



Executive Director's Report

As announced at the July Regional Council meeting, in October, MAG will host the 2009 National Association of Regional Councils (NARC) Executive Directors Conference. This conference will provide an important opportunity for regional leaders from across the nation to discuss relevant policy issues and share best practices for building and maintaining strong regional organizations. It will also give us the opportunity to showcase the great strides we have taken in developing our own transportation system here in the MAG region. MAG Chair, Phoenix Councilwoman Peggy Neely, will open the conference on Monday, October 5, 2009.

A highlight of the conference will be a keynote address by Joel Szabat, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Transportation Policy for the U.S. Department of Transportation, who will share his perspective on the upcoming surface transportation authorization. Mr. Szabat will place particular emphasis on the federal-local partnership and the role metropolitan and rural regions can play in implementing the federal transportation vision.

Another highlight of the conference will include a Mayors Panel featuring Mesa Mayor Scott Smith and Denver Mayor John Hickenlooper, who will discuss the emerging role of regional organizations and reauthorization.

The conference will also include sessions on entrepreneurial opportunities in shared services, program delivery and joint purchasing; information regarding climate change and greenhouse gas emissions; discussion on emerging policy issues; and targeted management training relevant to executive directors ranging from managing the current financial crisis to managing staff capital.

We are honored to host the NARC Conference and are looking forward to gaining the information and insights provided at this event.

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



Regional Council Meeting Report for Wednesday, July 22, 2009

Action Items

Regional Council Approves Operating Policies and Procedures

In January 2009, the MAG Regional Council expressed interest in revisiting MAG's polices and procedures. MAG Chair Peggy Neely appointed a seven-member MAG

Process Review Task Force consisting of members from the MAG Regional Council, Regional Council Executive Committee, and Management Committee.

Over the past six months, the Task Force reviewed approximately 15 major issues to be addressed. The Task Force encouraged the development of a document that would outline consistent operating policies and procedures for the Regional Council, Executive Committee, Management Committee, Transportation Policy Committee and all technical and policy committees.

Issues addressed included clarifying the responsibility of committee chairs as facilitators; establishing that all committees have chairs and vice chairs; outlining that officers ascend to the chair position through a prescribed order; and providing more opportunities for members to preside over committees by establishing one-year terms for chairs and vice chairs for major policy committees, with a provision allowing chairs and vice chairs of other technical and policy committees to serve one additional term by consent of the committee. Other recommendations included delineating that technical committee recommendations will move up through the policy committee process to be heard by the Regional Council; providing a mechanism for future items to be placed on agendas; clarifying the weighted voting provision; communicating quorum requirements and the importance of quorums in conducting business; and providing specific rules of order for all MAG committees.

As a result of these efforts, the MAG Committee Operating Policies and Procedures were completed and approved by the Regional Council. Changes to the MAG By-laws are now under review.

For more information, please contact Alana Chávez, MAG Management Analyst, (602) 254-6300.

Stimulus Dollars to Help Fund Greener Infrastructure

The MAG Regional Council voted to amend the FY 2010 MAG Unified Planning Work Program and Annual Budget to accept \$45,000 in stimulus funding from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 provided by the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality to MAG for water quality management planning. MAG will use the funds to conduct a workshop on green infrastructure for water and wastewater treatment plants focusing on Arizona issues.

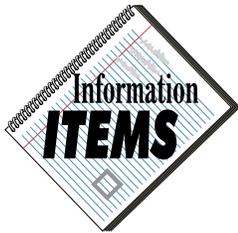
The workshop will include water/wastewater professionals, planners, businesses, and governments. Information from the workshop will be used to prepare a roadmap for “greening” water infrastructure, with the ultimate goal of planning for low impact development that may lead to resource conservation, water quality improvement, and lower costs.

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

Seven New Street Sweepers Funded

In January 2009, the Regional Council approved a prioritized list of proposed PM-10 certified street sweeper projects for fiscal year 2009 Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) funding. Approximately \$1.2 million to purchase seven remaining sweepers on the prioritized list is available from savings associated with four deleted sweeper projects and from year-end closeout funds. The Regional Council approved the additional projects for CMAQ funding. Sweepers will be funded in Phoenix, Paradise Valley, Tempe, Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community, Chandler, Youngtown, and Buckeye.

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



Information Items

Transportation Public Involvement Report

The Regional Council received an update on public involvement activities throughout fiscal year 2009 and a summary of the comments received during a variety of public input opportunities.

Nearly 40 Valley residents attended a public hearing in June to hear information, ask questions, and provide comments regarding transportation projects and services. The transportation public hearing brought together members of the public with representatives from the Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG), the Arizona Department of Transportation, Valley Metro, METRO and the city of Phoenix Public Transit Department. Information was provided at the hearing on current planning efforts, including the Transportation Improvement Program, stimulus funds, the Regional Transportation Plan and the Phoenix transit program. Residents were then given the opportunity to share their ideas and concerns. A court reporter recorded comments at the hearing and the comments received formal responses from staff.

