



Executive Director's Report

One mark of an effective organization is its ability to adapt to change. At our August Regional Council meeting, we heard several agenda items in which MAG demonstrated this ability.

One item had to do with changes to MAG policies and procedures, primarily the result of the recent change to the MAG Planning Area Boundary that added three new members—the town of Florence, city of Maricopa and Pinal County. The amendments provide for the new members to have seats on the Regional Council and to be considered for positions on various MAG committees.

Other governance adaptations are seen in the Continuum of Care Regional Committee on Homelessness, which is adjusting its structure to better align with federal goals established under the HEARTH Act (Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing). A key goal of this effort is a greater emphasis on moving homeless individuals and families quickly into permanent housing. Investments in homeless programs are already reducing homelessness, most significantly among veterans (*see summary below*). Cities can help by prioritizing permanent housing opportunities for homeless and chronically homeless individuals and families. Ending homelessness is one change that we would especially welcome.

Another example of MAG's flexibility was seen in our year-end closeout item. When projects do not move forward on schedule, this results in leftover unprogrammed funding. If federal funds assigned to the projects are not authorized to be spent, the funding is at risk of being rescinded by the federal government. Changes implemented by MAG, which include proactive project reporting, monitoring, and reprogramming, have reduced the amount of funding that is carried forward each year. For example, in fiscal year 2011, \$39 million in unspent project funding was carried forward; in 2012, \$16.5 million; and, although it would have been \$4.3 million this year, the action by the Regional Council means only \$200,000 of federal funding will be carried forward.

These are just a few examples of how MAG reacts to meet the changing dynamics of our region. In the words of noted author Bruce Barton, "When you're through

changing, you're through." I am grateful for the continued understanding of our Regional Council of the need to be nimble.

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

Meeting Report for the Annual Meeting, Wednesday, August 21, 2013

Action Items



Year End Closeout Report Update on Federal Fiscal Year 2013 Funds

The Regional Council approved a motion to proceed with the federal fiscal year (FFY) 2013 federal funding advancement of \$3.9 million to the Mesa Drive to Gilbert Road light rail extension project. The funding became available after certain projects expected to be authorized during FFY 2013 will not proceed as scheduled, and due to the fact that other projects saw cost savings based on revised estimates, and others were completed at a lower cost than anticipated. Together, this resulted in approximately \$4.3 million in unprogrammed funds. To address the unprogrammed federal funds, the MAG Transportation Review Committee and Management Committee recommended advancing \$3.9 million in Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality funds to the Mesa light rail extension project, and to make the appropriate amendments to the FY 2011-2015 MAG Transportation Improvement Program, FY 2014 Arterial Lifecycle Program, and Regional Transportation Plan 2010 Update.

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

Amendment to the MAG Committee Operating Policies and Procedures

The MAG Regional Council approved revisions to the MAG Committee Operating Policies and Procedures. In June, the MAG Executive Committee Governance Subcommittee met to discuss changes to the policies and procedures to provide for new MAG members that were added as a result of changes to the MAG Planning Area Boundary. The proposed policy changes focus around providing for the new members to be considered for positions on various MAG committees, and changes the language from "geographically balanced" to "regionally balanced" to better represent the broader planning area. The Economic Development Committee (EDC), for example, now provides a seat for one of the Pinal County member agencies (city of Apache Junction, town of Florence, city of Maricopa or Pinal County). The amendments also add a seat for a representative from Arizona State University. The Transportation Policy Committee adds the three new members to its list of at-large seats that can be selected by the Regional Council.

Another change involves the MAG Continuum of Care Committee on Homelessness. The Executive Committee will now appoint two co-chairs, one an elected official

and one a representative from the nonprofit sector. The expiration of the co-chairs' terms will be staggered.

Finally, a change was made to the policies surrounding quorums. In the event that a member agency is absent for three consecutive meetings of the Management Committee or any other technical or policy committee, the member/position shall no longer be considered a member for the purposes of calculating the number constituting a quorum. At such time the member does attend a meeting, that person will immediately be considered a member for purposes of calculating the number constituting a quorum. The rule excludes the Regional Council and Regional Council Executive Committee. In no event may the quorum consist of less than one-third of the voting members of the Committee.

