

MAG Celebrates Golden Anniversary

Decade Three: 1987-1997



April 12, 2017, marked 50 years that the Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG) has been serving the region. This is the third part of a five-part series that covers the five decades of MAG and the major milestones that represent how MAG has made a difference to the residents of our region.

The Economic Tide Turns

The elation surrounding passage of Proposition 300 was short-lived. In 1987, the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) announced new freeway system cost estimates that were much higher than originally estimated.

“Unfortunately, a lot of the cost estimates early on in the program were very gross estimates,” recalls MAG Transportation Director Eric Anderson. “As ADOT actually started designing the system, it was clear that we had to make additional improvements.” Although painful, Anderson calls the changes the right decisions at the time.

But soon, construction costs began skyrocketing. A real estate boom increased the costs for right-of-way. MAG and ADOT found themselves in the spotlight over the rising program costs.

“We saw revenues coming in significantly under the projections, which really caused

kind of a tsunami happening, because we had higher costs and lower revenues,” says Anderson. “It really put the freeway program in a crisis mode.”

Freeway costs now projected at \$4-6 billion
 Officials blame land prices, extras
By Susan Leonard
 The Arizona Republic

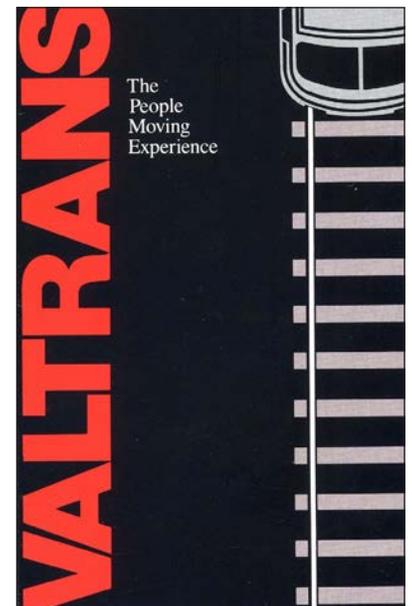
Adding to the uncertain economic climate, the savings and loan crisis was creating a nationwide financial meltdown.

ValTrans

Despite the churning economy, the region was moving forward with a second half-cent sales tax proposal known as ValTrans, designed to be the transit half of Prop 300. The \$8 billion proposal included more than 100 miles of elevated light rail and bus improvements. But journalist Bob Robb, who worked for the Phoenix Chamber of Commerce at the time, says voters were simply in the wrong frame of mind.

“As I recall, it went to ballot in 1989, which was only four years after the initial sales tax for the freeways had been proposed and approved. So it was a little quick to go back to the well,” says Robb.

ValTrans went down in a crushing defeat of nearly two to one. Former Phoenix Mayor Terry Goddard believes the region still suffers from the loss.



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Message From the Chair



Mayor Greg Stanton, City of Phoenix

Our Valley continues to be a region of choice for business, families and tourists, and our quality of life has few rivals. This is not something we should ever take for granted. So much of what makes our region desirable and economically competitive has been the fruit of visionary thinking and wise long-range planning. That is why it has been my pleasure to serve as MAG chair over this past year.

MAG has had a guiding hand in areas that touch nearly every aspect of our lives.

It has been a year in which MAG celebrates 50 years of serving this region. MAG has had a guiding hand in areas that touch nearly every aspect of our lives: Expanded freeways and a modern light rail and transit system that propel our economy. Improved air quality that makes us healthier. A cohesive emergency response system that saves lives every day. And a team approach that helps us to more effectively confront our most challenging social issues, like homelessness and domestic violence.

We are at our best when we work together. That's what MAG is about—a convening table for cities, counties, and Native American

communities in the region. A place where we advocate, listen, compromise and ultimately make better decisions together.

I'm proud to have chaired MAG for the past year because it is an opportunity to work side-by-side with my fellow Regional Council members on issues that matter to all our residents. Through MAG, we pool ideas and talent to make our region more connected and globally competitive. Working together makes us stronger.

The 50th Anniversary of MAG gives us an opportunity to analyze our many successes over the past five decades and to share our history. I believe it is important that residents—those who have been here since MAG began and those who might have just arrived—know just how vital this organization has been to the success of our region.

While MAG has evolved significantly over its history, it is fascinating to see how many tenets of the first Regional Council are still in practice. To succeed as a region, we must continue to work together to make solid, data-driven decisions focused on improving the lives of our residents. If our past shapes our future, we can count on MAG to have a lasting impact on generations to come. 



MAGAZine is a quarterly newsletter of the Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG). It focuses on the issues and concerns of the cities, towns and tribal communities of the MAG region. If you know of a friend or colleague who would like to receive MAGAZine, please call the MAG office, (602) 254-6300.

