



Executive Director's Report

At the June Regional Council meeting, we distributed a report called *Regional Council Annual Accomplishments*. This report represents much more than an opportunity to showcase our organization's many accomplishments. It documents a year's worth of effort as we undertake one of our largest planning responsibilities in the history of our organization, while at the same time continuing with our other important regional planning activities.

Rather than focusing on individual division tasks, the report was revamped this year to serve as a reader-friendly narrative highlighting the big picture accomplishments made by the Regional Council. The report includes a section called *A Look in the Mirror*, a summary of the strides taken in the area of governance that led to the creation of the Transportation Policy Committee and opened our process to the greater community. Other segments include a summary of the progress made in creating a new Regional Transportation Plan; a look at how MAG provided value-added assistance to member agencies through data analysis; a discussion on increasing the competitiveness of our region's economy; a look at improvements made last year in communication and partnerships; and a section on how the agency is working to improve lives through a variety of programs ranging from addressing human services needs to finding ways to reduce travel and improve air quality. The final section looks at how MAG plans to build on its accomplishments by being more inclusive in its regional decision making, outreach and education.

To read this document is to recognize the important role MAG plays in serving this region. Perhaps Chair Wendy Feldman-Kerr summarizes it best in the *Letter From the Chair* that prefaces the document: "Plans are important, but equally important is the policy process at MAG that is charged with stewardship of the plan. We are living in a dynamic region with incredible growth. This growth ensures that any planning document is not static and will require an organization that values straightforward communication and a true partnership among all of the member agencies to address the unforeseen challenges that lie ahead. How we interact as elected officials and through our professional staff is the fabric that will hold us together."

Acting on that advice, we will continue to accomplish our mission of improving our region through cooperation, planning, problem solving and decision making. **For more information, please contact Dennis Smith, Executive Director, (602) 254-6300.**



Regional Council Meeting Report for June 25, 2003

MAG Officers Elected

The Regional Council has elected officers for the coming year. The slate of officers for 2003-2004 include:

- Chair – Mayor Wendy Feldman-Kerr, Queen Creek
- Vice Chair – Mayor Keno Hawker, Mesa
- Treasurer – Mayor John Keegan, Peoria
- At-Large Member – Mayor Joan Shafer, Surprise
- At-Large Member – Mayor Mary Manross, Scottsdale
- At-Large Member – Mayor J. Woodfin Thomas, Litchfield Park
- Past Chair – Mayor Skip Rimsza, Phoenix.

For more information, please contact Dennis Smith, MAG Executive Director, (602) 254-6300.

Eight-Hour Ozone Nonattainment Area Boundary

The MAG Regional Council approved a recommendation of the MAG Air Quality Technical Advisory Committee setting forth an eight-hour ozone nonattainment area boundary. A map outlining the recommended boundary will be transmitted to the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality and the governor.

The governor is required to recommend by July 15, 2003 the nonattainment area boundary for the eight-hour ozone standard. The boundary must include all areas that do not meet federal clean air standards, or which contribute to a nearby area that does not meet the standards. The new boundary is required to accommodate the new federal eight-hour ozone standard, which is more stringent than the previous one-hour standard. It is important that the recommended boundary is as inclusive as possible without being excessively large, because the boundary will involve more stringent requirements for business, industry and transportation. While the boundary can be made larger at any time, it is difficult to make the boundary smaller once it is set. MAG developed the recommended boundary based on data using EPA factors analyzed through 2020. The boundary option encompasses 2,289 square miles, an area larger than the State of Delaware and 343 square miles larger than the current one-hour ozone nonattainment area.

According to a proposed EPA rule, the Maricopa area likely would be classified as a marginal (as opposed to serious) area. EPA indicates that marginal

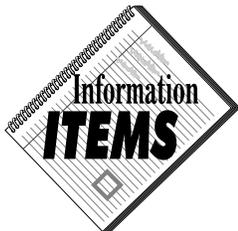
areas that are close to the level of the standard would probably come into attainment within three years after designation without any additional local planning, as a result of national and regional emissions control measures.

For more information, please contact Lindy Bauer, MAG Environmental Director, (602) 254-6300.

Revised Interim Projections Approved

The Regional Council voted to accept interim projections of population, housing and employment. The draft revised interim projections are by Municipal Planning Area and Regional Analysis Zone and include projections for 2010, 2020, 2025 and 2030. The projections were revised after a review by cities to address concerns by the Management Committee on the availability of water to support original projections. The projections include total resident population in households and group quarters, total and occupied housing units, and total employment by sector (retail, office, industrial, public and other). The interim projections will be used until official county level population control totals can be provided by the Department of Economic Security, enabling MAG to develop subregional projections based on those totals.

For more information, please contact Harry Wolfe, MAG Socioeconomic Program Manager, at (602) 254-6300.



Information Items

Transportation Policy Committee Update

An update was provided to the Regional Council on the progress of the Transportation Policy Committee (TPC) by Committee Chair Neil Giuliano. At its June 18th meeting, the committee discussed a "hybrid plan" which was developed based on an analysis of three Transportation Modeling Scenarios. The hybrid plan included three maps representing freeway, transit, and arterial projects. Because the plan included projects that far exceeded available revenue projections, the committee discussed potential modifications to bring the plan into budget.

Mayor Giuliano reported that the TPC meeting included a dialogue regarding the merits of light rail transit being funded by the half-cent sales tax. After discussion, the committee determined that using sales tax funding to extend light rail services beyond the starter system is appropriate and should be considered for inclusion in the regional plan.

Policy discussion at the TPC meeting centered on the fact that needs throughout the region are significantly different based on the various levels of transit services in Valley cities. Mayor Giuliano reported that a motion was passed specifying that the transportation plan needs to reflect those differences. A workshop was planned for July 2, 2003 to consider stakeholder comments and discuss additional changes to the hybrid plan. The Transportation Policy Committee is expected to approve a Draft Regional Transportation Plan by the end of July.

For more information, please contact Eric Anderson, MAG Transportation Director, at (602) 254-6300.

Transportation Video to Hit the Airwaves

Stay tuned to your local Channel 11, and you should soon see a ten-minute video outlining the Valley's transportation challenges and seeking input into the new Regional Transportation Plan. The video was produced at the request of the Transportation Policy Committee to let citizens know how they can effectively provide input into the plan. The video describes the transportation planning process, outlines future transportation needs, and explains how viewers can get involved in the planning process. It is being sent to city cable channels around the region and should hit the airwaves soon.

For more information, please contact Kelly Taft, MAG Communications Manager, (602) 254-6300.



Upcoming Events

Next Regional Council Meeting

The next Regional Council meeting will be held on Wednesday, July 23, 2003 at 5:00 p.m. at the MAG offices, 302 N. 1st Avenue, Suite 200, Phoenix. Agenda items are expected to include a proposed amendment to the FY 2003-2007 Transportation Improvement Program for transit projects, including consideration of any air quality impacts; consideration of contingency projects for possible additional federal funds; an update on the Eight-Hour Ozone Nonattainment Area Boundary; and a summary of the results of a series of public involvement efforts involving the Regional Transportation Plan.

For more information contact Dennis Smith, MAG Executive Director, (602) 254-6300.