

**50<sup>th</sup>**  
*Anniversary*

*Fifty Years of  
Serving the Region*



**MARICOPA  
ASSOCIATION of  
GOVERNMENTS**



**1967–2017**

**Transportation • Air Quality • Population • Human Services • Regional Cooperation • Freeways  
Big Data • Environment • Economic Development • Desert Spaces • 9-1-1 • Transit • Public Works**



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MAG 50th Anniversary

# Foreword

Arizona has a long history of governance based on local control. In its territorial days, cities were created by enactment of the Arizona Territorial Legislature but had territorial charters, which gave them flexibility and allowed them to respond to their differing local concerns. When we entered statehood, the new Arizona Constitution authorized cities to adopt charters with voter approval, allowing city and town residents and their elected officials to make local decisions. Governments closest to the people could respond to specific needs in their communities. This was known as home rule.

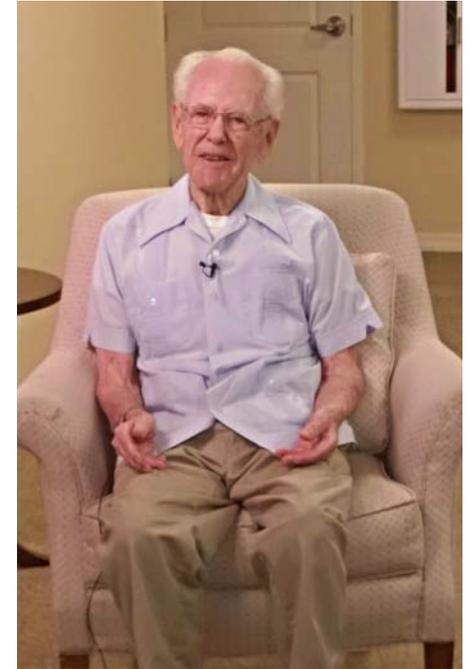
In the 1960s, when the federal government required states to set up a regional planning process to receive federal funding, many worried that local control would be lost. To ensure that local governments would maintain a voice in the process when the cities created the Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG), they housed the new organization at the League of Arizona Cities and Towns, with League staff performing MAG functions. Because of that relationship, there was a different mindset for MAG. Many of the concepts about how to deal with local governments were League concepts, much different from those of other planning agencies. Most planning agencies take an approach in which technical data drives the process. But planners tend to be unrealistic about politics. Our approach was that you need to consider both the data and the policy ramifications.

We were fortunate to have great elected officials throughout MAG's history who were willing to take risks. They were willing to take advice and counsel and then make decisions. These were the founders of MAG and that leadership continues today. Another important key to our success was that we created a Management Committee. This gave city, town, county and Native American Indian Community managers, who had great institutional knowledge about their communities, a voice in MAG decisions. This is another way in which MAG is unique from other planning agencies in the nation.

Finally, I credit the immense success of MAG to a decision I made at the time it was born: To hire people smarter than me. We have had incredible talent over the years. This has allowed MAG to continue to evolve as our region has grown and to best serve the needs of our Valley's four million residents.

I am honored to be a part of this incredible history.

**—Former MAG Secretary Jack DeBolske, who led MAG from 1967 to 1996**



Former MAG Secretary Jack DeBolske was interviewed for this book and a video series.

*Governments closest to the people could respond to specific needs in their communities.*

*-Former MAG Secretary Jack DeBolske*



MAG 50th Anniversary

1967-2017



Aerial view of I-17 in 1967, the year MAG was formed.

*The Maricopa Association of Governments touches many areas of our lives. From the roads we use, to the air we breathe, to working together to help our most vulnerable residents, MAG has been serving the region for 50 years.*

*MAG was formed on April 12, 1967. But the MAG story starts even earlier.*

## Pre-MAG

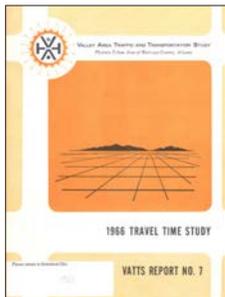
MAG was created in the wake of several events requiring regional cooperation. In 1960, Wilbur Smith and Associates completed the Major Street and Highway Plan for the Phoenix area. This plan contained the elements later included in the MAG Regional Freeway/Expressway Plan. Also in the early 1960s, local governments worked together on a successful multicity sewage treatment plant at 91st Avenue.

Two years later, the 1962 Federal Aid Highway Act required regional transportation planning. This resulted in the Valley Area Traffic and Transportation Study (VATTS) on March 12, 1965. The 1965 Federal Housing Act Amendments and 1966 Metropolitan Development Act also provided a legal and financial push for a full-fledged regional agency.

“It was the first time you essentially had a federal edict: If you want federal money for highways then you have to cooperate with the local officials,” recalls former MAG Staff Coordinator Ken Driggs.

MAG founder and former MAG Secretary Jack DeBolske, who led MAG from 1967 to 1996, puts it this way: “They required us to set up a planning process where you could go two ways: you could turn it over to the bureaucrats and set up a planning structure that is out of the control of cities, or you could set up a structure that would be under the control of local government.”

Local governments chose the latter. In a December 1966 memorandum to city and town clerks, DeBolske wrote, “Cities and towns, as well as the county, must cooperate with one another in order to solve regional problems and to maintain a semblance of local control over their own affairs.”



One of the reports from the Valley Area Traffic and Transportation Study (VATTS)



Former MAG Staff Coordinator Ken Driggs

*Cities and towns, as well as the county, must cooperate with one another in order to solve regional problems and to maintain a semblance of local control over their own affairs.*

*-Former MAG Secretary Jack DeBolske*



# Decade 1: 1967-1977



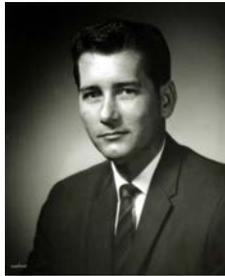
MAG's first decade established the agency's governance and many areas of regional focus, including transportation, environmental programs, public works and human services.

	<p>The Maricopa Association of Governments is formed on April 12, 1967.</p>	<p>1967</p>	<p>Bud Tims, then Mayor of Scottsdale, is elected MAG's first chair.</p>	
	<p><i>MAG Regional Review</i> is the organization's first published newsletter.</p>	<p>1968</p>	<p>First standing committees address issues of water, solid waste, public works and air pollution.</p>	
	<p>MAG establishes a criminal justice committee.</p>	<p>1969</p>	<p>MAG begins serving as a clearinghouse for projects requesting federal assistance.</p>	
	<p>Regional Planning Districts formed by Executive Order of Governor Williams.</p>	<p>1970</p>	<p>MAG's boundaries are expanded to include all of Maricopa County.</p>	
	<p>MAG participates in the Minorities in Management Program.</p>	<p>1971</p>	<p>MAG publishes its first traffic count map.</p>	
	<p>Five-year major street and highway plan is approved by the Regional Council.</p>	<p>1972</p>	<p>Criminal justice and flood control programs are focus of local news.</p>	
	<p><i>Interstate-10 Study</i> stirs controversy in Phoenix where voters reject alignment.</p>	<p>1973</p>	<p>MAG is designated as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Maricopa Region.</p>	
	<p>MAG cooperates with Valley Forward to prepare the first Rio Salado report.</p>	<p>1974</p>	<p>Charles Salem, then Mayor of Goodyear, becomes MAG's second chair.</p>	
	<p>MAG begins <i>Land Use and Transportation Reevaluation Study</i>.</p>	<p>1975</p>	<p>MAG is designated by the Governor as the Water Quality Planning Agency.</p>	
	<p>The MAG Regional Council approves the Criminal Justice Plan.</p>	<p>1976</p>	<p>Arizona DES contracts with MAG to produce a <i>Regional Human Services Plan</i>.</p>	