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Visit www.azmag.gov and click on Regional Council.



The City of Litchfield Park's recent annual report was titled "Breaking Ground." The title reflects a year of improving our parks and recreation facilities and the introduction of public art into the community. It reflects a year of planning for the development of nearly 23 acres in the city center and the groundbreaking or opening of significant commercial and residential developments. These developments provide opportunities for new housing and shopping areas for our community and an increased tax base.
—Mayor Thomas Schoaf, City of Litchfield Park

The City's hard work is coming to fruition as road construction projects on segments of El Mirage Road and Thunderbird Road will be completed this summer. Also, we are very excited that the recently approved MAG Regional Freeway and Highway Rebalancing effort will allow El Mirage to make improvements on the frontage road along Grand Avenue/US-60.
—Mayor Lana Mook, City of El Mirage



We recently broke ground on an exciting mixed-entertainment use in our downtown called "Overstreet Chandler." This and past Councils have been patient with this parcel as it is a gateway to our city core. Downtowns are special places. We all must take the utmost care in their preservation and success.
—Mayor Jay Tibshraeny, City of Chandler

As one of the fastest growing communities in the region, Queen Creek appreciates the fantastic work being done through MAG to address the regional needs of today—and tomorrow. We are grateful to have such positive working relationships with our regional partners and look forward to continuing to work with our neighbors to meet the needs of our residents, businesses, and visitors.
—Mayor Gail Barney, Town of Queen Creek



On behalf of Gilbert, Arizona, I am excited to partner with the Maricopa Association of Governments as well as its member municipalities in the endorsement of the Hidden Heroes initiative, raising awareness and support for the caregivers of our veterans. Arizona is known for its recognition of our veterans for the sacrifices they make in ensuring our country's freedoms and its programs like Hidden Heroes that help us also bestow those honors on their caregivers.
—Mayor Jenn Daniels, Town of Gilbert

I'm proud to support the recently approved Transportation Systems Plan 2035 developed by the Maricopa County Department of Transportation (MCDOT). This plan is a blueprint for long range transportation projects addressing the transportation needs of Maricopa County. At the heart of the plan is MCDOT's purpose to provide transportation connections that improve Maricopa County residents' lives.
—Maricopa County Supervisor Denny Barney



The City of Buckeye is proud to be an active member in the MAG Regional Council. Congratulations to MAG for 50 years of success and here's to many more accomplishments in the future.
—Mayor Jackie Meck, City of Buckeye

Regional Profile: Mayor Anna Tovar



Tolleson Mayor
Anna Tovar



Tolleson Mayor a Survivor

In the summer of 2001, a kindergarten teacher named Anna Tovar ran for the Tolleson City Council. She survived the election by a mere 12 votes. One month later, she was in a new, tougher fight for survival, when doctors diagnosed her with leukemia.

"My family's life was shattered in just one day," recalls Tovar. But with their support, she sought treatment quickly. Within 30 days, she had her first bone marrow transplant. Her brother was her donor.

"I woke up from my transplant on September 11th of 2001," recalls Tovar. "My first memory of waking up was the first plane hitting the World Trade Center."

Tovar, still coming out of anesthesia, could not grasp what was happening.

"My sister had turned on the TV, and I first thought it was a movie she was watching. I asked her, 'why are you watching this movie?' And her eyes were just...she was stunned and she didn't say anything to me. A few seconds later, a

nurse came in and said, 'We're being attacked.' And I thought, 'oh goodness, I think I woke up to an alternate universe.' I was still woozy from the drugs that were in me, and it felt very surreal."

Tovar said she would later come to focus on the "good" stories of 9-11, such as "the first responder heroes, a day of community service, the new babies that were born and the people like me who survived cancer."

The bone marrow transplant lasted 305 days before her body rejected it. She went into a clinical trial and her brother was again her donor for a stem cell transplant. Once more, she survived. And thrived.

"Since then, my stem cell transplant has allowed me to be a mom, a wife, and a public servant," says Tovar.

She left teaching but continued serving as a city council member and later vice mayor through 2009, when she was appointed as a state representative. She served two terms in the House, where she was Minority Whip. She was then elected to the state senate, where she served as Minority Whip, Minority Leader and chair of the Latino Caucus. Of all her achievements, she is most proud of the reinstatement of funds that allowed transplant survivors to have transplant benefits restored.



Anna Tovar being sworn in as a state representative in 2009.

"What has always led me is my passion to serve my community and to help out. Whether that be solving problems or trying to create a community that one can be proud of," says Tovar. "I love helping people, and that has always inspired me and helped me to be successful. And I don't take that for granted. I know that our constituents put a lot of trust in their elected officials. And I feel blessed to have earned their support."

