



## Executive Director's Report

The approval of our annual Unified Planning Work Program and Annual Budget is always a milestone at MAG, as it sets our work priorities for the year ahead and approves the funding for accomplishing the goals we have set. We want to thank the MAG Regional Council for its support of this budget and work program and for the ongoing confidence our leaders display for the MAG process.

The end of our fiscal year always serves as a reminder to me of the uniqueness of MAG as an organization. Our dual role as both a metropolitan planning organization and a council of governments, and the fact that we have responsibility for air quality planning for the region, makes us significantly different from many other such councils. From the day MAG was formed in April 1967, the organization has been led by local governments, which are closest to the people. Our first years were spent embedded within the League of Arizona Cities and Towns, which further cemented our roots as a coalition of local governments responsible for addressing issues that cross jurisdictional boundaries. We have a nationally unique policy structure in that we are one of a very few organizations that utilizes a Management Committee of city and town managers to assist in policy recommendations. We recognize the strength of the council-manager form of government and how it is a valuable resource in regional decision making.

With a population of more than four million, we have a relatively small number of governmental agencies. Our region represents nearly 64 percent of the state's population. This is a tremendous responsibility, and one of the reasons we have reexamined "to what end" we conduct transportation planning. Our federal responsibility includes a mandate to develop transportation programs with an eye on economic development opportunities as well as geographic connectivity.

Our work program requires a highly educated and trained staff to address complex issues. We live in a great region with very well-run local governments. As a region, I am confident we can make a difference for future generations.

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

**Meeting Report for Wednesday, May 28, 2014****Action Items****Approval of the FY 2015 MAG Unified Planning Work Program and Annual Budget**

The Regional Council unanimously approved the FY 2015 MAG Unified Planning Work Program and Annual Budget and the Member Dues and Assessments. The draft Work Program has been presented incrementally to the Regional Council since January.

Staff reported that the overall increase for the FY 2015 draft Work Program and Annual Budget is .67 percent (\$217,528), for an overall budget of \$32,837,483. The largest dollar increase for line items in the budget is for pass-through agreements. This increase is offset in the budget by a larger decrease in budgeted consultant costs, for an overall decrease in these line items of 2.34 percent.

Staff reported that additional increases were the result of higher personnel benefit and health care costs. Increases were also seen in maintenance and repair costs due to maintenance coverage on newer copier and computer equipment and software.

The largest dollar decrease in overhead was seen in capital outlay. Prior years' higher budgeted costs were due to the new accounting system and subsequent carryforward of this budget over a two-year period of installation, training and implementation. This system is anticipated to be complete in early fall.

Staff noted that MAG submits its Work Program each year to the Government Finance Officer's Association for review and application for the Distinguished Budget Presentation Award. MAG received this award for the 15th consecutive year for the FY 2014 Work Program in January of this year; the work program for FY 2015 will be submitted for the 16th consecutive year.

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

**Revisions to the Arterial Life Cycle Program Policies and Procedures**

The Arterial Life Cycle Program (ALCP) is the financial management tool for the arterial component of the Regional Transportation Plan. The program is guided by the ALCP Policies and Procedures, which were last approved by the MAG Regional Council in 2009. In 2013, the MAG Management Committee formed a Managers Working Group to discuss updates to the policies. There was consensus that additional project commitment requirements should be put in place, and that any program rebalancing should first be sent to the Managers Working Group

for direction. The ALCP working group was then tasked with developing specific revisions and met seven times to develop policy recommendations. In addition to new project commitment requirements and documentation of the program development process, proposed revisions included institution of programming principles, establishment of advancement priorities, clarification of eligible match for federally funded projects, and simplification of administrative requirements. The Regional Council voted to approve the revisions.

**For more information, please contact John Bullen, MAG Transportation Planner, (602) 254-6300.**

### **Vacancy on Transportation Policy Committee Business Seat**

Proposition 400, passed by Maricopa County voters in 2004, authorizes the President of the Arizona Senate and Speaker of the Arizona House of Representatives to each appoint three business members to six-year terms on the Transportation Policy Committee (TPC). One of these members must represent transit interests. In January 2010, the Speaker appointed Ron Barnes of Total Transit to the TPC. Mr. Barnes notified MAG in April that he would be resigning his seat. It is anticipated the Speaker will appoint a new transit member to fulfill the remainder of Mr. Barnes' term, ending December 31, 2016.

State law provides that the chair of MAG may submit names to the President and Speaker for consideration of TPC appointments. Three names were received by MAG: Nick Promponas, senior vice president of First Transit; Stanton Sipes, business development director of Total Transit; and Charles Huellmantel, principal, Urban Soul Development. The Regional Council recommended that the names of all three individuals be forwarded to the Speaker for consideration for appointment.