Original MAG Logo



Former Scottsdale Mayor B.L. "Bud" Tims, MAG Chair, 1967-1974

# MAG Is Born

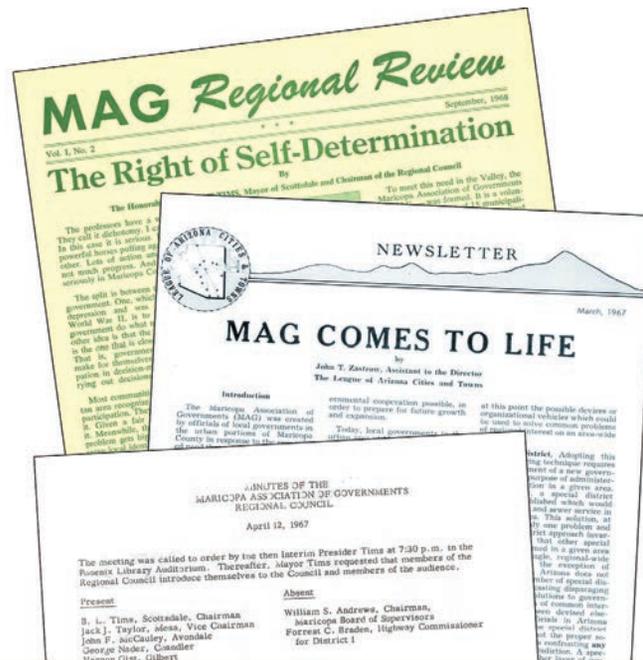
MAG was formed in 1967 by concurrent resolutions from its 15 original member agencies to foster regional cooperation and address regional problems. On April 12, 1967, the Regional Council was called to order at 7:30 p.m. The Regional Council elected Scottsdale Mayor B.L. "Bud" Tims as chair, who indicated that there were "many areas of common interest and concern to Valley cities" in the metropolitan area. He noted interests such as highways, airports, utility sources and commercial centers.

The council identified "matters of water, air pollution and solid waste disposal" of primary concern, and established standing committees to deal with each area. The members also called for a study on standardizing building materials and public works specifications. The first year also saw the expansion of topics addressed by MAG to include library services, law enforcement and criminal justice standards.



Reprinted Photo by Kirk Larsman

**VALLEY LEADERS** — B. L. Tims, Scottsdale mayor, third from left, was elected chairman last night of the Maricopa Association of Governments. Among other officials attending were, from left, Vernon Gist, councilman from Gilbert; John M. McCauley, Avondale mayor, and George Nader, Chandler mayor.



# Maricopa's Municipalities Organize

Groundwork for cooperation among Valley cities and towns on such matters as zoning, construction practices and irrigation negotiations was laid last night at the first meeting of the Maricopa Association of Governments.

B. L. Tims, Scottsdale mayor, was elected chairman of the group and Jack J. Taylor, Mesa mayor, was elected vice-chairman at the meeting in the Phoenix main library auditorium. The association is composed of representatives of incorporated governments in the Phoenix area.

COMMITTEES were appointed to study common water, sewage and air pollution problems and make recommendations at future meetings.

Phoenix Mayor Graham pointed out that cooperation among some Valley cities already had saved taxpayers money by establishing common standards for construction materials used in street paving.

While emphasizing the need for coordination among municipalities, he said, "I would like to make clear I'm not advocating metropolitan government.

"WHAT WE NEED is cooperative government on the metropolitan level."

Graham said the association could prove mutually beneficial in dealings with the Salt River Project on over legal rights to used irrigation water. The City of Phoenix is currently involved in a legal dispute with the SRP on this subject.

He said he hoped all the cities using SRP water would stick together and share information on their dealings.

"If we don't, we'll all get the short end of the stick," he said.

The Arizona Republic, April 1967

*Mayor Tims indicated that there were many areas of common interest and concern to Valley cities.*

*-From the minutes of the first Regional Council meeting on April 12, 1967, chaired by former Scottsdale Mayor B.L. "Bud" Tims*

# The League Connection

Due to concerns over local control, MAG was viewed with extreme suspicion, with some going so far as to call it a “communist conspiracy.” To address concerns, the elected officials had the League of Arizona Cities and Towns assign staff to perform MAG functions.

“They didn’t even trust the Maricopa Association of Governments to be formed unless it was part of the League of Arizona Cities and Towns,” says MAG Executive Director Dennis Smith. “I was actually a League employee and one of the founding principles of the League was that the unit of government closest to the people needs to be in charge.”

DeBolske reassured the agencies that “the proposed association will not take the place of any local government” and that the association was “voluntary and advisory.”

“The only reason MAG could exist was Jack DeBolske,” recalls Smith. “They trusted Jack. He always put the elected officials out front, and they responded to that.”

Former Goodyear Mayor Charles Salem, MAG’s second chair, recalls that the cities worked well together.

“The thing I enjoyed about MAG at the time is we really had a nice close-knit family of all of the cities and it was a very congenial group,” says Salem. “Jack DeBolske was a very good leader and very respected, and I think he made it happen.”

In 1975, MAG faced unexpected political hurdles over the League staffing arrangement. Several federal agencies threatened to withhold funding unless MAG hired an independent staff. With the help of Arizona Congressman John Conlan, MAG was given a chance to prove it could do the job. In a letter to Salem in 1975, Conlan wrote, “This is the only such arrangement anywhere in the nation, so I hope MAG can set a precedent and serve as a model of how to avoid unnecessary bureaucracy.”

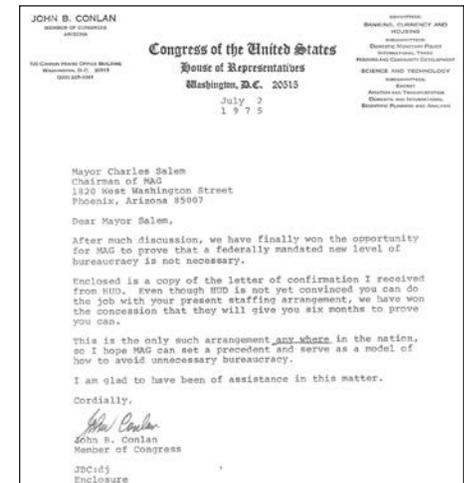
Jack DeBolske also brought another League-inspired model to MAG. A strong proponent of the council/manager form of government, DeBolske created a Management Committee, made up member agency administrators, to provide recommendations to the Regional Council, the main governing body of MAG. To this day, only Arizona Councils of Governments use this model.



Former MAG Secretary  
Jack DeBolske



Former Goodyear  
Mayor Charles Salem,  
MAG Chair, 1974-1980

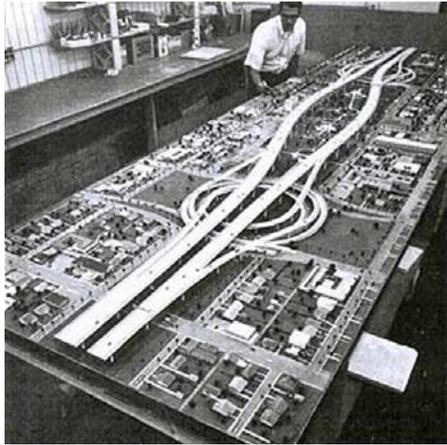


Letter from U.S. Representative John B. Conlan

***The only reason MAG could exist was Jack DeBolske. They trusted Jack. He always put the elected officials out front, and they responded to that.***

*-MAG Executive Director Dennis Smith*





Helicoil design of the proposed Papago Freeway.