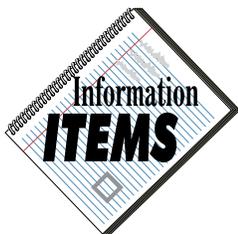
For more information, please contact Denise McClafferty, MAG Regional Program Manager, (602) 254-6300.

Appointments of the MAG Economic Development Committee Member Agency Positions

The MAG Regional Council approved appointments to the Economic Development Committee (EDC) member agency positions. The EDC includes a number of prescribed seats, such as the Transportation Policy Committee chair and vice chair and seats held by the central city and Maricopa County, while other positions are held by business representatives. Seven EDC positions were eligible for reappointment, of which two—one West Valley position and one East Valley position—were vacant. The Regional Council appointed Litchfield Park Mayor Thomas Schoaf to the West Valley position, and Scottsdale Mayor W.J. “Jim” Lane to the East Valley position.

For more information, please contact Denise McClafferty, MAG Regional Program Manager, (602) 254-6300.

Information Items



Update on Continuum of Care Regional Committee on Homelessness

Since 1999, MAG has hosted the Continuum of Care Regional Committee on Homelessness. The Committee prepares year-round planning in homelessness issues and prepares a consolidated application on behalf of the region to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Nonprofit agencies and homeless service providers serve as an integral part of the committee. Staff noted that the MAG Continuum of Care Committee is ranked as a priority by the federal government. The partnership has helped secure more than \$20 million each year, supporting more than 60 programs that help bring homeless people from the streets

to self-sufficiency. In addition to the HUD program, other major initiatives for the continuum are conducting an annual point-in-time street count and organizing a heat relief network of services.

Staff reported that the investment in programs has made a difference. Since the continuum was implemented, overall homelessness in the region has decreased by nine percent, chronic homelessness has decreased by seven percent and street homelessness by veterans has decreased by 50 percent. Eighty-three percent of people placed in permanent housing have retained housing for a year or more, and 75 percent of people placed in transitional housing are moving to permanent housing.

Staff reported that the Continuum of Care is in the process of implementing changes to align with federal regulations and goals following congressional reauthorization of the HUD homeless assistance program. The HEARTH Act (Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing) establishes a federal goal of ensuring that individuals and families who become homeless return to permanent housing within 30 days. At the same time, the first federal plan to end homelessness was developed. The plan has set 2015 as the target to end veteran and chronic homelessness. The continuum is looking to leverage opportunities through community initiatives, such as Phoenix Mayor Greg Stanton's Homeless Advisory Council.

Staff reported that the continuum will be engaging more than 80 stakeholders from all sectors of community, to look at best practices for implementing federal regulations and creating a system that houses people quickly and effectively.

For more information, please contact Brande Mead, MAG Human Services Program Manager, (602) 254-6300.

Update on the MAG 2012 Five Percent Plan for PM-10 and Exceptional Events

Staff provided an update on recent activity surrounding the 2012 Five Percent Plan for PM-10 (particulate matter 10 microns in diameter or less). A major milestone was reached on July 1, 2013, when the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) completed a review of documentation surrounding "exceptional event" days—occurrences in which exceedances at the monitors were the result of naturally-occurring high winds or dust storms. Staff reported that the EPA concurred with seven packages of exceptional event demonstrations for the remaining 2011 and 2012 exceptional event days that were not previously decided. Collectively, EPA has now concurred with 17 of the 18 packages of exceptional events that were submitted by the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality. The results appear to indicate that there were no violations of the PM-10 standard during the three-year period of 2010 through 2012. The region needs to have at

least three consecutive years without violations for the region to meet the federal PM-10 standard. The EPA will continue its review of the dust plan in light of these exceptional event approvals.

While some improvements have been made, staff noted the EPA exceptional events process is still flawed and needs to be streamlined. Too much documentation is required, it is too expensive and time consuming. The EPA has indicated that it intends to revise the Exceptional Events Rule and that further streamlining may be possible.

Staff thanked the Regional Council for the approval of \$90,000 in 2011 to assist Maricopa County in providing real time dust monitor information, enabling cities to be notified immediately when monitor levels are rising so that proactive steps may be taken to stop dust-producing activities before exceedances occur.

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

Next Meeting

The next meeting of the MAG Regional Council will be Wednesday, September 25, 2013, at 11:30 a.m. at the MAG offices, 302 N. 1st Avenue, Phoenix, second floor, Saguaro Room. Agenda items are pending.

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