



## Executive Director's Report

We had a very productive Regional Council meeting with several key decisions made on economic stimulus funding. These included approval of project lists for both the highway and transit portions of the funds, as well as approval of a scenario for distributing MAG sub-allocated funds. These decisions are notable due to the extremely tight deadlines and fast turnaround times necessary due to the federal obligation schedule. Meeting this tight time frame would not have been possible without the professionalism, dedication, and hard work of member agency and MAG staff.

This region is fortunate to have highly skilled staff members who are nationally recognized for their expertise. During our meeting, for example, it was my honor to announce that the MAG Human Services Transportation Coordination Planning Program won the national 2008 United We Ride Leadership Award for major urbanized areas by helping transportation-disadvantaged populations. It was also noted that the Don't Trash Arizona Litter Prevention and Education Program conducted by MAG, the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT), and Riester, is a finalist for a national public service award for excellence in strategic public relations. These efforts are just two of many instances in which our transportation, environmental, fiscal, human services, communications, technological and information services efforts have been held up as national best practices.

In the midst of these hard-charging hectic days, it is refreshing to pause for a moment and say thank you, not just to MAG and member agency staff but to our regional leaders for supporting these efforts and allowing us to provide a valuable resource for our region.

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



## Action Items

### Approval of ADOT Portion of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) Funds

The Regional Council approved the necessary modifications to the FY 2008-2010 Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) and Regional Transportation Plan for funding five major highway projects in the region. The five projects are funded through the ADOT portion of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funds. The State Transportation Board allocated \$129.4 million of ARRA

funds to the MAG region. The following projects were prioritized by MAG and approved for funding:

- I-10 widening (construct general purpose lane) from Verrado Way to Sarival Road.
- I-17 widening (construct general purpose lane) from SR 74 (Carefree Highway) to Anthem Way.
- US 60 widening (10 miles) from Loop 303 to 99th Avenue.
- US 60 widening (2.5 miles) from 99th Avenue to 83rd Avenue.
- Loop 101 traffic interchange widening at Union Hills and bridge with Beardsley connector.

**For more information, please contact Eric Anderson, MAG Transportation Director, (602) 254-6300.**

### **Distribution of MAG Sub-Allocation of the ARRA Funds**

After reviewing a number of scenarios and options for distributing ARRA funding as part of the \$104.6 million MAG sub-allocation, the Regional Council approved a scenario that includes a minimum agency allocation of \$500,000 plus additional funding based on population. MAG member agencies were given a deadline of April 3, 2009, to define and submit projects to MAG for the sub-allocated funds, due to a very limited time to obligate the projects.

The Regional Council recommended establishing a deadline of November 30, 2009, for projects to be obligated (programmed and approved by the Federal Highway Administration). Funds allocated to local projects that are not obligated by the MAG November deadline would be reprogrammed in the region so that the region can meet the federal obligation date of March 2, 2010, in order for Arizona to be eligible to receive funding from other states that are unable to obligate their funds.

**For more information, contact Eric Anderson, MAG Transportation Director, (602) 254-6300.**

### **Transit Portion of ARRA Funds Approved**

The Regional Council approved a list of transit projects for inclusion in the TIP and Regional Transportation Plan that represents the regional portion for transit in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. The transit portion is \$66.4 million. The legislation requires that 50 percent of the transit funds be obligated within 180 days. On March 19, 2009, the Valley Metro Board of Directors, which represents 14 cities and towns, as well as Maricopa County, took action on projects to receive stimulus funds. The transit list includes:

#### Phoenix-Mesa Urbanized Area

- Mesa: Country Club/US60, park-and-ride construction, \$9,400,000.
- Phoenix: Various projects, \$28,521,217.
- Regional Public Transportation Authority (RPTA): Arizona Avenue/Country Club, bus rapid transit capital, \$15,000,000.

- Scottsdale: Scottsdale/Loop 101, park-and-ride construction, \$5,000,000.
- Tempe: East Valley Operations and Maintenance Facility, expansion/upgrade, \$6,500,000.

#### Fixed Guideway Modernization

- Phoenix: Bell Rd/SR-51, bus access crossover, \$640,070.

#### Avondale Urbanized Area

- Avondale: Avondale Blvd./I-10, park-and-ride selection, \$250,000.
- Goodyear: I-10/Litchfield Rd, park-and-ride construction, \$1,083,602.

**For more information, please contact Eric Anderson, MAG Transportation Director, (602) 254-6300.**

### **Census 2010 Outreach Efforts**

The U.S. Constitution mandates a count of every person living in the United States every 10 years. The 2010 Decennial Census will take place on April 1, 2010. Census data are used to determine how to allocate more than \$300 billion in federal funds to states and communities every year.

To assist jurisdictions in communicating to residents the importance of filling out the Census 2010 questionnaire, MAG has implemented the "Count to '10" Census Outreach Group. The group has been working with the City of Phoenix Complete Count Committee - Media Subcommittee on developing outreach strategies, including paid advertising.

A draft media buys proposal was developed by the City of Phoenix that presented two advertising approaches, including a scenario totaling \$426,815 that includes a mix of network and cable television buys, radio buys, print advertising in mainstream and community newspapers, and minority media advertising. Because all areas of the Valley would benefit from the proposed media buys, the groups proposed that all municipalities and local governments within Maricopa County jointly participate financially in this effort. A funding scenario was developed that divides the advertising costs based on each jurisdiction's proportionate share of population.

The media buys proposal and funding scenario was approved by the MAG Regional Council, which also voted to amend the MAG Unified Planning Work Program and Annual Budget to allow the use of federal planning funds for census outreach efforts and reduce the cost member agencies will have to provide.

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

### **Human Services Coordination Transportation Plan**

The Regional Council approved the 2009 update of the Human Services Coordination Transportation Plan. The federal Safe and Efficient Transportation

Equity Act - A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) requires the establishment of a locally developed, coordinated public transit-human services transportation plan for all Federal Transit Administration (FTA) programs for underserved populations. Programs include the Elderly Individuals and Individuals with Disabilities program (Section 5310); the Job Access and Reverse Commute program (Section 5316); and the New Freedom program (Section 5317).

MAG has developed this coordination plan in compliance with this requirement since 2007. In fact, MAG was one of the first to respond, thanks to efforts already underway in the area of elderly mobility. Recently, the plan received national acclaim when the FTA notified Governor Jan Brewer that the MAG Human Services Transportation Coordination Planning Program won the 2008 United We Ride Leadership Award in the category of major urbanized areas. The region earned the award for successfully implementing plans to coordinate transportation for older adults, people with disabilities, and people with low incomes. The award was presented in Washington, DC on March 30, 2009.

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

### **Next Regional Council Meeting**

The next meeting of the MAG Regional Council is scheduled for Wednesday, April 22, 2009, at 5:00 p.m. in the Saguaro Room, 302 N. 1st Avenue, Phoenix. Agenda items are expected to include project approvals and conformity consultation for the MAG Sub-Allocation portions of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funds; status report on the Arterial Life Cycle Program and update to the Arterial Life Cycle Program Policies and Procedures; a recommendation to forward to ADOT the priority listing of applicants for Section 5310 Elderly Individuals and Individuals with Disabilities Transportation Program; recommended approval of the Regional Community Network reporting structure; and an update on the FY 2010 MAG Unified Planning Work Program and Annual Budget. Additional items are pending.

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