# Transportation Milestones

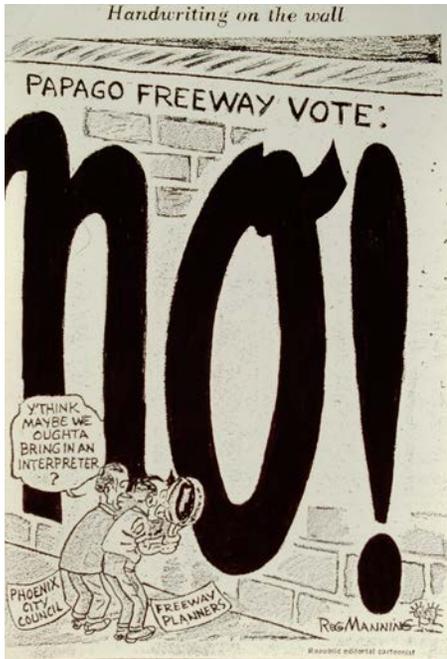
In 1968, the Papago Loop was accepted for the federal Interstate Highway System. But the project faced extreme opposition, much of which came from the state's largest newspaper.

"They just pounded us editorially, and they wound up killing that freeway, putting us in a very controversial position," recalls Staff Coordinator Ken Driggs.

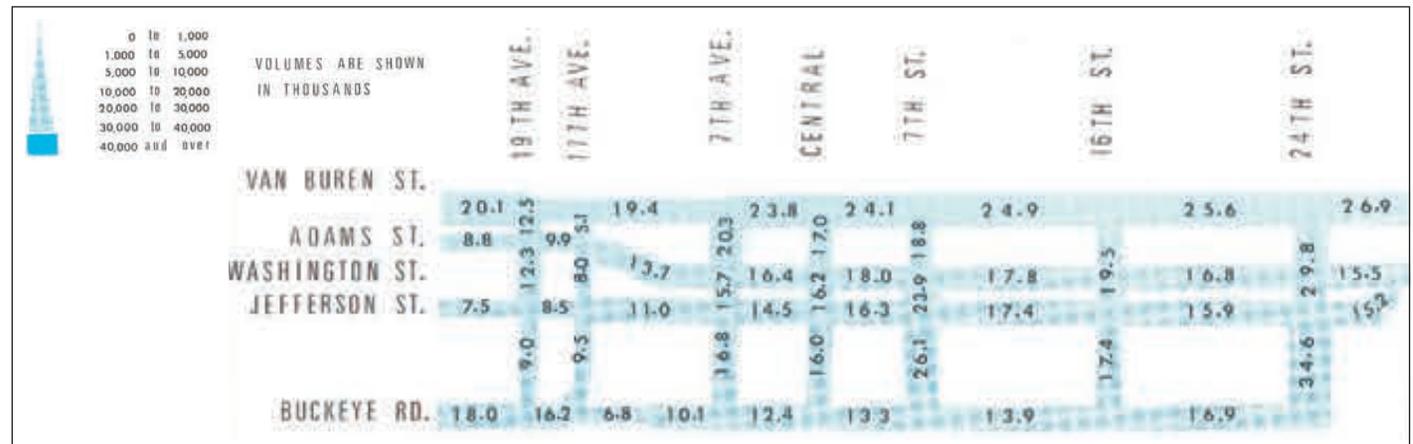
In 1973, in what was called an "advisory referendum," Phoenix voters rejected the 17-mile, eight-lane Papago Freeway. A *New York Times* article dated May 13, 1973, states, "The vote came as a severe setback to city and state transportation planners and elected officials who have been pressing for the Papago Freeway as the cornerstone of a 200-mile freeway grid for Maricopa County, which includes Phoenix."

That same year, under requirements set by the Federal Transportation Act, the governor designated MAG as the Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Maricopa region. In 1975, MAG began a major reevaluation of the transportation plan and regional development plan. In 1977, as MAG ended its first decade of service, public hearings were held on the revised plan.

In 1971, MAG published its first traffic count map, which it continues to produce every three to four years.



Editorial cartoon from *The Arizona Republic*



MAG's first traffic count map was published in 1971. The inset from the map (above) shows traffic counts in the Phoenix downtown area.

*They just pounded us editorially, and they wound up killing that freeway, putting us in a very controversial position.*  
 -Former MAG Staff Coordinator Ken Driggs

## Criminal Justice

In 1969, MAG established a criminal justice committee. Under the chairmanship of Glendale Mayor Max Klass, the *Criminal Justice Plan* put forth major regional initiatives that included improving youth rehabilitative services, combating drug abuse, expanding law enforcement training, and improving judicial processes.

Later, with the establishment of the Federal Law Enforcement Administration, MAG was responsible for planning and administering law enforcement funds. This effort was led by Scottsdale Councilmember Heinz Hink, who chaired the MAG Criminal Justice Coordinating Committee.

## Water Quality/Solid Waste Planning

In the early 1960s, Gilbert, Glendale, Mesa, Tempe, Scottsdale and Youngtown each contracted with Phoenix for the implementation of a multicity wastewater plan. Phoenix provided the management, operation and maintenance of the regional system. When the federal government called for regional wastewater plans in 1968, Phoenix agreed to conduct and pay for such planning to ensure continued federal assistance. In 1972, the Federal Water Pollution Control Act Amendments mandated that Water Quality Management Planning be conducted "border to border" across the nation. MAG accepted designation by the Governor and Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) as the Areawide Water Quality Management Planning Agency for Maricopa County. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers provided technical assistance.

In 1968, MAG conducted the first comprehensive solid waste needs assessment, concluding that the preferred approach was disposal in local landfills due to the amount of readily available land.

### "CITY TALK" HIGHLIGHTS MAG PROGRAMS



Mayor Max Klass of Glendale, Chairman, MAG Criminal Justice Coordinating Committee, and Al Brown, Director, Arizona State Justice Planning Agency, compare notes for the televised "City Talk" program which highlighted the MAG Criminal Justice program.



*After considerable discussion, it was the consensus of the Regional Council that the matters of water, air pollution and solid waste disposal were of primary concern.*

*-From the minutes of the first official MAG Regional Council meeting, April 12, 1967.*





## Human Services

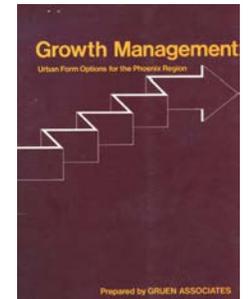
Just as other major issues require a regional approach, early MAG leaders recognized that human services issues also needed to be addressed regionally. In 1968, MAG designated the Health Planning Council as the body responsible for health planning in Maricopa County. In 1973, MAG became the designated planning agency for programs for older adults. Unfortunately, in 1974, federal regulations thwarted MAG's attempts to subcontract planning activities focused on aging. MAG recommended that the Community Council be the planning entity for elderly programs and services. In 1976, the Arizona Department of Economic Security contracted with MAG to produce a Regional Human Services Plan. It asked MAG to identify social services priorities to be funded by \$5.1 million in federal Title XX funding. In 1977, the Area Agency on Aging was established, while MAG's contract to plan for social services funding was extended through 1980.



