



Executive Director's Report

On May 7, history was made with the opening of a 14-mile stretch of Loop 303 connecting to Interstate 17. This project is one of two Legacy Projects first envisioned in Proposition 300, later becoming a high priority project in Proposition 400. It took tireless regional leadership to pass these propositions, and our job is not over: We are still working to complete the second Legacy Project, which is the construction of the South Mountain Freeway. Yet even as we continue efforts to complete our vision of 25 years ago, we are looking ahead to the next 25 years.

Since 1985, we have moved from a regionally competitive environment to a global one, with the Sun Corridor responsible for about 84 percent of the economic output of our state. In recent statewide meetings, it is evident that we need to better communicate how a vibrant Sun Corridor will be essential to lift the economy of the entire state. We also need to focus on bilateral trade with Mexico and Canada and our neighboring states as part of the larger region of the Intermountain West.

Other areas of the country are already looking beyond their borders to create a more competitive economic environment. To date, there are 16 freight corridor coalitions within the United States and another five international coalitions that have organized to advocate for their regions as freight corridors. We are working with our state agencies and neighboring states to plan an Intermountain West Summit in Phoenix. Also, we are sharing our ideas with the West Corridor Coalition, which could become a vital partner in addressing West Coast congestion along Interstate 5 through projects such as the proposed designation of Interstate 11.

As MAG Chair Tom Schoaf has said, it is time to pursue a new economic paradigm. Our transportation Legacy Projects of the future will no doubt be developed to stimulate and support an overall comprehensive economic strategy.

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

Regional Council Meeting Report for Wednesday, April 27, 2011

Action Items

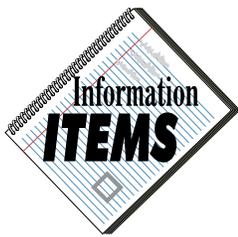


Road Safety Assessments at Intersections

Each year, more than 60,000 crashes occur on the local and arterial street system in the MAG region. About half of these crashes occur at intersections, and they result in a total of nearly 30,000 injuries and fatalities each year. The MAG Transportation Safety Committee recommended Road Safety Assessments as a regional initiative

to help identify and address safety issues at intersections. Previously, the MAG Regional Council approved \$398,000 in funding for conducting the assessments utilizing on-call consultants, with assistance from the Arizona Department of Transportation. During the April meeting, the Regional Council approved a list of 23 prioritized intersections for Road Safety Assessments, based on the MAG Crash Risk Rank.

For more information, please contact Sarath Joshua, MAG ITS and Safety Program Manager, (602) 254-6300.



Information Items

Multimodal Transit System Tour

The Regional Council heard an update on the possibility of a multimodal transit tour of a MAG peer region city. The purpose of the onsite tour would be for regional leaders to gather information and investigate the benefits of the connectivity between bus transit, light rail, and commuter rail. MAG staff researched the request and determined that the Utah Transit Authority (UTA) appeared to be the best example of an integrated transit agency that offers daily, multimodal connectivity in the Intermountain West. UTA staff has offered to host a tour for MAG region leaders on October 13-14, 2011. A summary of potential costs was presented, as each participant will be responsible for individual travel costs. The UTA oversees more than 100 local, bus rapid transit, express, ski and circulator bus routes; four light rail lines; and a 44-mile commuter rail line.

For more information, please contact Marc Pearsall, MAG Senior Transit Planner, (602) 254-6300.

Regional Freeway and Highway Program Update

The Regional Council received an update on the accomplishments, work underway, and continuing planning activities for highway corridors in the Regional Transportation Plan. Numerous accomplishments have been made since 2006, including opening 250 lane miles of new capacity, with another 250 under construction, for a total of 500 lane miles to be completed by 2015. While costs are close to what was projected in the plan, staff anticipates that, due to the decline in sales tax revenues, a \$210 million funding gap remains in the \$9.4 billion freeway and highway program between projected revenues and programmed expenditures. Staff reported that options under study for closing the gap are to complete environmental studies for local express lanes on the Interstate 10/Maricopa Freeway but to hold construction of the lanes, and to consider packaging I-10 and I-17 projects into a managed lanes public-private partnership. In addition, staff reported that some increases in funding for the Regional Transportation Plan may need to be factored in for upcoming maintenance costs for quiet pavement preservation.

