



Executive Director's Report

Our February meeting brought us an update on innovative solutions taking place in the Northwest Valley to provide alternative transportation to older adults. In the past, we have relied primarily on government programs to solve our problems, but it is becoming clearer that with the slow economic recovery, collaborative solutions are needed. It is gratifying to see public, nonprofit and private entities working together to meet residents' needs and fill funding gaps.

Research has found that the overwhelming majority of people aged 65 and over want to "age in place," meaning they want to stay in their homes and in the communities where they are connected. Benevilla and Sun Health are partnering to develop Northwest Valley Connect, a new nonprofit agency that will provide mobility management and a membership-based transportation program. Volunteers and paid drivers will be used to provide transportation to older adults for a nominal fee (*see summary, below*). The program fills existing gaps by supplementing the system with revenue obtained from rides and memberships. Perhaps the best advantage is that the model can be replicated by other agencies in additional areas of the Valley.

A MAG survey found that the population of adults 55 and older will grow from 450,000 in 2010 to 700,000 in 2020, and the number of those in that age group who drive will fall from 90 percent to 67 percent. This is an area of need that will not be going away. It is rewarding to see nonprofit agencies taking a prominent role in initiating changes in the way older adults access transportation in partnership with local governments.

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

Meeting Report for Wednesday, February 26, 2014

Action Items



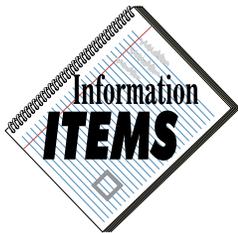
Safety Projects, Transit Study, and Paving Projects Approved

The Regional Council approved a number of items on the consent agenda, including the approval of 11 Road Safety Assessment projects to identify and address safety issues at locations with characteristics of high crash risk; four paving unpaved road projects to reduce fine particulate pollution near air quality monitors in the West Central Pinal PM-2.5 Nonattainment Area and West Pinal PM-10 Nonattainment

area; and a prioritized list of streetsweeper projects. It also approved the findings and recommendations contained in the Designing Transit Accessible Communities study, which provides tools and guidelines for better transit accessibility for pedestrians and bicyclists. For more information on these projects, please [visit the Regional Council page on the MAG website at \[www.azmag.gov\]\(http://www.azmag.gov\)](#). Detailed information can be found in the agenda link for the [February 26, 2014 meeting](#).

For more information, please contact Kelly Taft, MAG Communications Manager, (602) 254-6300.

Information Items



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

The Regional Council heard an update on the proposed approval of the MAG 2012 Five Percent Plan for PM-10 (coarse particulates). On January 14, 2014, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) signed a notice proposing to approve the plan, which includes a wide variety of existing measures and projects designed to control dust pollution. The plan additionally includes a new measure designed to reduce PM-10 during high risk conditions, including high winds. The plan demonstrated that the measures would reduce emissions by five percent per year and demonstrated attainment of the federal clean air standard by December 31, 2012. EPA is also proposing to make a determination that the region has met the standard based upon three years of clean data for 2010-2012, as measured by the air quality monitors. Staff reported that the notice was published in the *Federal Register* on February 6, 2014, and that comments may be submitted until March 10, 2014.

Staff also provided an update on issues concerning exceptional events, which involve exceedances that cannot be controlled by air quality plans, such as wildfires or dust storms. Staff noted that EPA anticipates proposing revisions to the Exceptional Events Rule in April 2014 and finalizing them in April 2015. In 2013, there were six exceptional event days due to regional dust storms, thunderstorms and high winds. Documentation for the exceptional event days has been prepared and is available for public review.

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

Alternative Transportation Solutions for Older Adults

Community engagement and research has shown transportation to be a significant concern among people aged 65 years and older in our region. As a result, the MAG Regional Age-Friendly Network is pursuing alternatives to assist older adults in accessing viable transportation solutions.

As noted in the Executive Director's Report above, staff reported that a number of options are being developed to supplement the current transportation infrastructure

through partnerships with nonprofit agencies. These options include travel training, van programs, and a new hybrid program being developed in the Northwest Valley. Benevilla and Sun Health are partnering to develop Northwest Valley Connect, a new nonprofit agency that will provide a membership-based transportation program. Rides will be provided by volunteers and paid drivers to older adults for a nominal fee. The project is supported with funding from Grantmakers in Aging and the Pfizer Foundation. The model includes three main components: information and referral, rides and mobility support, and socialization opportunities. The program is designed to be replicated in other communities.

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

MAG Fiscal Balance Report

MAG recently updated the Fiscal Balance Report to provide background information on how different types of development impact communities from a fiscal perspective. The report is accompanied by an in-house model that can be used by MAG to evaluate and estimate the impacts of different land use combinations for five size categories of cities and Maricopa and Pinal counties.

Generally, the model shows that residential development yields the least return on investment, when compared to office, industrial and retail land uses. The report found that while retail development alone does not create a healthy economy, it is fiscally sustainable as long as there are residents and job opportunities nearby to support it. The model can be used to measure the costs and benefits of specific projects, small area plans, or an entire general plan. Communities can then identify potential future shortfalls that need to be addressed and more clearly direct economic development objectives.

For more information, please contact Scott Wilken, MAG Regional Planner, (602) 254-6300.

Economic Development Data and Analysis Meetings

MAG staff reported that it is conducting meetings with member agency economic development staff to showcase datasets and analysis tools available through MAG. MAG collects and analyzes a wide variety of data, including socioeconomic data, commuting pattern data, travel data, and employer data. MAG staff also has developed enhanced online mapping and reporting tools that can easily be used by individuals or member agencies to find information about specific or customized geographies (<http://ims.azmag.gov/>). In addition, MAG has developed a report that analyzes regional employment clusters that can be used by member agencies to determine types and locations of employment centers within their communities. Staff demonstrated how the data can be customized to show the macro and regional economy. Analysis of commuting patterns can show travel times and how many

people are traveling in or out of a jurisdiction to go to work, or if they live and work within the same community. Socioeconomic analysis is also available, including household income, population by age, and educational attainment.

For more information, contact Anubhav Bagley, MAG Information Services Manager, (602) 254-6300.

Discussion of the development of the FY 2015 MAG Unified Planning Work Program and Annual Budget

Each year, the MAG Unified Planning Work Program and Annual Budget is developed in conjunction with member agency and public input. The Work Program is reviewed each year by the federal agencies in April and approved by the Regional Council in May. To provide an early start in developing the Work Program and Budget, staff provided an overview of MAG's draft proposed new projects for the FY 2015 Work Program. Seventeen new or ongoing projects are included in the FY 2015 budget. The new project requests mainly consist of projects in the area of transportation safety. Staff presented an updated draft budget timeline and estimated dues and assessments. Staff noted that a webinar workshop was held on February 20, 2014, to answer questions and present information.

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

Next Meeting

The next meeting of the MAG Regional Council will be Wednesday, March 26, 2014, at 11:30 a.m. at the MAG offices, 302 N. 1st Avenue, Phoenix, second floor, Saguaro Room. Agenda items are expected to include a regional transit planning agreement, conformity consultation, deferral for the construction phase of the bicycle and pedestrian improvements on the Arizona Canal from Chaparral Road to Indian Bend Wash project, and update on federal fiscal year funding levels.

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