Aerial view of Phoenix, 1972.  
Photo credit: Courtesy of the U.S. National Archives and Records and Records Administration

## Land Use

In 1973, MAG developed the Composite Land Use Plan compiled from local land use plans. In 1974, MAG cooperated with the Valley Forward Association to prepare one of the early proposals to improve the Salt River channel. This proposal was called the Rio Salado Report. In 1975, the *Growth Management Study* identified critical issues of urban form options and provided a framework for a regional evaluation process.



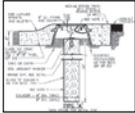
*Arizona had a very fledgling social service delivery system. The regional approach was really the only way we could begin to have a seamless network that would really make sense for people who needed those services.*

*-Former MAG Human Services Director Karen Novachek*

# Decade 2: 1977-1987

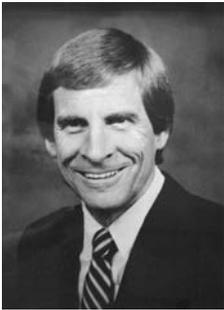


The second decade of MAG saw major initiatives in transportation, air quality, and human services. These efforts would profoundly shape the future of the organization, as well as the entire region.

	Clean Air Act Amendments require regions to develop plans if they fail to meet national standards.	1977	Governor's Executive Order authorizes MAG to develop official population projections.	
	MAG publishes first <i>Uniform Standard Specifications and Details for Public Works Construction</i> .	1978	MAG is designated as the Lead Air Quality Planning Agency.	
	The first <i>Regional Airport System Plan</i> is approved by the Regional Council.	1979	MAG is designated as the Solid Waste Planning Agency.	
	MAG Human Services Planning Office established.	1980	The <i>Section 405 Transition Plan</i> identifies policies and improvements needed for paratransit programs.	
	MAG conducts an analysis of the 1980 Salt River flood that closed 19 of 21 river crossings.	1981	MAG assumes responsibility for rideshare program.	
	A revised carbon monoxide plan is adopted by MAG to reduce auto emissions.	1982	Transportation system management studies are designed to improve capacity.	
	MAG initiates a series of subregional area studies to identify new freeway/expressway routes.	1983	MAG publishes the <i>Regional Street and Highway Plan</i> .	
	MAG forms the Outer Loop Financing Task Force to find alternatives for building the Loop 101.	1984	First plan to address ozone pollution in the region is released.	
	MAG develops Regional Freeway Plan. Prop 300 passes. 1985 Special Census is conducted.	1985	MAG spearheads implementation of the region's 9-1-1 system.	
	Collection of the half-cent sales tax for transportation improvements begins.	1986	The State Legislature mandates that MAG develop an extensive air quality plan.	



## Transportation Planning



Former Glendale Mayor George Renner, MAG Chair, 1982-1984

The raging controversy over the Papago Freeway Inner Loop design, which had led to a defeat by voters of an “advisory referendum” in 1973, had left MAG transportation planners reeling. A voracious campaign by the state’s largest newspaper against the freeway seemed insurmountable. In a 1982 summary of MAG’s history, MAG Staff Coordinator Ken Driggs wrote: “The I-10 issue hit MAG like a ton of bricks.”

“The hard ‘No!’ reaction to freeways really kind of stopped anything meaningful from happening for a long period of time,” recalls former Glendale Mayor George Renner, who served as MAG chair from 1982-84. “Of course, the growth had just exploded in the ‘70s, and moving into the ‘80s, it was apparent that we had to have a means to move people and goods around the Valley.”

It was time to regroup. A reevaluation study was initiated that included a Regional Advisory Committee of 18 elected officials and citizen representatives, and a Technical Advisory Committee that consisted of transportation and planning staff from each MAG member agency and selected state agencies. In 1977, public hearings were held on a revised regional plan. On January 4, 1978, the MAG Regional Council adopted the plan, which identified the Outer Loop (today known as Loop 101), the Squaw Peak Parkway (today’s Piastewa Freeway), the Paradise Freeway (later removed from the plan) and the East Papago (I-10).

### Political Pulse

The needle was moving, but it would take cooperation from many, including the business community. Dennis Mitchem, a Phoenix businessman who served on several transportation advisory boards, chaired the campaign known as “Residents for Safe and Efficient Transportation (RESET).” Mitchem said the naysayers were wrong in thinking that the residents who voted against the referendum were opposed to freeways. What they were really opposed to was the freeway design, which took the freeway 100 feet in the air over neighborhoods.

“People thought they were voting against a freeway design of Interstate 10, and it was interpreted by the politicians and the press as being a vote against freeways,” recalls Mitchem.

“There was a sense that Phoenix didn’t want to grow up to be (Los Angeles),” recalls journalist Bob Robb, who at the time worked for the Phoenix Chamber of Commerce. “Well, we were growing up anyway, and the only thing worse than being L.A. with the freeways would be to be L.A. without the freeways.”



1985 photo of freeway congestion in the region

*The only thing worse than being L.A. with the freeways would be to be L.A. without the freeways.*

*-Journalist Bob Robb*



Mitchem says the RESET group had another revelation. While some opposed freeways because they objected to growth, others objected only because they wanted more transit built first. Getting transportation advocates on the same page was crucial.

“By the time we got to the countywide tax vote, we concluded that we had to be broader than just freeways, we had to include transit in a meaningful way,” recalls Mitchem. The new plan included creation of a regional transit planning agency.

## Transportation Funding Challenges

The next hurdle was funding.

“The cities at that time decided to go with a property tax to build the Outer Loop,” says DeBolske. “We had to get something moving. The only way to do that was to come up with an idea that was something we could control, because we couldn’t get anything out of the Legislature, because they wouldn’t pass enough gas tax money,” says DeBolske.

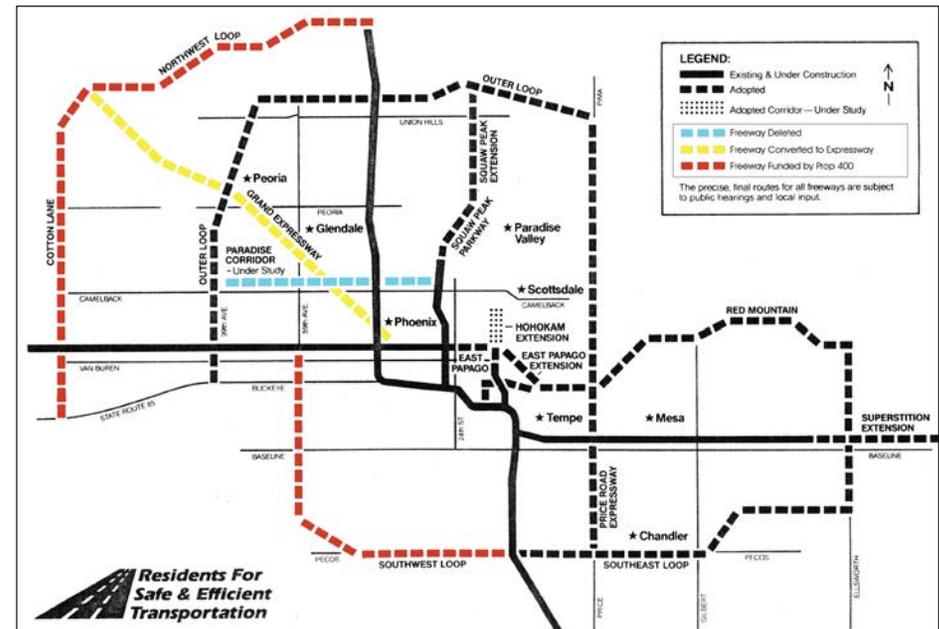
But the property tax plan hit a roadblock from the business community.