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

### **Northern Arizona Council of Governments Loan Request and Proposed Project Advancements**

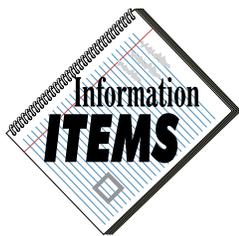
The Northern Arizona Council of Governments (NACOG) has requested that MAG enter into a loan agreement to assist them with \$4.2 million in federal fiscal year (FFY) 2014 Surface Transportation (STP) funds from the Federal Highway Administration that they cannot utilize this year, with repayment across multiple years from FFY 2016-2019. The loan would have no negative impacts to the MAG region. The main benefit to the MAG region includes early advanced federal funding for projects that are currently underway and can meet federal and state rules and policies. Three projects in the Arterial Life Cycle Program have been identified that meet the requirements to accept advancement of the FHWA STP funding. The Regional Council approved the loan request.

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

## Approval of Consent Items

The MAG Regional Council approved several significant items on the consent agenda, including the approval of a draft Transit Oriented Development Regional Strategy, approval of the Title VI and Environmental Justice Program, approval of the updated Public Participation Plan, approval of the priority listing of applicants for the Federal Fiscal Year 2014 Section 5310 enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities Transportation Program, and the appointment of Mesa Mayor Alex Finter and Peoria Mayor Bob Barrett to the Transportation Policy Committee. More information on these and other consent items are available on the Regional Council page of the MAG website, [www.azmag.gov](http://www.azmag.gov).

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



## Information Items

### Near Term Improvements Strategy for the I-10/I-17 Corridor

The Regional Council received an update on a Near Term Improvements Strategy for the Interstate 10/Interstate 17 corridor. In 2012, a multi-phase process was identified for improving the corridor. MAG staff provided a report on potential near-term improvements that could be made to the 35-mile, north-south Interstate 10/Interstate 17 corridor between the Loop 202 Pecos Stack and the Loop 101 North Stack. This area is often referred to as the “Spine” because it serves as the backbone for transportation mobility in the metropolitan Phoenix area. In fact, 43 percent of all daily trips in the region use a portion of the corridor.

Staff noted that \$1.47 billion is programmed in the Regional Transportation Plan for improving the corridor. In recent years, the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) developed design concept reports and environmental impact statements as part of the I-10 Corridor Improvement Study and I-17 Corridor Improvement Study. These studies looked at ways to add capacity to both I-10 and I-17 in the Phoenix area. ADOT and MAG agreed, and FHWA accepted, the decision to rescind the studies in 2012 because the improvements shown in the studies were too extensive and did not meet the regional goals for the corridor. In addition, conditions have changed and new multimodal ideas have been discussed.

Staff reported that a path forward was identified at a workshop in October 2012 that includes identifying near-term improvements, developing a corridor master plan, conducting environmental studies, and implementing the design, construction and operation of the Spine.

Staff noted that the Near Term Improvements Strategy is still under development and study by ADOT. He explained that the options under consideration include alternatives targeting bottlenecks and enhancing traffic operations. Candidate projects must rapidly meet environmental requirements and a near-term construction timeframe.

Staff reported that potential improvements under consideration include:

- Reducing congestion on outbound Interstate 10 between SR-51/SR-202L Ministack and US-60. One potential option is striping another lane on the outbound side, as sufficient pavement width exists to accommodate this safely. The lane could be an HOV lane or a general purpose lane. This option is under study.
- Improvements to Interstate 10 between SR-143 and US-60, such as implementing a “ramp braid” on the inbound segment to eliminate traffic weave and improve operations. Sufficient right-of-way exists at the interchange to accommodate this. In the outbound direction between US-60 to SR-143, because a flyover cannot be accommodated, consideration is being given to adding a collector/distributor road to improve the weave situation between the two freeways.
- Addition of extra general purpose lanes inbound and outbound on Interstate 10 between Baseline Road and SR-202L/Santan Freeway.
- Addition of auxiliary lanes along Interstate 17 between the interchanges in the segment from 16th Street to 19th Avenue. Staff noted that adding any improvements to I-17 outside this segment is difficult without a major environmental process.
- Improvements to traffic operations and ITS enhancements, in addition to improvements to the Freeway Management System. Congestion begins at approximately 1,600 vehicles per hour per lane, however, capacity for a freeway lane is approximately 2,200 vehicles per hour per lane. Adding improvements to traffic operations and ITS enhancements could add back that capacity. Additional improvements could include coordinating ramp metering, which would be most helpful to Interstate 17.
- Another strategy is to add a DPS officer in the ADOT Traffic Operations Center. One officer would be able to dispatch officers and their presence could help in the effort to stop wrong-way drivers.

Staff reported that stated that next steps include the possible inclusion of potential projects in the Transportation Improvement Program this fall. He added that the corridor master plan project website, [www.spine.azmag.gov](http://www.spine.azmag.gov) will be operational in the next few weeks.

**For more information, please contact Bob Hazlett, Senior Engineering Project Manager, (602) 254-6300.**

## **Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the MAG Regional Council will be the Annual Meeting followed by the Desert Peaks Awards Program at a different time and place. The meeting will be held Wednesday, June 25, 2014 at 5:00 p.m. at the Downtown Sheraton Hotel, 340 N. 3rd Street, Phoenix. Agenda items are expected to include election of officers for the Regional Council Executive Committee and the appointment of member agency Transportation Policy Committee members, approval of the MAG 208 Water Quality Management Plan Point Source Update, and recommended approval of the FY 2015 Arterial Life Cycle Program. Additional agenda items are pending.

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