



Executive Director's Report

Our March meeting saw three distinct items of interest that are unrelated with one exception: all of them speak to our future and will take the commitment of our policy leaders to see them through to fruition.

First, we heard a call for a resolution of support for Arizona to be selected by the Federal Aviation Administration as one of six national test ranges, in a federal effort to integrate unmanned aircraft systems into the National Airspace System. (*See meeting summary, below.*) With the defense industry budget uncertain, this is a rare opportunity to utilize technology formerly used for military applications into other civilian uses. The Association for Unmanned Vehicle Systems International estimates that more than 23,000 jobs could be created in the United States in the next 15 years, resulting in more than \$1.6 billion in wages. The Arizona Commerce Authority asked for and received the Regional Council's support in advocating that Arizona be selected as a test site for implementation of these systems.

The second item of note was the unanimous adoption of a Resolution of Support for Arizona's Ports of Entry with Mexico. As noted in a recent *Arizona Republic* article, other border states like Texas are far outpacing Arizona when it comes to developing trade relations with Mexico. While Arizona exports to Mexico totaled about \$5.7 billion in 2011, in Texas the total was \$87 billion. Legal Mexican visitors spend approximately \$7.3 million *each day* in Arizona. It is time for local governments to assist the state to proactively enhance our trade relations with Mexico, and to take advantage of a significant economic opportunity. The resolution calls for infrastructure improvements at the Arizona Ports of Entry to enhance the flow of commerce. Not only MAG, but also other Councils of Governments around the state, are supporting the resolution.

The third item discussed was the MAG Municipal Aging Services Project, an effort involving focus groups and forums to determine how the needs of older adults will change in the next 10 years. The region's population aged 65 years and more is expected to more than double by 2020, to more than 700,000 people. Through the aging services project, leaders and service providers are preparing for this significant increase in the region's older population, including determining the most effective role for local governments. The region also was selected as one of five in the country to participate in the MetLife Foundation City Leaders Institute pilot project to help older adults age in place. One area of focus will be how hospitals

are looking to develop networks of home-based care following hospitalizations to prevent high rates of readmittance.

All of these issues will take time to address. But the Regional Council has demonstrated that it is forward thinking by taking the first step in acknowledging the importance of these agenda items and offering support and encouragement in moving forward.

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

Regional Council Meeting Report for Wednesday, March 28, 2012

Action Items



Resolution of Support for Integration of FAA-Unmanned Aircraft Systems into the National Airspace System

As noted above, the MAG Regional Council unanimously adopted a resolution to support Arizona being selected by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) as one of six national test ranges to integrate unmanned aircraft systems into the National Airspace System. The National Defense Authorization Act of 2012 and the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 contain specific direction to the Department of Transportation and the FAA to safely integrate unmanned and manned flight, including establishing six national test ranges. The Arizona Commerce Authority is coordinating an effort to formally present Arizona's case to meet the requirements as a national test range. Three primary range locations and eight secondary options have been identified for the FAA's consideration.

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

Resolution of Support for Arizona's Ports of Entry with Mexico

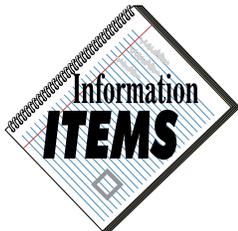
In December, elected officials, business leaders and staff from Maricopa, Pinal and Pima counties visited the Arizona ports of entry in Nogales and San Luis. The purpose of the trips was to better understand the challenges facing freight movement to and from Mexico and Arizona. As a result of these trips, a resolution of support for the ports of entry was developed and reviewed by each organization. The Joint Planning Advisory Council reviewed the resolution in February and comments were incorporated into the resolution. The MAG Economic Development Committee considered the resolution in March and recommended adoption. The resolution calls for improvements to Arizona's transportation infrastructure to enhance commerce, including:

- Funding an alternative to State Route 189 near the Mariposa Port of Entry in Nogales.
- Improving the San Luis Arizona Port of Entry 1.

- Restoring the Wellton Branch rail line or other options for freight and Amtrak service.
- Improving US-95 and infrastructure to support the north/south traffic flow on the Arizona Department of Transportation designated Western CANAMEX passage.
- Supporting Juan Sanchez Boulevard construction, Avenue E widening, and the SR-195 Connector to the Robert A. Vaughn Expressway and US-95.
- Funding improvements to the Douglas Port of Entry, connecting routes of Chino Road and developing infrastructure.