“We didn’t like the proposal, both because of its funding source—the property tax in those days fell hugely disproportionately on the business community—and we didn’t like the idea of just building the Outer Loop and not building the entire system,” recalls Robb. “So the Phoenix Chamber approached MAG and asked MAG to engage in a process of examining options.”

The groups met in the basement of the League building.

“It was mostly a process of elimination,” says Robb. “The need was so large in terms of the capital expenditure required that no other funding source other than the sales tax could do the job at a politically acceptable level and within an acceptable period of time.”

Ken Driggs recalls the meeting in which he came away convinced that a sales tax was the answer. “I think it was on Columbus Day in 1984. They said, ‘we want you to take a look at this.’ And they put it on a computer



The Regional Freeway Plan was adopted by the MAG Regional Council in 1978.

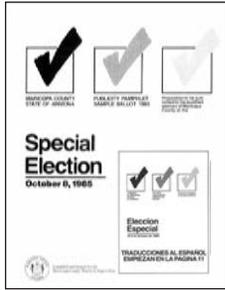


Journalist Bob Robb recalls how funding the freeway plan was decided.

*By the time we got to the countywide tax vote, we concluded that we had to be broader than just freeways, we had to include transit in a meaningful way.*

*-Dennis Mitchem, Phoenix businessman and transportation advocate*





Prop 300 election pamphlet

and they started punching up some numbers, and I always said I've never seen so many zeroes after millions. And then it was billions of dollars that a half-cent sales tax would bring in for transportation."

But Jack DeBolske had an even higher priority: keeping local control of the transportation dollars. He also remembers the meeting with Bob Robb.

"His advice was, let's compromise. Let's go for a sales tax. We can raise enough money with a sales tax. I looked at my hole card, and said I would recommend we go with a sales tax, too, if you go with us controlling it. Keep the Legislature out of it. And it should be used only for building the freeways, not maintaining them," recalls DeBolske.

The half-cent sales tax for transportation went before voters on October 8, 1985.

### Overwhelming Support



When the final ballots were tallied, Proposition 300 was an overwhelming success, with a whopping 72 percent voting in favor. Mayor Renner recalls the sense of accomplishment he felt during a post-election celebration at the Westward Ho.

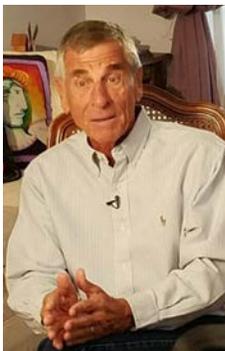
"We prevailed with a cooperative effort that involved private sector, public sector and an overwhelming amount of support from the public," he says. "It pushed the Valley into a direction that was 'no looking back' as to how important a good transportation system is and how absolutely vital."

It also was a watershed moment for the Arizona Department of Transportation.

"Once the vote succeeded, we began a true partnership with the state and then-Director Charlie Miller," recalls DeBolske. "For the first time, the agency had money with which to build a freeway system, and the system they built became state-of-the art."

For Renner, who had also presided over contentious negotiations to determine the Outer Loop alignment, it was a victory that still comes to mind when he drives Valley freeways.

"You just have one of those flashbacks that, gosh, this wasn't here, none of this existed 30 years ago. Credit deserves to go to literally thousands of people who worked over the years to cause it to happen."



George Renner today, looking back on the Prop 300 process.

*We prevailed with a cooperative effort that involved private sector, public sector and an overwhelming amount of support from the public.*

*-Former Glendale Mayor George Renner*

## Other Transportation Achievements

The decade saw other achievements in transportation. MAG assumed responsibility for the rideshare program in 1981, and Proposition 300 paved the way for the creation of the Regional Public Transportation Authority. The first phase of the *Regional Transit Plan* was approved in 1982.

In another transportation arena, aviation, MAG created the first regional airport system plan in 1979. These discussions would serve as an early test of MAG's foundation of cooperation, when plans by the City of Phoenix to expand the Phoenix-Litchfield Airport were strongly opposed by the City of Goodyear. Despite threats from some to pull out of MAG during one contentious Regional Council meeting, in the end the Regional Council removed the expansion plans and urged the two cities to work it out separately.

"You have to have certain masochistic tendencies to want do this job of bringing people together," acknowledges former MAG Secretary Jack DeBolske. "It's very hard. You've got local elected officials that are concerned about their community, but you are asking them to be regional." To put it in perspective, DeBolske coined the term "regionable," referring to the need to be both regional and reasonable.



MAG created the first regional airport system plan in 1979. Sky Harbor Airport pictured above.

## Environmental Programs

The Clean Air Act Amendments of 1977 required regions to develop air quality plans if they failed to meet national standards in order to receive any federal funds. MAG was designated as the lead air quality planning organization for this region on February 7, 1978. MAG began its important role of developing plans to reduce the three serious pollutants of carbon monoxide, ozone, and dust (then referred to as total suspended particulates).

"We were appalled that the federal government could be able to come in here and tell us in Arizona what we needed to do," recalls Mayor Renner. "But, slowly but surely, people came to understand that the brown cloud was real and it was something that had to be dealt with. And whether you agreed or disagreed with the requirement, you had to have an air quality plan," he says. "It was again a time of figuring out a way to bring the cities, the county, and the state together in dealing with an issue that we never had been forced to deal with before."



The brown cloud over the region.

*The brown cloud was real and it was something that had to be dealt with.*  
-Former Glendale Mayor George Renner





Former Phoenix Mayor Terry Goddard, MAG Chair, 1986-1988

MAG's first carbon monoxide plan was completed in 1982. But that plan was later disapproved as a result of a lawsuit filed by the Arizona Center for Law in the Public Interest against the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). "We had the lawsuit against the EPA that ended up making MAG get the cities involved in taking serious steps to improve our air quality," recalls former Phoenix Mayor Terry Goddard.

In 1986, MAG worked with the State Legislature on a bill that required MAG to prepare a comprehensive air quality plan. MAG member agencies then implemented measures outlined in the plan. "I think the quality of air we have today stems directly from the early steps that we took in the 1980s," says Goddard.

In 1979, MAG was designated by the Governor as the Solid Waste Planning Agency. Landfills were the main means of dealing with trash, but by the late 1980s, "reduce, reuse, recycle" was introduced as an important way to reduce the amount of material heading to landfills.

## Human Services Planning

In 1980, MAG found itself in a new planning role with the creation of the MAG Human Services Planning Office. In 1975, Congress had passed the first Social Services Block Grant to provide more proportionate funding across the United States. The Eastern states had sophisticated social services programs, but Western states were falling behind.

"Arizona had a very fledgling social service delivery system," recalls Karen Novachek, the first director of the MAG Human Services Planning Office. "We had no Community Information and Referral. We had no publicly funded child care. Services for domestic violence were not even considered. A few services were in place for children. Almost no services for elderly persons. No services for people with disabilities. So all of a sudden, Arizona had this windfall for funding and didn't know how to spend it. It was a blank canvas in some respects."

Novachek jokes that in the beginning, "MAG didn't know what to do with us, we were social workers, and I think they were suspicious of us," she says. "Jack DeBolske was always frustrated with us and he would say, 'You're generating too much paper!'"

But she adds that it was the relationship Jack DeBolske had with then Department of Economic Security (DES) Director Bill Jamieson that allowed MAG to take responsibility for setting the priorities for a portion of Title XX funding.