In 2016, Tovar became the first woman to be elected mayor in Tolleson, and the first new mayor in 22 years. Tovar says her highest priority is attracting quality, high paying jobs—a goal she believes is possible through regional collaboration.

"I'm glad to have strong mayors in the West Valley who are committed to building communities for residents to live, work and play."

Tovar says she loves talking with and listening to constituents. She hosts a monthly "Coffee with the Mayor," putting to use the listening skills she honed as a youngster.



Mayor Tovar reads to a class of kindergartners.

Continued on page 5

Mayor Anna Tovar (continued)

“My family used to own a grocery store, so I was taught at a very early age the importance of customer service and listening to people’s needs and wants.”

Tovar believes her double fight with cancer puts politics in perspective.

“There are some issues that can be tumultuous and very divisive, but at the end of the day, as long as you’re not dying and everyone is okay, we can tackle these issues,” says Tovar. “We definitely have more in common than we think.”

In her spare time, her husband and two boys, ages 18 and 21, are her focus. “They’ve guided me through the roughest times of my life,” she says. “It doesn’t matter what we’re doing, as long as I’m with my family.”



Mayor Tovar with her husband Carlos and two boys Xavier (left) and J.C. (right).

Tovar credits earlier female trailblazers in her community for opening the door to becoming the city’s first female mayor. First, but not the last.

“One of my goals is to help inspire young ladies, young students. If they are interested in public service, I want to mentor and guide them so that they can replace me,” she says.

As to her future political career, Tovar says, “Since I’ve gone through this cancer journey, I don’t take anything for granted. I live for today. If the opportunity presents itself, I would love to continue serving. I don’t look too much into the future as far as what I want or what is going to happen. I do have aspirations and goals, but since cancer, I have the door wide open for opportunities that come my way.”

Final Four Security a Slam Dunk MAG Network a Key Player



Whether rooting for North Carolina or Gonzaga, Valley residents were still the winner when it came to public safety during the Final Four NCAA Championship game in April. The game and its associated events brought more than 100,000 people to the Valley. With the opening game of the Diamondbacks and other festivals also bringing people downtown, security was a major concern, resulting in the need for technology, manpower and other resources. An unheralded star player of the Final Four weekend was the MAG Regional Community Network (RCN).

RCN is a fiber optic network that links traffic cameras and other vital data sources among cities, and recently expanded to use the excess bandwidth to provide another conduit for 9-1-1 communications. During the busy Final Four weekend, the network supported the Phoenix Multi-Agency Coordination Center (MACC), which served as the emergency operations center. MACC staff were able to see live traffic cameras from the Arizona Department of Transportation, Phoenix, Valley Metro and other regional partners throughout the Final Four activities.

Among those staffing the MACC was MAG RCN Program Manager Ryan Gish, who was available to assist with troubleshooting of the traffic camera systems.



Valley Highways Seeing Less Litter

Elected Officials and Tourism Leaders Urge Spring Visitors to Keep Arizona Clean

If you drive our region's freeways, you may have noticed the landscape is cleaner than ever. No, it's not a desert mirage. New statistics released in March indicate that a litter education program is having a positive effect on the volume of highway litter throughout Maricopa County.

impact litter has on tourism and the economy. The event was held at Tempe Diablo Stadium, home of the Anaheim Angels spring training.

"Eliminating freeway litter is one way we can keep not only tourists, but businesses, coming back to our state," said Tempe Mayor Mark Mitchell. "It's critical that we get the message out about discouraging littering to everyone. Whether longtime residents or weekend visitors, it's up to all of us to keep Arizona clean and beautiful."

Arizona Office of Tourism Deputy Director Stephanie Dowling says the beautiful Sonoran desert is a major attraction for tourists.

"We all know Arizona has a stunning landscape, with picturesque mountains and gorgeous sunsets, which is why it is important to keep litter from cluttering the view," said Dowling. "The way visitors view Arizona is vitally important to their memorable experiences of our amazing state, and we urge both our visitors and residents to keep Arizona beautiful. Not only does it make an impression on our visitors, but it enhances the quality of life for our residents."

The perception of the Valley's litter problem has also improved as litter has decreased. In 2006, about 80 percent of residents believed highway litter was a big or moderate problem. That percentage dropped to 62 percent in 2016.

"Our industry is built on first impressions, and I applaud Arizona residents and visitors for the incredible strides made in eradicating freeway litter," said Kim Sabow, President and CEO of the Arizona Lodging & Tourism Association. "I will continue to champion our collective efforts, which have resulted in solutions that showcase the enviable environment we enjoy in Arizona, and that is a memory we want every business traveler and vacationer to take home and share."