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

MAG Five Percent Plan for PM-10 Update

The Regional Council received an update on ongoing dust prevention activities and the schedule for completing a new Five Percent Plan for PM-10 (particulate matter 10 microns in diameter or less). Due to the state's withdrawal of a previous plan in January 2011, it is anticipated that a new plan would need to be submitted to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in January 2012. Maricopa County has provided a revised emissions inventory that will be used as the basis for the new plan. Staff noted that the inventory incorporates new paved-road dust emission factors provided by the EPA. Staff also pointed out that any source, regardless of how much it contributes to the overall inventory, can create exceedances at the air quality monitors.

Staff reported that the region is pursuing a rigorous effort to prevent PM-10 exceedances in 2011. Maricopa County is currently classified as a Serious Area for dust pollution by the EPA. The EPA has informally indicated that 2009 may be a clean year, and there were no violations of the standard in 2010. If 2011 remains clean, the region would have the three years needed for attainment of the standard.

Activities taking place include the development of a Dust Reduction Task Force by the city of Phoenix; Maricopa County upgrades to provide near real time monitor data (upgrades purchased by MAG); the development by MAG of a Rapid Response Action Plan Template and Tool Kit; the mobilization of cities, towns and the county to take action to prevent dust; and new legislation that requires the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality to develop and distribute air quality dust forecasts five days in advance. This forecast will let cities, businesses, industries, vacant lot owners and residents know whether a low, moderate, or high risk of dust is expected. MAG and the Maricopa County Air Quality Department are working to provide outreach and other educational materials to the public, including a MAG video that outlines the serious nature of dust pollution and how business, industry and local governments are addressing dust emissions. The video encourages members of the public to assist in the effort by reducing dust-causing activities.

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

Development of the FY 2012 MAG Unified Planning Work Program and Annual Budget

The Regional Council received an update on the FY 2012 MAG Unified Planning Work Program and Annual Budget. The budget is developed incrementally in conjunction with member agency and public input. Updates to the budget include the addition of \$25,000 to the Gila Bend Small Area Transportation Study due to contributions from the town of Gila Bend (\$5,000) and Maricopa County (\$20,000); and a match of \$50,000 contributed by MAG for a Federal Railroad Administration Grant awarded to the Nevada Department of Transportation for the Western High

Speed Rail Alliance, of which MAG is a member. MAG also provided an update on staff positions for 2012.

Staff reported that the budget will come before the Regional Council next month for approval. MAG is still waiting to hear formal comments from the Federal Highway Administration, Federal Transit Administration, and the Arizona Department of Transportation following an annual review that took place in March. If any comments are noted that affect the work program or budget, they can be considered prior to the Regional Council action in May.

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

Nominating Committee

Elections for the MAG Executive Committee will be held during the MAG Annual Meeting in June. 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. The past chair of the Regional Council, if still a current member of the Council, will serve as committee chair. If the past chair of the Regional Council is not a current member of the Council, the chair also appoints the Nominating Committee chair. In accordance with this process, the following appointments were made to the Nominating Committee:

Mayor Elaine Scruggs, City of Glendale, Chair
Mayor Jackie Meck, Town of Buckeye
Councilmember Dick Esser, Town of Cave Creek
Mayor Jay Schlum, Town of Fountain Hills
Mayor Georgia Lord, City of Goodyear

The Nominating Committee is charged with developing a slate of officers: Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer, the Past Chair, and three at-large members. If the past chair is not a current member of the Council, the Nominating Committee nominates an additional at-large member. The Nomination Process requires that the Committee provide a balanced slate of candidates. These nominations are forwarded to all Regional Council members at least two weeks prior to the 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 25, 2011, at 5:00 p.m. in the Saguaro Room, 302 N. 1st Avenue, Phoenix. Agenda items are expected to include the approval of the Draft (FY) 2012 MAG Unified Planning Work Program and Annual Budget; an update on the Five Percent Plan for PM-10 and the implementation status of committed measures in the MAG 2007

Five Percent Plan for PM-10; and discussion of MAG Regional Council meeting locations during the MAG Office remodel. Additional items are pending.

Note: Remodeling of MAG meeting rooms will take place during June and July (and possibly August), and meetings will be moved to alternate locations. Attendees are encouraged to check the MAG website, www.azmag.gov, prior to these meetings to determine the location.

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