



Executive Director's Report

During my recent evaluation by the Executive Committee and Regional Council, I received many positive comments related to MAG's accomplishments over the past year. This feedback was very much appreciated, and to me is a reflection of the great staff work at MAG. More than that, however, I believe our success is the result of the supportive environment that has been created for us by our member agencies.

One of our key objectives at MAG is for you, our member agencies, to be "heard," and, as a result, have confidence that MAG is working for you to meet your objectives. At a recent staff retreat, we focused on the processes involved in building effective project agreements. The idea is to not get caught up in the process, but to identify the outcomes early in order to respond to member agencies' needs. By keeping our eye on the desired results, we can increase our ability to create and influence new opportunities for our member agencies.

Above all, we strive to be good listeners. We want not only to get it done, but to get it done right. That is why we appreciate the feedback we receive, whether it be through the evaluation process or any other means. We thank you for the encouragement we have received, and for allowing MAG to continue to serve you and this region in every way that we can.

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



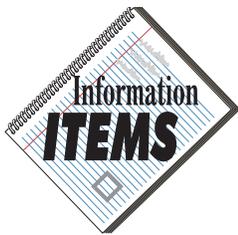
Action Items

Nominations for Business Representatives on the TPC

With the passage of Proposition 400 in November 2004, the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives were authorized to appoint six business members representing regionwide business interests to the TPC. The terms of two of the business members who were appointed by the Speaker of the House expired on December 31, 2006. These terms included the seats held by Eneas Kane of DMB Associates, Inc., who served as the representative for regionwide business interests, and Dave Berry of Swift Transportation, who served as the representative for freight interests.

The MAG Regional Council voted to forward the names of both individuals to the Speaker of the House for consideration to continue their service on the committee.

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



Information Items

Air Quality Update

The Regional Council received information on two issues of concern in the area of air quality: the Five Percent Plan for PM-10 (dust pollution) and the Eight-Hour Ozone Plan, both of which are due to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in 2007.

When the clock hit midnight on December 31, 2006, Maricopa County officially missed its deadline to reduce unhealthy dust. The Maricopa Association of Governments now has one year to submit a plan to the Environmental Protection Agency outlining how the region will cut particulate pollution by five percent each year until the particulate standard is met. This "Five Percent Plan" is expected to include aggressive measures for reducing particulate pollution in the Valley. If the region fails to produce a plan that reduces PM-10 emissions and meets federal requirements, future sanctions could include the loss of millions of dollars in federal transportation funding. A recent study by MAG on the sources of PM-10 around two of the monitors with the highest readings found that major contributors include dirt that is tracked onto paved roads; dirt roads and shoulders; vehicles driving on dirt parking lots and roads; open burning; and agriculture. Some of the measures being considered to reduce emissions include tighter regulation and enforcement by Maricopa County, paving unpaved roads, and controlling dust on vacant lots.

In addition to the Five Percent Plan, the Eight-Hour Ozone Plan is due to the EPA by June 15, 2007. This region was classified as a Basic Area for ozone pollution with an attainment date of June 15, 2009. In order to be in attainment, the region will need clean data at the monitors in 2006, 2007, and 2008. To date, the region has two years of data with no violating monitors. Based upon preliminary modeling data, it appears that existing measures may be sufficient to attain the standard.

In late December 2006, the U.S. Court of Appeals vacated EPA's Phase I Eight-Hour Ozone Implementation Rule and remanded it back to the EPA

for further proceedings. The Court rejected EPA's approach for classifying eight-hour ozone nonattainment areas. While the EPA is in the process of analyzing the ruling, it has advised that a plan should still be submitted for this region.

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

MAG Budget Process Underway

Each year, the MAG Unified Planning Work Program and Annual Budget is developed in conjunction with member agency and public input. The Work Program is reviewed each year by the federal agencies in the spring and scheduled for approval by the Regional Council in May. The Regional Council received an overview of MAG's draft FY 2008 Dues and Assessments and the proposed budget production timeline, which provides an opportunity for early input into the development of the Work Program and Budget.

For more information, please contact Becky Kimbrough, MAG Fiscal Services Manager, (602) 254-6300.

Next Regional Council Meeting

The next meeting of the MAG Regional Council is scheduled for Wednesday, February 28, 2007, at the MAG Offices, 302 N. 1st Avenue, Suite 200, Phoenix. Agenda items are expected to include an air quality update, 2005 Census Survey cost allocations, project list for the Arizona Department of Transportation's Safe Routes to School Program, proposed status report and administrative adjustments to the Arterial Life Cycle Program, selection of dirt road paving projects using Congestion Management and Air Quality (CMAQ) funding for FY 2008 and 2009, and the consolidated application process for the Department of Housing and Urban Development Stuart B. McKinney Continuum of Care homeless funding.

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