Don't Trash Arizona is a result of Proposition 400, which provided funding for landscape maintenance, litter control and a new litter education campaign. On average, it costs taxpayers about \$3 million every year—about 150,000 hours of labor—to pick up trash from Maricopa County freeways alone. Beyond the monetary expense, litter also is dangerous, as about 125 people die in debris-related car accidents nationwide each year. 



The most recent statistics, mined from data collected by the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) maintenance crews, show that highway litter has decreased by about 50 percent since the 2006 launch of *Don't Trash Arizona*, a litter education program conducted by the Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG) in cooperation with ADOT.

Over the first 10 years of the program, ADOT crews have gone from collecting 130,000 bags of roadside trash in 2006 to about 65,000 bags in 2016. That means a drop from about 500 bags collected each weekday to just 250, and a decrease from 1.6 million pounds of trash each year to about 788,000 pounds.

"We have cut the amount of litter on our freeways in half," Phoenix Mayor and MAG Chair Greg Stanton said at a press conference to announce the new numbers. "We are seeing this improvement despite an increase in population and lane miles, and the same number of crews working on collection. The *Don't Trash Arizona* message is having an impact."

Stanton's comments came during a press conference held to discuss not only the new statistics, but the

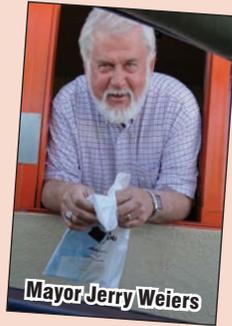


Presenters at the conference were (left to right): Phoenix Mayor Greg Stanton, Arizona Office of Tourism Deputy Director Stephanie Dowling, Arizona Lodging & Tourism Association President Kim Sabow, and Tempe Mayor Mark Mitchell.

Mayors Talk Trash

Hand Out Burgers to Help Prevent Freeway Litter

If a trip through the drive-thru window of Whataburger was on your plate in late April, it was a good bet you got a side of trash talk with your order. For the third year in a row, the popular fast-food restaurant partnered with **Don't Trash Arizona** to remind drivers to make responsible decisions about trash. Mayors from Glendale, Goodyear, Scottsdale and Tempe worked a daytime shift at



Mayor Jerry Weiers

Whataburger drive-thru windows to inform motorists about the dangers associated with freeway litter.



Mayor Georgia Lord

Glendale Mayor Jerry Weiers, Goodyear Mayor Georgia Lord, Scottsdale Mayor Jim Lane and Tempe Mayor Mark Mitchell greeted

hungry, unsuspecting drivers at the drive-thru windows of Whataburger locations in their respective cities on April 21, in celebration of Earth Month. While working, the four mayors discussed the harmful effects of litter and the simple steps drivers can take to prevent it.



Mayor Jim Lane

Along with handing them their order, the mayors gave Whataburger customers educational materials from **Don't**



Mayor Mark Mitchell

Trash Arizona. As a show of solidarity, each of the Valley's 18 Whataburger locations will display **Don't Trash Arizona** window clings at their drive-thru windows to remind drivers that littering comes with a \$500 fine. 

Get Ready for a Smoother Commute

Freeway Program Gets \$1.25 Billion Boost

Your commute is going to get easier. In the largest “rebalancing” effort in MAG history, the MAG Regional Council approved adding a record \$1.25 billion in new or returning Regional Freeway and Highway Program projects over the next 10 years. When added to projects under construction today and projects that were already in the program, the action means an overall boost of billions of dollars to the regional economy.

The ability to add the funding back into the program is a result of several factors, including higher revenue and cost savings that have been identified by MAG and the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT). When combined with current construction efforts, such as completing the I-10/Loop 303 traffic interchange in Goodyear and the Loop 202/South Mountain Freeway in Phoenix, the scenario represents a \$5 billion program for meeting current and future travel demand throughout the MAG region.

“This is a significant infusion of dollars that will create stable, higher-paying construction jobs in the Valley and have further ripple effects for suppliers and other retailers,” says MAG Chair and Phoenix Mayor Greg Stanton. “The economy will also benefit when people can get to their destinations quickly and more easily,” he said.

“MAG staff has worked closely with ADOT, the Federal Highway Administration and numerous MAG member agencies to identify

a total of 41 projects over the next 12 years,” added Transportation Policy Committee Chair John Giles. “These projects range from initial work on the new State Route 30 to help relieve I-10 congestion in the West Valley, to improving Loop 101 in the North Valley, to advancing construction on the State Route 24 Gateway Freeway in the East Valley,” he said. “Every area of the Valley will benefit, as will every motorist who uses the regional freeway system.”

Later this year, amendments are anticipated to be made to the *FY 2018-2022 MAG Transportation Improvement Program* and *2040 MAG Regional Transportation Plan*, both currently in draft form, to begin the eventual environmental, design, right-of-way, and construction phases of all projects in the program.

