



Executive Director's Report

At our March Regional Council meeting, we discussed our recent trip to Nogales, Sonora, Mexico. More than 45 representatives from Phoenix, Tucson and Nogales, including 15 elected officials, traveled to Mexico to join other elected and high-ranking government officials, business leaders, and economic development experts in a binational economic forum. Due to the participation of governments and businesses on both sides of the border, the trip was an extraordinary success.

The Valley delegates arrived at the MAG offices shortly after 5:00 a.m. on a Friday morning and didn't return until 8:30 p.m., a significant time commitment that further demonstrated the members' desire to improve our relationship with Mexico. Local elected officials have a key role in working with existing and expanding businesses, as well as attracting new economic opportunities to the region. The importance of Mexico as a trading partner cannot be overstated. Our shared border is the gateway for \$26 billion worth of imports and exports. More than 65,000 Mexican residents travel to Arizona each day for business, leisure and recreation. These legal visitors spend more than \$7 million every day in Arizona, pumping \$2.7 billion annually into the state economy and generating tens of thousands of jobs. Yet there are other border states, such as California and Texas, that far outpace us in these numbers. That is one of the reasons the MAG delegation is working to strengthen government and business relationships across the border.

There were many takeaways from the trip. For example, Mayor Stanton noted that one of his positive observations was about the growing middle class in Mexico. Research finds that 17 percent of Mexico's population joined the middle class in the last decade (2000 to 2010), with the annual middle class income ranging between \$14,600 and \$75,000 for a family of four. Most of the members of the rising middle class live in urban areas, are better educated, and work in the formal private sector.

Other mayors commented on the phenomenal welcome that we received from Sonora Mayor Ramón Guzmán Muñoz and the rest of the Mexican delegation. The trip was a major news story in Sonora, with 20 newspapers and two national TV stations carrying stories, calling it 'historic and a great success,' further recognizing the Valley's interest in developing better trade relations with Mexico. It became clearer and clearer throughout the day of presentations from economic and tourism officials that our economic destinies are forever intertwined.

For me, the trip was a version of *Back to the Future*. In the past, local governments had strong positive ties to Mexico. Recently, these ties have been neglected at the local level in lieu of other priorities. We have been separated by much more than a distance of 175 miles. It took traveling that 175-mile distance to demonstrate our sincerity. The gap is closing as those relationships are now being rekindled.

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

Meeting Report for Wednesday, March 27, 2013

Action Items



Adoption of MAG 2013 Carbon Monoxide Plan

The MAG Regional Council voted to adopt the MAG 2013 Carbon Monoxide Maintenance Plan for the Maricopa County Area. In April 2005, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) approved the Revised MAG 1999 Serious Area Carbon Monoxide Plan, MAG 2003 Carbon Monoxide Redesignation Request and Maintenance Plan, and Redesignation of the Maricopa County Nonattainment Area to attainment status. There have been no violations of the one-hour standard since 1984 and no violations of the eight-hour standard since 1996. The Clean Air Act requires an additional plan demonstrating maintenance of the standards 10 years beyond the initial 10-year period. The Maintenance Plan is due eight years after redesignation to attainment (April 8, 2013). The Maintenance Plan contains a variety of measures, including use of reformulated gasoline, off-road vehicle standards, vehicle emissions test requirements, coordination of traffic signal systems, tougher enforcement of vehicle registration and emissions test compliance, clean burning fireplace ordinances, and more.

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

Metropolitan Planning Area Boundary

At the February Regional Council meeting, an amendment to the MAG By-Laws was presented that would enable new agencies to join MAG if a new Metropolitan Planning Area (MPA) Boundary is approved. The boundary would be approved by the Governor working in cooperation with MAG as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). The proposed amendment would provide for local governments in Pinal County that are within the MPA Boundary to be eligible to join MAG. The City of Maricopa and the Town of Florence have each passed resolutions expressing interest to join MAG, if the new boundary includes their community. No action was taken by the Regional Council pending notification of a new boundary by the Governor.

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

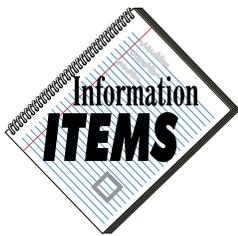
TIP and Plan Amendments

Under the new federal transportation legislation known as MAP-21, a new Transportation Alternatives program allocates funding to regional planning organizations for programming. Federal fiscal year (FFY) 2013 and FFY 2014 Transportation Alternatives funds are estimated at \$4.2 million and \$4.8 million, respectively. At the same time the new program was created, two formerly funded programs, Transportation Enhancement projects and Safe Routes to School, were sunset. Staff reported that the money budgeted for these two programs in Arizona (\$6.2 million and \$3.6 million, respectively), would need to be reprogrammed. MAG staff presented a two step approach for the new Transportation Alternatives Program. For the near term (FY 2013-14), MAG will work with the Arizona Department of Transportation in trying to meet commitments under the sunset programs, after evaluating funding shortages for programmed project phases. Any balance above the funded amount would be carried over to 2015. For the long term (FY 2015-18), MAG would determine priorities and eligible activities, assign a committee for the program, develop program evaluation and performance criteria, schedule a call for projects in the summer of 2013, collect and evaluate applications, approve the list of projects, and program them in the MAG transportation plans.