Former MAG Human Services Director Karen Novachek

*We had the lawsuit against the EPA that ended up making MAG get the cities involved in taking serious steps to improve our air quality.*

*-Former Phoenix Mayor Terry Goddard*



“DES actually reached out to the Councils of Governments and said ‘help.’ They could have kept the money all inside and made decisions about how that money should be spent,” says Novachek. “But they realized, I think in part because of Jack DeBolske, that they were not equipped internally or had no infrastructure externally to be able to adequately assess what the needs were. They felt that the COGs had their fingers on the pulse of their communities and they would be a good partner to fill in that blank canvas.”

In 1982, a key priority surfaced during the November-December holiday period. Temperatures were near freezing. A “tent city” of homeless people sprung up near downtown Phoenix.

“They were trying to stay warm with burning anything they could find, trying to stay fed with whatever food they could find,” recalls former MAG Human Services Manager Carol Kratz. “Everybody was just horrified; here is this this very visual image of people who are experiencing something so totally different than what others were experiencing at home for the holidays.”

Former Phoenix Councilmember Calvin Goode was one of those startled by the tent city. “I start coming down Washington Street, and I noticed some folks were building some fires there at 9th Avenue and Jefferson,” he says. “So I stopped and I said, ‘Hey, what do you need?’ They said, ‘We need some water and we need some port-a-johns.’”

Goode asked Jack Tevlin, a former MAG staffer who had begun working for the City of Phoenix, for help. Tevlin ordered water and sanitation brought to the site. The pair was later criticized for spending taxpayer dollars without council approval.

“I said, ‘I didn’t spend any money, I just asked what could we do, and certainly, if the city is not willing to pay for it, I will pay for it,’” recalls Goode. “I think we have an obligation and a responsibility to provide safe, sanitary, decent housing for people.” But in the end, Goode says the greater good prevailed. MAG soon got involved and regional homeless planning began. The site later became home to the Central Arizona Shelter Services.

“The need is there, perhaps even greater now than it was back then, but MAG always responded to our concerns,” says Goode.

“I think the big accomplishment of that era was that MAG played a pivotal role in helping form a robust delivery system,” adds Novachek. “We were able to begin to address community needs that had gone unserved.”



A homeless campground named “Tent City” captured in this newspaper photo from 1985.



Former Phoenix Councilmember Calvin Goode

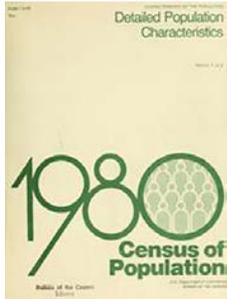


The Central Arizona Shelter Services (CASS) building now stands on the site of the former “Tent City.”

*I think we have an obligation and a responsibility to provide safe, sanitary, decent housing for people.*

*-Former Phoenix Councilmember Calvin Goode*





## Population Projections

The first Arizona Executive Order calling for the development of an official set of population projections was issued by Governor Raul Castro in 1977. Other such executive orders followed. MAG is required to develop an official set of population estimates annually and official population projections approximately every three years. MAG conducted a Special Census in the region in 1985, and continues to work on a regional basis to ensure the success of each decennial census and periodic special censuses.

## 9-1-1 System Implemented



Dispatcher Carol Mero in Mesa's first 9-1-1 center, part of the regional system implemented in 1985.

Another MAG program that forever changed the lives of Maricopa County residents was the implementation of a regional 9-1-1 system in 1985. MAG was an instrumental player in bringing the system to the Valley, after being told it couldn't be done.

"No one believed that we could weave a successful system through 24 cities and towns, three Native American communities and Maricopa County," recalls Tom Sawyer, former Phoenix assistant fire chief and former chair of the 9-1-1 Technical Advisory Committee. However, relying on technical expertise from MAG member agencies, the committee developed electronic switching capabilities where calls could be received within each city. "Regional cooperation and technology made it work. It was a model system then. It remains a model system today," says Sawyer.

The system went live on September 9, 1985.

"We worked with the Corporation Commission in order to fund it, and it was the best 9-1-1 system in the United States when we cut that system over in 1985," adds MAG Executive Director Dennis Smith. "But it was really a testament to how things are done at MAG. You get the best run cities in the world to send you staff members to solve a problem that some people think can't be done. It could be done and it is saving lives every day here in the Valley."



*Regional cooperation and technology made it [the 9-1-1 System] work. It was a model system then. It remains a model system today.*

*-Former Phoenix Assistant Fire Chief Tom Sawyer*

# Decade 3: 1987-1997



MAG's third decade included two transportation election defeats, resulting in the removal of several freeways from the Regional Transportation Plan. But the decade ended on a high note, when a fiscal analysis refined cost assumptions, putting \$500 million back on the table, adding most of the deleted freeways back into the Plan and accelerating many sections by seven years.

	New cost estimates on the Regional Freeway System are higher than originally estimated.	1987	Freeway cost increases force MAG and ADOT to reevaluate scope of projects and timelines.	
	ValTrans, a proposed regional transit system, is unveiled by the Regional Public Transportation Authority.	1988	Construction of the Regional Freeway System is underway.	
	Voters reject the ValTrans regional transit project.	1989	MAG publishes the <i>Regional Development Summary 1989</i> report.	
	Congress imposes stringent air quality requirements with the passage of the 1990 Clean Air Act Amendments.	1990	MAG develops Enhanced Notification Procedure to share planning information.	
	Regional Freeway System performance audit clarifies MAG's role in planning freeways.	1991	MAG is designated a Transportation Management Area. MAG implements a weighted voting process.	
	MAG votes to allow 50% of all MAG federal funds to be allocated for completion of the freeways.	1992	HB 2278: MAG sets priorities and approves cost changes on the Regional Freeway System.	
	MAG begins collecting data on the number of residential completions for use in transportation planning.	1993	MAG prepares the <i>Moderate Area Carbon Monoxide and One-Hour Ozone</i> plans.	
	An additional half-cent sales tax for transportation funding (Prop 400) is rejected by voters.	1994	Bills designed to remove MAG's freeway authorities are defeated in the State Legislature.	
	Through MAG, the largest mid-decade Special Census in the nation is conducted.	1995	The MAG juvenile curfew model ordinance is adopted by major cities.	
	MAG re-engineers its policy process and separates from the League of Arizona Cities and Towns.	1996	MAG revises the Regional Freeway Program with completion scheduled by 2014.	



## 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.

### Freeway costs now projected at \$4-6 billion

Officials blame land prices, extras

By Susan Leonard  
The Arizona Republic

“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.

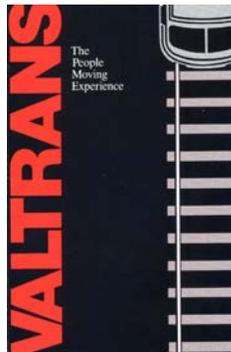
“We saw revenues coming in significantly under the projections, which really caused kind of a tsunami happening, because we had higher costs and lower revenues,” says Anderson. “It really put the freeway program in a crisis mode.”

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.

“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.”



