



## Executive Director's Report

At the April Regional Council meeting, there was an extensive discussion regarding a proposal from the TIME Coalition and the Arizona Department of Transportation for a statewide one-cent sales tax for transportation. Many questions were asked regarding the proposal and the details are still being worked out.

At the Regional Council meeting, a report was also provided on the transportation focus groups that had been conducted (*see summary below*). We are awaiting the results of the statewide transportation poll, which are expected to be available at the May 21, 2008, Transportation Policy Committee meeting.

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

## Regional Council Meeting Report for Wednesday, April 23, 2008.

*Note: This was a joint meeting of the MAG Regional Council and Transportation Policy Committee.*



## Action Items

### Commuter Rail Strategic Plan

The MAG Regional Council voted to accept the MAG Commuter Rail Strategic Plan as the guiding implementation framework for commuter rail, and recommended that MAG proceed with the first four of 12 recommended implementation steps. Those steps include ongoing coordination, Union Pacific passenger rail coordination, Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway coordination, and regional transit planning.

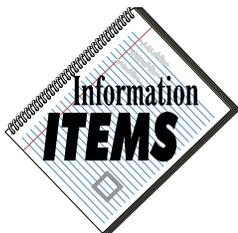
Commuter rail service has been discussed as a transportation option in Arizona since the early 1980s. The 2003 MAG High Capacity Transit Study analyzed the costs and physical requirements for implementing commuter rail service, and identified more than 129 miles of potential commuter rail corridors in the region. However, the Regional Transportation Plan does not include funding to build and operate commuter rail. To look at potential commuter rail options in the region, MAG launched a commuter rail planning process in February 2007. The Commuter Rail Strategic Plan identifies priorities and develops an implementation strategy for commuter rail service in Maricopa County and northern Pinal County.

**For more information, contact Kevin Wallace, MAG Transit Planning Project Manager, (602) 254-6300.**

## **STAN Project Change Approved**

The Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) requested that a modification be made to the Stewide Transportation Acceleration Needs (STAN) account approved by MAG in December 2006. The Regional Council approved the request, which recommended decreasing the funding by \$1.0 million for the I-10 Sarival to Verrado Way project, and increasing the funding by \$500,000 each for the Loop 303 Bell Road crossing and Loop 303 Cactus and Waddell Road crossing projects.

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



## **Information Items**

### **Transportation Planning Update**

The Regional Council was provided with several transportation planning updates. First was a report on information gathered during a series of recent statewide focus groups conducted in Maricopa, Pima, and Yavapai counties.

The focus groups were the initial phase of a Statewide Transportation Survey that includes a telephone survey of 1,200 high-efficacy voters. The survey is currently in the field and an update on the survey results will be provided at the May Regional Council meeting.

The committees also received an update regarding efforts to develop a statewide transportation plan. During the update, MAG staff discussed investment principles developed by the National Surface Transportation Policy and Revenue Study Commission. Principles cited included:

- Investments should be tied to specific desired system-wide performance objectives.
- Potential investments should be subject to quantitative analysis to identify their benefits and costs.
- Investment decisions should be influenced by economic, environmental and energy considerations beyond the immediate transportation-related objectives.

Staff also discussed the need to meet federal and state planning requirements that require a coordinated process, proactive public involvement, and air quality considerations.

Staff addressed the transportation needs of the MAG region. Currently, congestion causes about 82 million person hours of delay, resulting in lost productivity of \$1.7 billion in 2005. Transit demand is increasing due to rising fuel prices and an aging population, as well as recognition by the public of the environmental benefits of transit. The regional freeway program is facing increased costs due to increases in the cost of commodities, and a shortfall of \$9 billion is anticipated for local street programs.

The Arizona Department of Transportation presented information regarding a \$42 billion statewide transportation plan that would be paid for through a one- percent increase in the statewide sales tax. In a preliminary definition of critical needs, the ADOT plan allocates 58 percent of the increased funding to highway projects, 18 percent to rail and transit projects and programs, 20 percent to local mobility projects and programs, and four percent to pedestrian and bicycle enhancement programs.

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

### **MAG Nominating Committee Announced**

The MAG nomination process provides for the chair of the Regional Council to appoint a five-member Nominating Committee at the April Regional Council meeting. If the past chair of the Regional Council is not a current member of the Council, the Chair also appoints the Nominating Committee Chair. The chair announced the following appointments:

Mayor Keno Hawker, Chair, City of Mesa  
Mayor Boyd Dunn, City of Chandler  
Mayor Ed Winkler, Town of Paradise Valley  
Mayor Bob Barrett, City of Peoria  
Mayor Michael LeVault, Town of Youngtown

The Nominating Committee is charged with developing a slate of officers, including Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer, the Past Chair, and three At-Large members. The Regional Council will vote on the committee's recommendations at its annual meeting in June.

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

### **Next Regional Council Meeting**

The next meeting of the MAG Regional Council is scheduled for Wednesday, May 28, 2008, at 5:00 p.m. in the Saguaro Room, 302 N. 1st Avenue, Phoenix. Agenda items are expected to include an update on the Statewide Transportation Survey; the Draft MAG 208 Small Plant Review and Approval for the Proposed Preserve at Goldfield Ranch Water Reclamation Facility; Fiscal Year 2008 Arterial Life Cycle Program Regional Area Road Fund Closeout; and potential approval of the Draft FY 2009 MAG Unified Planning Work Program and Annual Budget. Additional items are pending.

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