The Regional Council unanimously supported the resolution.

For more information, please contact Denise McClafferty, Management Analyst III, (602) 254-6300.



Information Items

Draft FY 2013 MAG Unified Planning Work Program and Annual Budget

Each year, the MAG Unified Planning Work Program and Annual Budget is developed incrementally in conjunction with member agency and public input. The Work Program is reviewed each year by several federal agencies (including the Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration), as well as by other partners, including the City of Phoenix, the Regional Public Transportation Authority, METRO, and the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality. The final draft is brought forward for final approval by the Regional Council in May.

Staff reported that this month the draft budget for 2013 was sent to members and is about 70 percent complete. The first draft MAG FY 2013 budget includes the program narratives and the estimated budget amounts by project and funding source, including carry forward funding amounts. The indirect rate for FY 2013 is used to project cost amounts for the first draft of the budget each year; the cost detail of the budget is being prepared and will be presented later.

This draft of the budget includes the MAG capital budget. Typically, the capital budget includes equipment additions and replacements, mostly for staff computer equipment and software purchases. The capital budget for FY 2013 also includes accounting software this year and the purchase of a vehicle currently leased by MAG. Staff is also upgrading storage and backup systems. More cost details will be provided in April.

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

MAG Municipal Aging Services Project

In February, more than 200 people attended an event titled *Planning the Next 100 Years*. The event was part of the MAG Municipal Aging Services Project. The event

included a presentation about the results of key interviews, focus groups, and a survey conducted with adults aged 55 years and older in this region.

Staff reported that the 65 and older population makes up 12 percent of the Valley's population of 3.8 million, representing about 463,000 people. About 31 percent of this group has some form of disability, and nearly seven percent meet the federal poverty level. The elderly population is expected to more than double by 2020, to approximately 700,000 people. Such dramatic changes will have a significant impact on local governments and how they meet the needs of this population. The interviews and focus groups concentrated attention on transportation and social participation. Respondents reported that they want to remain living in their homes, which will require more home based and community care. Respondents also noted financial concerns, including income, health and housing costs. They also expressed concerns about losing their ability to drive, which could have consequences for services like transit and dial a ride.

Staff noted that one way MAG will continue to engage people is through the MetLife Foundation City Leaders Institute, which will provide technical assistance and connect the region with national experts centered around one of the topics emerging from the project. Staff reported an advisory group will be formed to help determine the focus of the MetLife efforts.

For more information, please contact Amy St. Peter, Human Services and Special Projects Manager, (602) 254-6300.

Update on the MAG Five Percent Plan for PM-10

An update was provided on the Draft MAG 2012 Five Percent Plan for PM-10, a plan to reduce dust emissions in the region by five percent each year until national air quality standards are met. Staff reported that the draft plan document is now complete, and a public hearing is scheduled for April 12, 2012. During the 30-day public comment period, discussions will continue between the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) regarding the Agricultural Best Management Practices Program. Following the consideration of public comments, it is anticipated that the MAG Regional Council would take action on the plan in May.

Staff noted that in addition, the region needs three years of clean data as measured at the monitors for EPA to determine that the standard has been met. Staff noted that it is critical for member agencies to maintain their aggressive efforts to prevent exceedances at the monitors and throughout the region. To date in 2012, there have been three PM-10 exceptional event exceedances, two of which are believed to be caused by high winds and one by residual dust from high winds. ADEQ is continuing to prepare documentation for more than 100 exceedances that took place in 2011, which staff noted was a time-consuming process. In March, EPA

sent a letter to MAG indicating that it would consider the MAG comments on how to improve the exceptional events documentation process.

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

Next Regional Council Meeting

The next meeting of the MAG Regional Council is scheduled for Wednesday, April 25, 2012, at 11:30 a.m. at the MAG offices, 302 N. 1st Avenue, Phoenix, second floor, Saguaro Room. Agenda items are expected to include an update on the development of the fiscal year 2013 MAG Unified Planning Work Program and Annual Budget, a Regional Freeway and Highway Program Life Cycle Program update, and an air quality update. Additional agenda items are pending.