50th Anniversary
MARICOPA ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS
 1967-2017

DRAFT FY 2018-2022 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP)

ON THE MOVE
 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

February 2017

While the projects will mean improved commutes much sooner than planned, MAG staff noted that with so many projects coming at the same time, drivers may feel some construction pain. Coordinating the phasing of the projects and communicating with the public will be important components in keeping the system running smoothly while the improvements are made. 



Ending Domestic Violence: That's the Plan

If you or someone you love has been the victim of domestic violence, you know that it is a complex problem that is difficult to end. In April, the MAG Regional Council took steps in that direction by approving an update to the *MAG Regional Plan to End Domestic Violence*.

“Domestic violence is a very serious issue, especially when you consider that 40 percent of the population has been affected by it,” said Apache Junction Councilmember Robin Barker, chair of the MAG Regional Domestic Violence Council. “The plan contains 15 strategies to end domestic violence, and the Council will continue its work until the goals are achieved.”

The plan was updated for 2017 with a five-year scope. Goals include enhancing the process for

victim safety, holding abusers accountable, and leveraging limited funding.

One strategy of the plan is to provide cross training among all elements of the system—including law enforcement, the criminal justice system, and advocates—to save lives and ensure successful prosecution. Councilmember Barker said previous plans already have made a difference.

“Another important strategy has been the development of a central intake system for domestic violence shelters,” said Barker. “In 2014, the system was taking more than 300 calls per week. The central intake system screens all shelters for space availability so a domestic violence victim does not need to call each shelter individually.”

The plan strategies also include a review and revision of the protocol model for law enforcement. In February, the Regional Council approved revisions to the MAG Regional Misdemeanor Domestic Violence Protocol Model.

Apache Junction Police Chief Thomas Kelly told the Regional Council that the protocol model is used for investigative purposes and as a guideline for officers and 9-1-1 dispatchers in day-to-day situations.

“These best practices can help save the lives of officers and victims,” said Chief Kelly. “Questions asked by dispatchers can provide critical information to officers being sent to a volatile situation. They can also assist in identification of the suspect.”

Most of the MAG member agencies have developed a form to use when conducting a lethality assessment on a victim. Lethality assessments help officers determine if a victim is in imminent or future danger of being killed.

Chief Kelly called for further engagement of judges in regard to looking at the lethality assessment forms when setting a bond for a suspect. 

For more information, visit www.azmag.gov/dv/

For victim advocacy services, visit www.finddvservices.com.



MAG Moment

Mid-Phase Public Hearing

Members of the public attend an open house and public hearing March 14, 2017, to ask questions and provide comment on several key transportation plans. Comments included input on the draft FY 2040 Regional Transportation Plan, Draft FY 2018-2022 Transportation Improvement Program, and two draft transit programs of projects. Other comments were provided during public meetings, online, during small group presentations, and via e-mail and mail correspondence. All comments received during the Mid Phase Input Opportunity were responded to in a report provided to policymakers. A second opportunity will be provided during the Final Phase Input Opportunity that will be held from April 26 to May 25, 2017.



Export Program Highlights Diversity, Importance of Global Trade in the Region

What do aerospace, peanut butter, and high-end athletic conditioning all have in common? They are thriving businesses in our region that are exporting products and services all over the world. The Sun Corridor Export Recognition Program is celebrating the successes of 17 businesses in Maricopa, Pima and Pinal Counties. The goal of the program is to raise awareness about the critical role exporting plays in our economy and to stimulate growth in this area.

The program was launched by the Joint Planning Advisory Council (JPAC), led by elected officials and business leaders in the Sun Corridor. Phoenix Mayor Greg Stanton, chair of the Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG), championed the development of the export recognition program when he became chair of the MAG Regional Council.

“We have great products and services to offer the world, and the vast majority of the marketplace is outside of our borders, so we have to think and act in a more concerted way toward exporting,” says Mayor Stanton. “The better we do, the better off our economy is going to be.”

Research has found that growing the export economy gives residents the jobs they need, businesses the customer base they seek, and the region the competitive edge it requires to sustain itself. Nationally, only one percent of businesses export goods or services. Businesses that do export are more recession proof and successful. JPAC will honor businesses for their exporting achievements in May in honor of World Trade Month. The recognition ceremony is part of the Sun Corridor Economic Development for the Global Economy (EDGE) event.

In addition to the recognition ceremony, the event will feature speakers on international trade and the local businesses that are leading the way in exporting. Businesses like Able Aerospace Services are multi-million dollar enterprises with high-tech, complex products. Other businesses are small, family-owned efforts just emerging into the world of exporting—one farmer’s market at a time. The range of products



SUN CORRIDOR edge 2017

Economic Development for the Global Economy

and services being exported is diverse. The creativity and drive of the businesses to succeed is inspiring.

