



Executive Director's Report

April 5th was a great day, when our Governor, along with MAG and ADOT, held a press conference to kick off the regional anti-littering campaign. It had a familiar ring to me, reminding me of when my mother would tell me to take out the trash. Well, now it is time to take out the regional trash and we all need to step up and do our part.

As a regional planning agency, it was gratifying to see action taken on what started as a discussion in the Transportation Policy Committee (TPC) as the Regional Transportation Plan was being developed. From the very first TPC meeting, Councilmember Peggy Bilsten and a chorus of others demanded that litter be addressed in the Plan.

There was one meeting in particular, May 21, 2003, in which the litter issue was discussed at length. One after another, the elected officials on the TPC – including Glendale Mayor Elaine Scruggs, Phoenix Councilmember Peggy Bilsten, Scottsdale Mayor Mary Manross, Mesa Mayor Keno Hawker, and Chandler Mayor Boyd Dunn – voiced the importance of including landscaping and litter funding in the Regional Transportation Plan. A comment by Mayor Elaine Scruggs, then Vice Chair of the committee, may sum it up best. "This isn't just an add-on," she stated, "this is a quality of life issue."

In the end, the TPC and the Regional Council included \$279 million in the Plan for litter control, and the public supported the Plan through its approval of Proposition 400.

It is rewarding to see how an issue identified as a high priority by elected officials and supported by the voters is now making a significant difference in the amount of litter being collected. About \$3 million a year is now being spent directly on freeway litter pickup, compared to only \$2 million two years ago. The additional funding has increased the number of bags of trash collected from 80,000 bags a year to about 151,000 bags per year.

Even as we celebrate these accomplishments, we recognize that freeway litter remains a major issue for our region, and that funding alone won't solve the problem. We need to change the behavior of motorists who litter. That is why

MAG has implemented the *Don't Trash Arizona* litter prevention campaign that was the focus of the recent press conference. The campaign encourages Valley residents to use litterbags, secure their loads with tarps and proper tie downs, and to keep cigarette butts in the car. Through this campaign and the Prop 400 funding, we hope to make a difference in eliminating freeway litter.

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



Action Items

Regional Council Meeting Report for Wednesday, March 28, 2007

Regional Council Approves Dust Control Measures

The MAG Regional Council approved the Suggested List of Measures to Reduce PM-10 Particulate Matter following an update on MAG's efforts to develop a Five Percent Plan for PM-10. The MAG Air Quality Technical Advisory Committee developed the draft list of measures designed to reduce PM-10 pollution to comply with federal standards. On March 9, 2007, the MAG Air Quality Technical Advisory Committee recommended approval of the Suggested List of Measures.

The measures were recommended for approval by the MAG Management Committee on March 14, 2007. Maricopa County suggested additional measures be added. The Regional Council added a measure to grant Maricopa County the ability to assess liens on parcels to cover the costs of stabilization for the parcel. The Regional Council also added the state to the list of implementing authorities for a measure to restrict vehicle use and parking on vacant lots. The Council also directed the MAG Air Quality Technical Advisory Committee to consider the remainder of the recommendations provided by Maricopa County.

The approved list includes such measures as requiring dust managers at construction sites of 50 acres and greater, increasing fines for open burning, banning ATV use on high pollution days, and banning leaf blowers from blowing debris into streets.

With the approval of the list by the Regional Council, implementing agencies will now be requested to make legally binding commitments to implement measures which they deem appropriate for their jurisdictions. Local govern-

ment commitments will be needed by June 15, 2007. The Five Percent Plan for PM-10 must be submitted to the Environmental Protection Agency by December 31, 2007.

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

Regional Office Center Moves Forward

Members of the Regional Council authorized MAG staff to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding for the Regional Office Center and to execute a lease for 30 years at an estimated cost of approximately \$39.7 million over 30 years. In addition to MAG, the Regional Office Center would house the Regional Public Transit Authority (Valley Metro) as well as Valley Metro Rail (METRO).

Staff reported that MAG and Valley Metro are rapidly outgrowing their current office space. The Regional Office Center is a long term strategy to reduce the cost of office space. The selected site for the Regional Office Center is on McKinley Street between 1st Avenue and 2nd Avenue. This site is in a centralized location readily accessible by public transit, which makes it more convenient and feasible for the public to provide input into the planning process. In addition, having the three planning agencies share building space more fully integrates the three planning agencies and creates numerous efficiencies for staff, for elected officials, and for the public, including a reduction in the amount of time spent in travel between agencies and an increase in productivity through face-to-face interaction.

On March 16, 2007, the Valley Metro Board of Directors authorized their executive director to negotiate a contract to acquire land and construct an office building, and on April 10, 2007, the METRO Board of Directors authorized the Chief Executive Officer to execute a lease for the METRO portion of the Regional Office Center, which includes 45,474 square feet at an estimated cost for land, building construction, financing, and operating costs over 30 years.

For more information, please contact Denise McClafferty, MAG Management Analyst, (602) 254-6300.

Building a Quality Arizona

The Regional Council approved the selection of the firm DMJM Harris to provide consulting services related to the Building a Quality Arizona: State-wide Intrastate Mobility Reconnaissance Study.

The Reconnaissance Study is part of a statewide collaboration – Building a Quality Arizona – spearheaded by the Arizona Councils of Governments and

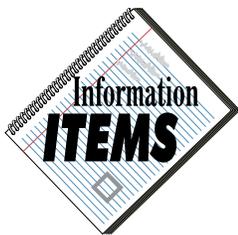
Metropolitan Planning Organizations throughout the state. The Arizona Department of Transportation, the Governor's Office and representatives from the business community are also participating in the study. The \$300,000 study is jointly funded by MAG, the Pima Association of Governments in Tucson, and ADOT, which is providing funding for the remainder of the state.

The study will identify immediate transportation needs in Arizona and provide a statewide modeling tool to assist policymakers in evaluating potential future investments throughout the state. It will also identify high growth areas of the state that may require more detailed framework studies that examine streets, parkways, highways and transit needs. The Reconnaissance Study will recommend a common methodology for the framework studies.

The statewide collaboration is being modeled after the successful process undertaken during the development of the Regional Transportation Plan, which engaged the business community, the general public, ADOT, the Governor's Office and the State Legislature to address transportation needs and solutions.

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

Information Items



Update on Development of the Draft MAG FY 2008 Unified Planning Work Program and Annual Budget

The Regional Council received an update on the FY 2008 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 the spring and scheduled for approval by the Regional Council in May. The Regional Council received an overview of the proposed budget production timeline, which provides an opportunity for early input into the development of the Work Program and Budget, as well as an overview of MAG's proposed new projects and estimated dues and assessments. Proposed new projects include, among others, safety training for school crossing guards, a commuter rail corridor development plan, and bicycle and pedestrian design assistance programs. MAG staff reported to the Regional Council that the elements of the budget document are about 80 percent complete.

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

Next Regional Council Meeting

The next meeting of the MAG Regional Council is scheduled for 5:00 p.m., Wednesday, April 25, 2007, at the MAG Offices, 302 N. 1st Avenue, Suite 200, Phoenix. An open house will be held one hour prior to the Regional Council meeting on the second floor to celebrate MAG's 40th anniversary. Agenda items are expected to include an overview of input received during the FY 2007 MAG mid-phase public input opportunity; approval of the draft FY 2008-2012 MAG Transportation Improvement Program and Regional Transportation Plan 2007 Update for air quality conformity analysis; and approval of the interim closeout of the federal fiscal year 20007 MAG federally funded program.

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