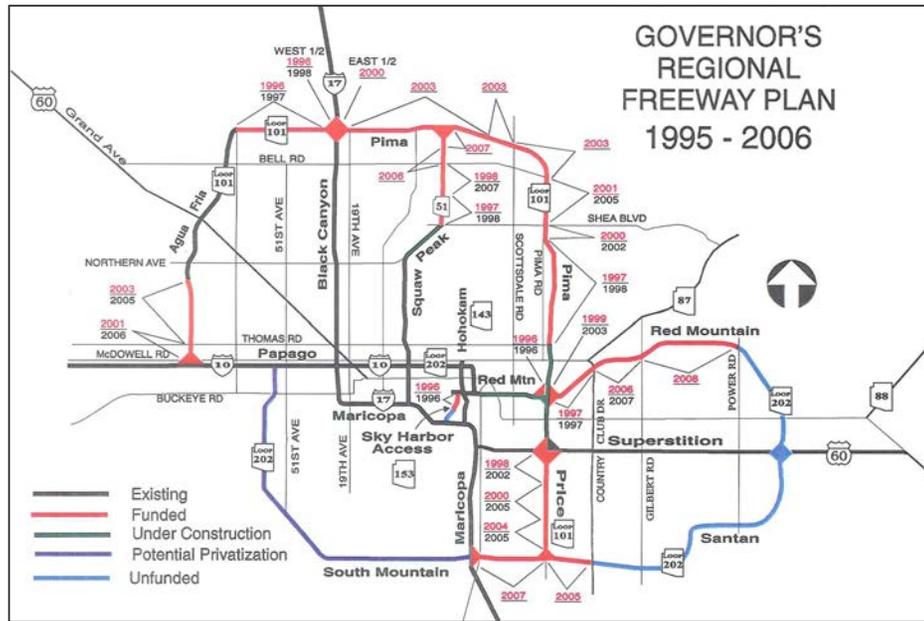
ValTrans map showing potential transit lines.



Former Glendale Mayor Elaine Scruggs, MAG Chair, 1996-1998

*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.*  
-Former Phoenix Mayor Terry Goddard





Planned freeway construction map from 1994.

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. The Governor also recommended fewer lanes, no lighting and no landscaping on remaining freeways. 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.



The League of Arizona Cities and Towns housed many of MAG's staff in the first three decades.

## 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 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."

*We, the Valley, were in a time of such feverish growth, and our whole transportation system was so far behind the times.*

*-Former Glendale Mayor Elaine Scruggs*

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, and a new director, James Bourey, was hired.

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.



Several MAG transportation plans published in 1992.

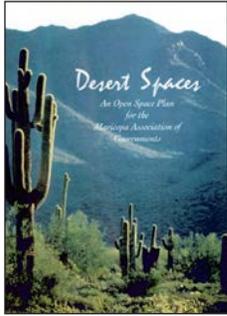


Former Scottsdale Councilmember Bill Soderquist and MAG staff members Roger Herzog and Lindy Bauer stack up MAG air quality plans in 1994.

*I have to say, all the mayors who served at that time really pulled together. And we worked in friendship, camaraderie.*

*-Former Glendale Mayor Elaine Scruggs*





## 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.

## 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.



*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.*

*-MAG Executive Director Dennis Smith*

# DECADE 4: 1997-2007

50<sup>th</sup>  
Anniversary



1967-2017

The fourth decade saw a leap forward in transportation progress following a major election victory and passage of Proposition 400. Along with major freeway improvements, the measure provided regional funding for transit for the first time. MAG continued air quality efforts following the passage of the 1990 Clean Air Act Amendments. There were also strides in human services planning, with the formation of the Regional Domestic Violence Council.



MAG establishes its first website to provide information to the public.

1997

MAG moves to its current location and consolidates staff from different locales.



Federal TEA-21 Act requires a cooperatively developed funding estimate for transportation.

1998

MAG launches the *Desert Peaks Awards* program to recognize regional excellence.



MAG creates the Regional Domestic Violence Council to address abuse issues.

1999

MAG's "fair share" of state funding accelerates freeway completion to 2007.

After planning for the Y2K rollover, the deadline passes without incident.

2000

MAG begins hosting Continuum of Care for homelessness planning.



The elderly mobility initiative is developed to meet transportation needs of an aging population.

2001

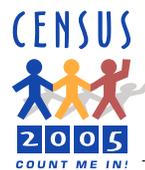
MAG provides funding to launch the Freeway Service Patrol.



MAG governance review results in major policy changes.

2002

The Regional Council creates the Transportation Policy Committee (TPC).



HB 2292 recognizes MAG's establishment of the TPC and provides for an election (Prop 400).

2003

The *MAG Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)* is approved.



The Community Emergency Notification System (Reverse 9-1-1) is launched.

2004

Voters approve the Prop 400 half-cent sales tax extension to fund the RTP.

MAG conducts the largest mid-decade census survey in the nation.

2005

The EPA announces the region has attained the carbon monoxide standard.



The *Don't Trash Arizona* litter prevention program begins.

2006

Collection of the half-cent sales tax extension through Prop 400 begins.





Outer loop freeway construction.

## Freeway Acceleration and “Fair Share”

Following the split from the League of Arizona Cities and Towns in 1996, it didn’t take long for MAG to settle into its new role separate from the League.

Following the identification of \$500 million and placing freeways back on the map, the focus turned to the reauthorization of federal transportation funding. MAG expected a significant increase, but a surprise was in store. Soon after the legislation was passed, MAG learned that only about 10 percent of the Arizona Department of Transportation’s (ADOT’s) discretionary (flexible) funding would be coming to the region. This created a controversy over how funding was allocated. MAG, together with the Pima Association of Governments, conducted an analysis of the funding.

Months of negotiations with the state culminated in a historic meeting in Casa Grande in April 1999. In what became known as “the Casa Grande Resolves,” the agencies agreed to seven guiding principles in Arizona’s transportation planning and programming process. The funding accord cemented MAG’s “fair share” of transportation funding, meaning the region would receive an equitable share of state and federal gas taxes. As a result, MAG and ADOT were able to accelerate completion of the freeways by another seven years.



Former Queen Creek Mayor Wendy Feldman-Kerr, MAG Chair, 2002-2004

## A New Director

In 2002, the Regional Council launched a nationwide search for a new Executive Director. Former Queen Creek Mayor Wendy Feldman-Kerr, who served as MAG chair from 2002-2004, recalls that the best candidate was found right within MAG’s own ranks. Dennis Smith, who had been a critical part of MAG since 1976 and had served as both an Assistant Director and Interim Director, was officially promoted to the position.

“With his knowledge of where MAG had been and the knowledge of where we were headed, it was a good time for us to turn everything around and move positively into the future,” states Feldman-Kerr.

With the half-cent sales tax set to expire in 2005, that institutional knowledge would be critical as MAG once again looked for ways to fund transportation improvements.



Dennis Smith after being named Executive Director in 2002.

*With his knowledge of where MAG had been and the knowledge of where we were headed, it was a good time for us to turn everything around and move positively into the future.*

*-Former Queen Creek Mayor Wendy Feldman-Kerr describing Dennis Smith*



## Proposition 400—Take Two

MAG knew that it would need the support of voters to continue transportation progress in the region. This would mean learning from the 1994 election defeat.

“There’s a saying, ‘from failure comes great wisdom,’” notes MAG Executive Director Dennis Smith. “Even though we lost that election, we learned so much from losing that in 2004 we corrected all of those mistakes.”

Former Tempe Mayor Neil Giuliano recalls there was a wide variety of needs to include in a new transportation plan.

“Our friends in the West Valley needed freeway capacity, desperately needed freeway capacity. Our friends in the East Valley needed the freeway capacity, but also were interested in multimodal transportation and including something for urban transit, light rail, more buses, bicycles,” says former Tempe Mayor Neil Giuliano, chair of MAG from 1998-2000. “So we had this (dilemma), how do you get everyone together for a transportation improvement plan when everyone has different needs?”