It is important to cultivate exporting in businesses of all sizes, and Mayor Stanton says small businesses have an important role to play.

“The future Fortune 500 companies are those small businesses that are there today. The vast majority of the job creation is being done in the small business marketplace and those businesses have a huge role in the international economy,” he says.

Peanut Butter Americano is one of the businesses starting small and dreaming big. Founded by a brother/sister team four years ago with no investments, this fledgling company now has an international audience in a niche market. Visitors to Arizona from Mexico and Canada are acquiring a taste for the company’s nut butters and the family is acquiring a taste for exporting. They plan to expand their reach through e-commerce platforms and spread their success worldwide.



Expanding globally requires special attention to cultural differences. ALTIS is the world’s leading private training company of Olympic athletes. Located in Mesa, the company attributes its success to embedding staff in other countries to develop the understanding and relationships needed to serve an elite international clientele. Past Olympian John Godina of ALTIS says the key to “doing international business is to listen, learn and adapt to cultural differences. This sounds simple, but in a service business, awareness is everything. Open ears and a thoughtful mind take businesses far in the international marketplace.”



The 14 partners below make the Sun Corridor Export Recognition Program possible. For more information visit: www.jpacAZ.org.



Joint Planning Advisory Council Partners



Sun Corridor Export Recognition Program Partners



Decade Three: 1987-1997 (cont. from page1)

“If we’d been able to pass in 1989 the Valtrans program, we’d be way ahead of the curve in terms of transportation, in terms of air quality, in terms of just a better place to live,” states Goddard, who called the defeat a valuable political lesson.

Proposition 400—Take One

Five years passed. Transportation supporters continued to believe that Maricopa County was dangerously behind the curve in moving cars and people. Proposition 400 went before voters in 1994. It sought to raise the sales tax by a half cent, with revenues divided between freeways and transit. It also would have extended the Prop 300 sales tax, scheduled to expire in 2005. Former Glendale Mayor Elaine Scruggs, who would chair MAG from 1996-1998 but who was already active on the Regional Council, recalls that competing interests stalled transportation progress.

“The Valley was still a place of a lot of conflict. (There were the) people who had been in Arizona and in the Valley for many, many years and really were resistant to change, and then there were all

the new people who had come, who were expecting transportation systems like they left in the major cities they came from,” says Scruggs. “And that’s not just the freeways, but also transit, which was pretty much nonexistent.”

Unfortunately, the controversies over higher costs, lower revenues and right-of-way issues remained a sore point in the press, and on November 8, 1994, Proposition 400 failed by a 6-5 ratio. “Lack of Trust Sank Freeway Levy,” and “Voter Trust on Use of Funds Was Issue,” were among the headlines following the election.

“By 1994, we had put a lot of management practices in place to restore the fiscal integrity of the program, but I don’t think by 1994 that progress really had been seen publicly yet,” explains Eric Anderson.

“When it comes to talking about funding for transportation, there’s a core group of people who are against growth,” adds Dennis Mitchem, a transportation advocate who led a group of proponents called Residents for Safe and Efficient Transportation. “They will always be against any tax that is going to go to transportation that will promote growth. And that is a fact to be dealt with.”

The Prop 400 defeat in 1994 led Governor Fife Symington to put forward his own freeway program. Among the freeways cut from the map were the Paradise Freeway, which would have run parallel to Camelback Road; and three West side freeways: the Estrella Freeway, which would later become Loop 303; Grand Avenue, which was then envisioned as a freeway; and the Agua Fria Freeway south

of Interstate 10. Mayor Scruggs vividly recalls standing in her kitchen when she received the call from Governor Symington’s chief of staff.

“I was just stunned. Just absolute shock. As were my colleagues across the Valley. It was such a setback,” says Mayor Scruggs. “And if you think back, we, the Valley, were in a time of such feverish growth, and our whole transportation system was so far behind the times anyway.”

Left on the map but unfunded were the Santan, Red Mountain, Sky Harbor and Hohokam freeways. The South Mountain Freeway was proposed as a toll road. The MAG Regional Council reluctantly approved the Governor’s plan.

MAG Splits From League

The defeat of Prop 400 had many taking a second look at MAG. Some were proposing a new agency with more authority. Mayor Scruggs believed it wasn’t a new agency that was needed, but rather that MAG needed to separate itself from the League of Arizona Cities and Towns. “Not because there was anything wrong with the League,” says Scruggs, but to ensure MAG’s survival at a time many were trying to take over the agency.

“There were competing sources from outside of MAG that wanted to get control of transportation planning and implementation in



Former Phoenix Mayor Terry Goddard



Former Glendale Mayor Elaine Scruggs



Governor Symington’s freeway program is discussed at an open house meeting in 1995.

