)
- 11th 10:00 a.m. Transit Committee (Ironwood)
- 11th 1:30 p.m. Human Services Technical Committee (Chaparral)
- 15th 12:00 p.m. Regional Council Executive Committee (Ironwood)
- 16th 1:00 p.m. Bicycle & Pedestrian Committee (Ironwood)
- 17th 12:00 p.m. Transportation Policy Committee (Saguaro)
- 17th 2:00 p.m. Building Codes Committee (Ironwood)
- 18th 10:00 a.m. Technology Advisory Group (Chaparral)
- 23rd 10:00 a.m. Population Technical Advisory Committee (Chaparral)
- 24th 5:00 p.m. Regional Council Annual Meeting (Phoenix Airport Marriott*)
- 25th 10:00 a.m. Transportation Review Committee (Saguaro)
- 25th 1:30 p.m. Air Quality Technical Advisory Committee (Saguaro)

* Note change in meeting location.

Parking is available under the building. Please ask for parking validation at the meeting. A transit ticket will be provided for anyone who purchased a transit ticket to attend a meeting. Bike racks are available at the entrance to the parking garage.

July 2015

- 1st 9:00 a.m. Regional Community Network Working Group (Ironwood)
- 1st 9:00 a.m. ITS Committee (Ironwood)
- 1st 1:30 p.m. Standard Specifications and Details Committee (Ironwood)
- 4th Independence Day Holiday (Office Closed)
- 7th 11:30 a.m. Economic Development Committee (Saguaro)
- 9th 10:00 a.m. Transit Committee (Ironwood)
- 9th 1:30 p.m. Human Services Technical Committee (Chaparral)
- 14th 1:00 p.m. Street Committee (Ironwood)
- 15th 9:30 a.m. Continuum of Care Regional Committee on Homelessness (Saguaro)
- 15th 12:00 p.m. Management Committee (Saguaro)**
- 20th 12:00 p.m. Regional Council Executive Committee (Ironwood)**
- 21st 1:00 p.m. Bicycle & Pedestrian Committee (Ironwood)
- 21st 2:00 p.m. Building Codes Committee (Ironwood)
- 22nd 10:00 a.m. Human Services Coordinating Committee (Cottonwood)
- 22nd 12:00 p.m. Transportation Policy Committee (Saguaro)**
- 23rd 1:30 p.m. Air Quality Technical Advisory Committee (Ironwood)
- 27th 2:00 p.m. Continuum of Care Board (Saguaro)
- 28th 9:30 a.m. Transportation Safety Committee
- 29th 11:30 a.m. Regional Council (Saguaro)**
- 30th 10:00 a.m. Transportation Review Committee (Saguaro)

** Meetings only if necessary.

All meetings, unless indicated otherwise, will be held in the conference rooms located in the MAG office on the 2nd floor of the building, 302 N. 1st Ave., Phoenix

The dates, times and locations of all meetings may change. Other committees not listed here may meet during these months. For confirmation, call (602) 254-6300, or visit the website: www.azmag.gov/Events/