The Regional Council voted to approve the scenario for short term and long term programming methodologies and the associated amendments and modifications to the FY 2011-2015 and 2014-2018 Transportation Improvement Program and in updates to the Regional Transportation Plan.

For more information, contact Teri Kennedy, MAG Transportation Improvement Program Manager, (602) 254-6300.

Information Items



Development of the FY 2014 MAG Work Program and 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 the appropriate federal agencies and typically approved by the Regional Council in May. Staff presented the first draft of the FY 2014 Work Program and Budget, which included the program narratives and the estimated budget amounts for projects and the funding source, including carry forward amounts. The cost detail of the budget is being prepared and will be presented next month.

Staff noted that this draft of the budget includes the MAG capital budget. Typically the capital budget includes equipment and software additions and replacements, mostly for staff computer equipment, and software purchases. The capital budget

for FY 2013 also included new accounting software and this was procured during this year. The capital budget for FY 2014 includes some carryforward funds for the software, as the installation and implementation of the system is anticipated to be completed after the new fiscal year has started. Otherwise the capital budget requests are set at the usual amounts needed to replace existing equipment and software.

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

Domestic Violence Survey

The Misdemeanor Domestic Violence Protocol Model was developed to improve the way domestic violence offenders are arrested across the region. An implementation survey was distributed to law enforcement agencies to gather data about the use and impact of the model across the region. The vice chair of the MAG Regional Domestic Violence Council, Chief Steve Campbell with the city of El Mirage, provided information about the survey results.

The survey was distributed to 61 law enforcement agencies across the state, with 90 percent of law enforcement agencies in Maricopa County responding. Chief Campbell reported that 95 percent of agencies in Maricopa County are implementing the model, providing more consistency throughout the region. Sixty-three percent of the participating agencies reported that implementation of the protocol model has resulted in their agency being better equipped to handle domestic violence cases. Others reported that additional technical assistance, staff, training, and funding were needed in order to further implement elements of the protocol model.

Chief Campbell reported that the data from the survey will be used to identify training and technical assistance opportunities for increasing use of the protocol model across the region.

For more information, please contact Renae Tenney, MAG Human Services Planner, (602) 254-6300.

21st International Trails Symposium

The Regional Council received an update on the 21st Annual American Trails International Trails Symposium to take place at the Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation Resort on April 14-17. A representative from the organization reported that more than 700 attendees from around the United States are expected to attend the symposium, with 10 countries represented. It is the first time the symposium is being held on tribal lands, and brings all trail interests together. The symposium promotes communication, supports trail advocacy, and showcases Arizona's successes. The symposium will feature a public awareness day and have long-lasting financial benefits.

For more information, please visit the website at www.americantrails.org.

Legislative Update

MAG staff provided an update on legislative activities. Staff reported that the National Association of Regional Councils (NARC) has approached MAG with a consideration to support pending federal legislation. The legislation being sought is called Regional Infrastructure Improvement Zones (RIIZs.) The concept came from the Ohio-Kentucky-Indiana Metropolitan Planning Organization. A bill was introduced in the last Congress (112th) to advance the concept of RIIZs. The bill did not advance, but it is now being reconsidered as a potential new bill in the current Congress. If enacted, a RIIZ is a change to the federal tax code to allow private corporations or individuals to contribute tax-deductible dollars toward construction and maintenance of public infrastructure. Under the RIIZ process, businesses or individuals would apply to the local regional planning organization, which would be responsible for determining local/regional support for the proposed project and whether it is eligible in local or regional long-range plans. Approval of the RIIZ is by the regional planning organization's board of directors. When conditions are satisfied, a certificate of approval would be filed with the state attorney general and the Internal Revenue Service. When the certificates are filed, businesses and individuals can make tax-deductible contributions. More details are forthcoming as the legislation makes its way through Congress.

The Regional Council voted that it was supportive of the concept, but asked staff to work with NARC to acquire more detailed information.

For more information, please contact Nathan Pryor, MAG Government Relations Manager, (602) 254-6300.

Next Meeting

Please note that the next meeting of the MAG Regional Council has been changed from its usual date. The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, May 1, 2013, at 11:30 a.m. at the MAG offices, 302 N. 1st Avenue, Phoenix, second floor, Saguaro Room. Agenda items are expected to include ongoing development of the FY 2014 MAG Unified Planning Work Program and Annual Budget, an update on the ADOT Passenger Rail Study - Tucson to Phoenix, a regional economic update, and a transportation funding overview. Additional agenda items are pending.

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