Continued on page 11



the Valley. But who knew what was better (for our residents) than the mayors of the cities in the MAG region?” she questions. “So it was really a matter of needing to take charge, take control, and get things moving forward.”

In 1996, the Regional Council voted to make MAG a separate entity. Some MAG staff were housed with Maricopa County, others at the League. The split meant that all staff would be brought together under one roof. In 1997, MAG moved to its current location.



To further establish the credibility of MAG, Mayor Scruggs chaired a working group to “Re-engineer the MAG Policy Process.” Refinements included a more transparent and user-friendly agenda. Each agenda item would also include a “transmittal summary” to recap hefty technical material and show how previous committees had voted.

Finally, a Brighter Outlook

Prop 400 was defeated, but MAG was not. As the decade neared its end, the revenue picture began to improve. Transportation planners sharpened their pencils. A fiscal analysis conducted by Eric Anderson, who was then an economist contracted by MAG, refined many of the program assumptions. When the columns were tallied, another \$500 million was on the

table. Enough to add back in the Red Mountain and Santan freeways and to accelerate many other sections of the freeway by seven years, including the Loop 101.

“We talk about regionalism and it’s hard sometimes to be regional. It’s much easier to just worry about your little part of the world. But I have to say, all the mayors who served at that time really pulled together,” recalls Scruggs. “And we worked in friendship, camaraderie. Yes, there was competition, there’s always going to be competition, but it was really with an eye for how can we make the whole Valley work at once. What can we do to immediately have an impact? And that’s how we put those suddenly found dollars to work.”

Air Quality

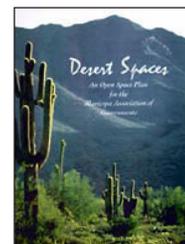
While things were in flux on the transportation side, MAG also continued its efforts in air quality. Congress passed the 1990 Clean Air Act Amendments imposing stringent air quality requirements. The region was classified as a Moderate Area for coarse particulates, or PM-10. MAG prepared a plan to address the new dust standard. After 1996, there were no violations of the eight-hour carbon monoxide standard or the one-hour ozone standard.



Retiring Scottsdale Councilmember Bill Soderquist, with MAG staff members Roger Herzog and Lindy Bauer, stack up the MAG air quality plans and documentation in 1994.

Desert Spaces

In a separate effort to protect the environment, in 1995, the MAG Regional Council adopted the *Desert Spaces Plan*. The Plan identified and recommended conservation and management strategies for natural resources and open spaces in Maricopa County. The Plan recognized that residents of the MAG region were at risk of losing access to mountains, scenic views, Sonoran desert, and riparian areas that define the natural character of the Valley of the Sun. More than 20 years later, the Desert Spaces Plan still serves as a framework for decision makers at all levels to establish and maintain a system of open spaces.



MAG 1995 Desert Spaces Plan

Other Achievements

There were many other achievements in the third decade. In 1992, MAG voted to allow a large portion of MAG federal construction funds to be allocated for completion of the freeways.

“This was a major commitment by the cities and towns and another great example of regionalism,” says MAG Executive Director Dennis Smith. “Instead of using the money for local transportation projects, the local governments recognized the importance of keeping our commitments with the voters for a connected freeway system.”

Through MAG, in 1995 the largest mid-decade special census in the nation was conducted. MAG hired 5,000 employees, working with the Census Bureau to count Maricopa County’s population.



Logo design contest winner for the 1995 Special Census.

In 1997, MAG entered the digital age by establishing its first Web site to provide information to the public. 

The story will continue in the next quarterly edition of MAGAZine, focusing on 1997-2007.



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A Quarterly Newsletter Focusing on Regional Excellence

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Summer 2017 Calendar

May

- 2nd 11:30 a.m. Economic Development Committee (Saguaro)
- 3rd 1:30 p.m. Standard Specifications and Details Committee (Ironwood)
- 9th 11:00 a.m. FY 2017 Final Phase and Air Quality Conformity Open House and Public Hearing (Saguaro)
- 9th 1:00 p.m. Street Committee (Ironwood)
- 10th 9:30 a.m. Intelligent Transportation Systems Committee (Chaparral)
- 10th 10:30 a.m. Systems Management and Operations Plan (Ironwood)
- 10th 12:00 p.m. Management Committee (Saguaro)
- 11th 1:30 p.m. Human Services Technical Committee (Chaparral)
- 15th 12:00 p.m. Regional Council Executive Committee (Ironwood)
- 16th 1:00 p.m. Bicycle & Pedestrian Committee (Ironwood)
- 16th 2:00 p.m. Transit Committee (Saguaro)
- 17th 9:30 a.m. Maricopa Regional Continuum of Care Committee (Ironwood)
- 17th 12:00 p.m. Transportation Policy Committee (Saguaro)
- 17th 2:00 p.m. Building Codes Committee (Ironwood)
- 18th 1:30 p.m. Human Services and Community Initiatives Committee (Chaparral)
- 18th 1:30 p.m. Technology Advisory Group (Ironwood)
- 22nd 1:30 p.m. Maricopa Regional Continuum of Care Board (Ironwood)
- 23rd 10:00 a.m. Transportation Safety Committee (Ironwood)
- 23rd 10:00 a.m. Population Technical Advisory Committee (Chaparral)
- 24th 11:30 a.m. Regional Council (Saguaro)
- 25th 10:00 a.m. Transportation Review Committee (Saguaro)