The public hearing wrapped up a year-long series of public input opportunities for fiscal year 2009. Along with input opportunities at public meetings, MAG also hosted information booths at 20 special events around the Valley and conducted more than 20 presentations to smaller groups. Many of these presentations were made to disability groups and organizations, many of whose members are transit dependent.

A summary of input and staff responses to comments are included in the FY 2009 Transportation Public Involvement Report, which is available on the MAG Web site at www.mag.maricopa.gov (see communications page, resources section).

For more information, please contact Jason Stephens, MAG Public Involvement Planner, (602) 254-6300.

Transportation Planning Update and Tentative Scenario

The Regional Council continued to discuss potential strategies for bridging a projected \$6.6 billion gap in the Regional Freeway and Highway Program and heard recommendations regarding the future incorporation of a tentative scenario for addressing the program deficit. Among the strategies being considered are cost options that utilize a combination of management strategies, value engineering, project deferrals, and “staying the course.”

Under a draft scenario, approximately \$762 million in savings would be realized through management strategies such as lower construction, right-of-way and system-wide costs; \$1.7 billion in value engineering savings would result from changes along the Loop 202/South Mountain and Loop 303 freeway corridors; \$4.1 billion in savings would come through deferrals, while “stay the course” improvements slightly increased projected costs by \$30 million. Under the tentative scenario, the overall cost opinion for the Regional Freeway and Highway Program would decrease from \$15.95 billion to \$9.4 billion, bringing the program back into balance. In order to further analyze cost and revenue projections, the Transportation Policy Committee has tabled recommended action on a tentative scenario for 90 days. **For more information, please contact Eric Anderson, MAG Transportation Director, (602) 254-6300.**

Interstates 8 and 10 Hidden Valley Transportation Framework Study

The Regional Council was provided an update on the Interstates 8 and 10 Hidden Valley Framework Study. As a follow-up to the Interstate 10 Hassayampa Valley Framework Study, MAG and its partners recognized the need to extend framework planning into southwestern Pinal County. Participants in the study included the Arizona Department of Transportation, the Maricopa County Department of Transportation, Pinal County Public Works, the Town of Buckeye, and the cities of Goodyear and Maricopa. Beginning in 2007, a project team began framework planning efforts for a 3,200 square mile study area in Maricopa and Pinal counties for an area bounded by Gila River on the north, State Route 87 and Overfield Road on the east in Pinal County, the Tohono O’odham Indian Community and Barry Goldwater Range on the south, and 459th Avenue on the west in Maricopa County. The team determined that entitled development represents a population of approximately 2.5 million by buildout.

Among the recommendations that the Regional Council will consider in September are acceptance of a regional freeway and parkway framework for the Hidden Valley Study area, the adoption of a two-mile traffic interchange spacing policy for new freeway facilities, and coordinating acceptance with the tribal councils of the Gila River and Ak Chin Native American Indian Communities. More information on the framework study can be found at www.bqaz.org (select Hidden Valley on the right side of the screen).

For more information, please contact Bob Hazlett, MAG Senior Engineer, (602) 254-6300.

Annexation Requirements for Census 2010

With the 2010 Census only nine months away, it is important that all jurisdictions be aware of the need to complete any annexations by December 31, 2009, and report those annexations to the Census Bureau by March 1, 2010, in order for population in the newly annexed area to be included in the jurisdiction's Census 2010 population.

The U.S. Census Bureau conducts the Boundary and Annexation Survey (BAS) annually to update information about the legal boundaries and names of all governmental units in the United States. The Census Bureau uses the boundary information collected in the BAS to tabulate data for various censuses and surveys, including the 2010 Census of Population and Housing. It is anticipated that all federally recognized tribal areas, governmental counties, and incorporated places will receive their 2010 BAS materials in the mail between October 1 and November 25, 2009.

If a city or town has annexed land in recent years, but the Census Bureau does not know about the annexation by March 1, 2010, the population data from Census 2010 for that city or town could be under reported.

For more information, please contact Heidi Pahl, MAG Regional Planner, (602) 254-6300.

Next Regional Council Meeting

The August meeting of the Regional Council has been cancelled. The next meeting of the MAG Regional Council is scheduled for Wednesday, September 30, 2009, at 5:00 p.m. in the Saguaro Room, 302 N. 1st Avenue, Phoenix. Agenda items are expected to include proposed acceptance of the framework recommendation for the Interstates 8 and 10 Hidden Valley Transportation Framework Study and recommended approval of a locally preferred option for the Mesa light rail project. Additional agenda items are pending.

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