

MARICOPA ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS

INFORMATION SUMMARY...for your review

DATE:

February 8, 2011

SUBJECT:

Don't Trash Arizona Litter Prevention and Education Program

SUMMARY:

The Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) includes \$279 million for the freeway maintenance program, including litter control. In November 2003, MAG and the Arizona Department of Transportation signed a joint resolution that included a commitment to develop a long-term litter prevention program to help reduce freeway litter and defray pickup costs.

To help accomplish this goal, in 2006, the MAG Regional Council approved the selection of a consultant, RIESTER, to implement a Litter Prevention and Education Program for the Regional Freeway System in the MAG region, also known as *Don't Trash Arizona*. The purpose of the program is to increase awareness of the health, safety, environmental and economic consequences of freeway litter and ultimately change the behavior of offenders. MAG works cooperatively with the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT), which manages the program for the state outside of Maricopa County.

The initial two-year contract for the prevention and education program expired August 31, 2008. A new Request for Proposals was issued and a selection process undertaken. Based on the recommendation of a multi-agency review panel, on September 24, 2008, the Regional Council again approved the selection of RIESTER as the consultant to develop the FY 2009 litter prevention and education program. The action included a provision that the base contract period shall be a one-year term but that MAG may, at its option, offer to extend the period of this agreement up to a maximum of two (2), one (1) year options, based on consultant performance and funding availability. On October 19, 2009, the MAG Executive Committee approved exercising the first one-year option. On October 18, 2010, the MAG Executive Committee approved exercising the second one-year option. The current contract with RIESTER expires November 30, 2011. A new Request For Proposals (RFP) will be required before any new contract can be issued. The FY 2012 Draft MAG Unified Planning Work Program and Annual Budget contains \$300,000 to continue the *Don't Trash Arizona* program for an additional year. Staff recommends issuing the RFP to continue the program and to include a similar provision as the prior RFP that the contract may be extended up to a maximum of two years based on performance and funding availability.

New activities conducted in FY 2010 included radio and web advertising, the development of a motivational speaker's tour to reach out to students at community colleges and vocational schools, the development/dissemination of monthly e-blasts with tips and information, and a 15 minute video on littering. An analysis of the e-mail outreach found an unusually high open rate for emails (more than 40 percent amid an industry average of 25 percent). In addition to the above activities, MAG implemented a "Safe Loads = Safe Roads" campaign. This messaging was aimed at reducing dangerous road debris from unsecured loads. Tactics included live radio broadcasts and a web contest so that those who took the *Don't Trash Arizona* anti-litter pledge could be registered to win a free tarp to cover truck bed or trailer loads, reinforcing the importance of safely securing vehicle loads. Activities recommended for 2011 include development of a school presentation kit, hosting several special events such as the Great American Clean Up in coordination with Keep Arizona Beautiful, and "Friday Night Drags," which are legally-sanctioned drag races at Firebird Lake that draw large numbers of participants that fall within the program's target demographic of males aged 18 to 34.

Since 2006, combined with public relations efforts, the *Don't Trash Arizona* Litter Prevention and Education program has achieved more than 30 million audience impressions. A recent telephone survey of 601 Maricopa County residents finds that half of Arizonans have heard the slogan *Don't Trash Arizona*. Some of the most significant findings of the survey were positive changes in awareness and behavior among the target demographic, as well as changes in attitude and behavior by the overall population. Overall awareness of the slogan *Don't Trash Arizona* increased from 43 percent in 2006 to 51 percent in 2010. Awareness among the target demographic was 58 percent. Another significant finding was that almost three-fourths of Maricopa county residents (74 percent) reported they had not littered at all during the past year, which, for the first time, represents an increase from previous years (69 percent in 2009). In addition, the percentage of residents classified as "Admitted Litterers" declined to 23 percent, the lowest recorded in the history of the annual tracking study.

A full copy of the survey and the findings are available at www.DontTrashAZ.com. The site also includes information about littering, activities and resources for students and teachers, a page to report littering violations and other information.

PUBLIC INPUT:

Numerous presentations and special events were conducted throughout the year, with feedback solicited through question and answer periods as well as surveys provided to community college and trade school students at the end of each motivational speakers tour. Additional input is received through the *Don't Trash Arizona* website. A scientific, random-sample telephone survey was conducted in July 2010 by WestGroup Research. Results are based on 601 fifteen-minute interviews with Maricopa County residents with results at a 95 percent confidence level. Key results of the survey are noted above and the full report is available on the *Don't Trash Arizona* Web site.

PROS & CONS:

PROS: Research suggests that prevention programs can change public perception and habits regarding litter, which is ugly, unhealthy and unsafe. Properly maintained freeways are important to the quality of life of the residents of this region and to the image projected to tourists and economic development prospects.

CONS: None.

TECHNICAL & POLICY IMPLICATIONS:

TECHNICAL: During the development of the Regional Transportation Plan, a joint resolution passed and adopted by the Maricopa Association of Governments on December 3, 2003, and passed and adopted by the Arizona State Transportation Board November 21, 2003, included a clause to support and enact the development of a long-term litter prevention program in the region. The clause cites that the program should be developed from various funding sources. The Regional Transportation Plan includes \$279 million in funding for landscape maintenance and noise mitigation, which includes litter pickup and sweeping.

POLICY: An effective litter prevention and education program will help change the behavior of offenders, which will improve health and safety, protect the environment, improve visual aesthetics along the MAG Regional Freeway System, enhance tourism and economic development prospects, and ultimately reduce the cost of freeway maintenance.

ACTION NEEDED:

Information, discussion, and input/guidance to continue the Don't Trash Arizona Litter Prevention and Education program for inclusion as a funded project in the FY 2012 MAG Unified Planning Work Program and Annual Budget.

PRIOR COMMITTEE ACTIONS:

On October 18, 2010, the MAG Executive Committee approved amending the consultant contract with RIESTER for one additional year for the Litter Prevention and Education Program to include \$300,000 budgeted in the MAG FY 2010 Unified Planning Work Program and Annual Budget for litter prevention and education. This followed an October 13, 2010, MAG Management Committee recommendation for the same action.

On September 17, 2008, the MAG Regional Council approved a recommendation that RIESTER be selected to design and implement the FY 2009 Litter Prevention and Education Program for the Regional Freeway System in the MAG Region. The action included a provision that the base contract period shall be a one-year term but that MAG may, at its option, offer to extend the period of this agreement up to a maximum of two (2), one (1) year options, based on consultant performance and funding availability. On October 13, 2009, the MAG Regional Council Executive Committee exercised the first one-year option, and approved amending the contract through November 30, 2010.

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