Parking is available under the building. Please ask for parking validation at the meeting. A transit ticket will be provided for anyone who purchased a transit ticket to attend a meeting.

June

- 1st 1:30 p.m. Air Quality Technical Advisory Committee (Saguaro)
- 1st 2:00 p.m. Regional Domestic Violence Council (Ironwood)
- 6th 11:30 a.m. Economic Development Committee (Saguaro)
- 7th 9:30 a.m. Intelligent Transportation Systems Committee (Chaparral)
- 7th 10:30 a.m. Systems Management and Operations Plan (Ironwood)
- 7th 1:30 p.m. Standard Specifications and Details Committee (Ironwood)
- 8th 10:00 a.m. Elderly and Persons with Disabilities Transportation Committee (Chaparral)
- 8th 1:30 p.m. Human Services Technical Committee (Chaparral)
- 13th 1:00 p.m. Street Committee (Ironwood)
- 14th 12:00 p.m. Management Committee (Saguaro)
- 19th 12:00 p.m. Regional Council Executive Committee (Ironwood)
- 20th 10:00 a.m. Solid Waste Advisory Committee (Ironwood)
- 20th 1:00 p.m. Bicycle & Pedestrian Committee (Ironwood)
- 20th 2:00 p.m. Transit Committee (Saguaro)
- 21st 9:30 a.m. Maricopa Regional Continuum of Care Committee (Ironwood)
- 21st 12:00 p.m. Transportation Policy Committee (Saguaro)
- 21st 2:00 p.m. Building Codes Committee (Ironwood)
- 26th 1:30 p.m. Maricopa Regional Continuum of Care Board (Ironwood)
- 27th 10:00 a.m. Population Technical Advisory Committee (Chaparral)
- 28th 4:00 p.m. Regional Council Annual Meeting followed by Passing of Gavel (Downtown Phoenix Hyatt Regency)
- 29th 10:00 a.m. Transportation Review Committee
- 29th 1:30 p.m. Air Quality Technical Advisory Committee (Saguaro)

July

- 5th 1:30 p.m. Standard Specifications and Details Committee (Ironwood)
- 11th 11:30 a.m. Economic Development Committee (Saguaro)*
- 11th 1:00 p.m. Street Committee (Ironwood)
- 12th 10:30 a.m. Systems Management and Operations Plan (Ironwood)
- 12th 12:00 p.m. Management Committee (Saguaro)*
- 12th 9:00 a.m. Regional Community Network (RCN) Working Group (Ironwood)
- 12th 9:30 a.m. Intelligent Transportation Systems Committee (Chaparral)
- 13th 1:30 p.m. Human Services Technical Committee (Chaparral)
- 17th 12:00 p.m. Regional Council Executive Committee (Ironwood)*
- 18th 1:00 p.m. Bicycle & Pedestrian Committee (Ironwood)
- 18th 2:00 p.m. Transit Committee (Saguaro)
- 19th 9:30 a.m. Maricopa Regional Continuum of Care Committee (Ironwood)
- 19th 12:00 p.m. Transportation Policy Committee (Saguaro)*
- 20th 10:00 a.m. Human Services and Community Initiatives Committee (Chaparral)
- 20th 1:30 p.m. Technology Advisory Group (Ironwood)
- 24th 1:30 p.m. Maricopa Regional Continuum of Care Board (Ironwood)
- 25th 10:00 a.m. Transportation Safety Committee (Ironwood)
- 26th 11:30 a.m. Regional Council (Saguaro)*
- 27th 1:30 p.m. Air Quality Technical Advisory Committee (Saguaro)
- 27th 10:00 a.m. Transportation Review Committee

*If necessary
All meetings, unless indicated otherwise, will be held in the conference rooms located in the MAG office on the 2nd floor of the building, 302 N. 1st Ave., Phoenix. The dates, times and locations of all meetings may change. Other committees not listed may meet during these months. For confirmation, call (602) 254-6300.