MAG Transportation Director Eric Anderson says the new Proposition 400, which again sought to extend the half-cent sales tax, had to take a different approach from Proposition 300, which was limited to building new freeways.

“Proposition 400 was a multimodal approach. Of course, we still had major funding for new freeways... but it also allocated a third of the revenues to the public transportation system. From a regional perspective, that was the first time we had regional funding for public transportation,” Anderson recalls.

The public had also had time to experience the tremendous transportation progress that came from Proposition 300. The Loop 101 system and major portions of the Red Mountain Freeway were completed; the Santan Freeway was under construction.

“I think the voters clearly could see that significant progress had been made, at the same time many of the management practices we put into place to better manage the program, really I think gave the public a lot more confidence in our ability to deliver what we say we can,” says Anderson.



Former Tempe Mayor Neil Giuliano, MAG Chair, 1998-2000

*How do you get everyone together for a transportation improvement plan when everyone has different needs?*

*-Former Tempe Mayor Neil Giuliano*





At its 2002 retreat, the Transportation Policy Committee began developing a new Regional Transportation Plan, which would be the basis for Proposition 400.

## Transportation Policy Committee

The first order of business: drafting a new Regional Transportation Plan.

“In addition, it was determined that we really needed a separate committee that just looked at transportation and that’s how the Transportation Policy Committee came into being,” states former Glendale Mayor Elaine Scruggs.

To ensure accountability, MAG leaders structured the Transportation Policy Committee (TPC) to include not only elected officials, but also six members of the business community. The composition required that all six must represent regionwide business. In addition, there needed to be one representative each for transit, freight, and construction interests.

“It had to be businesses where they knew what was going on throughout the region,” recalls Mayor Scruggs. “They had to move throughout the region. They had to be aware of all areas of the region. And that worked very, very well for us,” she says.

Mayor Giuliano believes having the support of the business community was crucial. “The thing I remember most about that time was the significant participation from the private sector,” says Giuliano. “We had Benito Almanza from Bank of America, Marty Shultz from APS, Doug Pruitt from Sundt construction, and a whole lot of other folks from the private sector,” he says. “That partnership was really important, and wouldn’t have happened without them.”

State lawmakers also played a significant role, adding funding “firewalls” for the half-cent sales tax revenues. That meant that the budgets for freeways, streets and transit would be kept separate and funds could not be moved from one account to another. Major changes to the program would require public review. Finally, the transportation system must be independently analyzed every five years to evaluate performance.

Representative Gary Pierce of Mesa sponsored House Bill 2292, which formalized the Transportation Policy Committee in state law. He also sponsored House Bill 2456 to allow the Maricopa County Board of Supervisors to set the election.



Mayor Elaine Scruggs, Mayor Neil Giuliano and Bank of America executive Benito Almanza at the Transportation Policy Committee retreat.

*The thing I remember most about that time was the significant participation from the private sector... That partnership was really important, and wouldn't have happened without them.*

*-Former Tempe Mayor Neil Giuliano*

To celebrate passage of the bill, Governor Janet Napolitano posed for a photograph with members of MAG, the business community, legislators and the public.

Another difference from previous elections was the significant focus on public outreach.

“All told, we conducted more than 400 input events with stakeholders and the public,” says MAG Communications Manager Kelly Taft. “Many of them were led by the elected officials in their own communities. It became clear to the public that the leaders of their communities truly owned the plan and believed strongly in its importance.”

In fact, when the opposition called a press conference two months before the election, mayors from Avondale, Glendale, Mesa, Phoenix, Queen Creek, and Scottsdale crashed it, leading to front page coverage of the heated debate.

“There was this towering man, who I’d never heard of or met before, who was very active in some strong anti-tax movements. And he was just outrageous, and I just had to speak up,” Scruggs recalls today.

The hard work paid off. Proposition 400 passed by a solid margin of 58 to 42 percent.

## Domestic Violence

Another milestone in MAG’s fourth decade also had lasting implications. In 1998, the community was shaken by the murder of a young mother named Laura Muñoz. After three weeks of being turned away from domestic violence shelters due to a lack of beds, Muñoz was stabbed to death in front of her children. Shock turned into action. In 1999, MAG formed the Regional Domestic Violence Council, bringing together governments, law enforcement agencies, prosecutors, nonprofit groups and other community leaders working to prevent such tragedies.



Governor Janet Napolitano and transportation supporters at the ceremonial signing of House Bill 2456 on February 9, 2004. The bill authorized a public vote on the continuation of the half-cent sales tax for transportation.



Arizona Republic article after Prop 400 passes.

*All told, we conducted more than 400 input events with stakeholders and the public. Many of them were led by the elected officials in their own communities. It became clear to the public that the leaders of their communities truly owned the plan and believed strongly in its importance.*

*-MAG Communications Manager Kelly Taft*





Former MAG Human Services Manager Carol Kratz

"We didn't realize the extent of the problem, and then once we got into the domestic violence issue, we found that there was no consistency," recalls former MAG Human Services Manager Carol Kratz. Inconsistencies ranged from how domestic violence was defined to how evidence was collected to how abusers were arrested and prosecuted.

"Domestic violence calls were among the most dangerous calls police officers responded to and there was no standard way of responding to that," says Kratz.

The Council went to work to develop a series of protocols. Efforts included developing a resource guide for employers, a toolkit for healthcare workers that contained materials for screening and treating domestic violence victims in the emergency room, and a model of best practices for law enforcement. Brochures with safety tips and laminated shoe cards were placed in restrooms across the region to provide emergency numbers and information in a place where abusers couldn't follow.



## Air Quality Efforts



MAG continued its air quality efforts. In 1997, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) established a new eight-hour ozone standard that was more stringent than the one-hour standard. In 1999, to stave off threatened sanctions by the EPA, MAG submitted a strengthened particulate plan to reduce unhealthy dust. The revised plan was approved by the EPA in 2002. Also in 1999, MAG conducted the Brown Cloud Project, which confirmed that gasoline and diesel engine exhaust accounted for about 70 percent of the small particulates that create the brown cloud. As a result, MAG recommended six control measures, including the mandated use of clean burning diesel fuel.

In 2001, the U.S. Department of Transportation and EPA selected MAG as a "demonstration community" for a national effort called "It All Adds Up to Cleaner Air." The public education program provided information about the link between travel behavior and air quality. It encouraged combining trips, using alternatives such as biking or walking, and keeping up with regular car maintenance.

In 2005, the EPA redesignated the region to attainment for carbon monoxide. There were no violations of the 1997 ozone standard after 2004. MAG Environmental Director Lindy Bauer says the success in controlling these pollutants is the result of sustained efforts over the years.

*Domestic violence calls were among the most dangerous calls police officers responded to and there was no standard way of responding to that.*

*-Former MAG Human Services Manager Carol Kratz*

“Under the Clean Air Act, one air quality plan builds upon another,” says Bauer. “We have been very fortunate to have such a wide variety of control measures in place. Taking a look at the air quality trend data, the numbers keep coming down,” she says.

## Freeway Service Patrol

Another regional success was the launch of the Freeway Service Patrol in December 2000, funded by MAG and operated by the Department of Public Safety. Still in effect today, stranded motorists receive help from roving road repair service vehicles that provide on-the-spot assistance to get them on the road again, improving safety for motorists and relieving traffic congestion.



## Quiet, Please!

Thousands of residents living near Valley freeways began experiencing the noise-reduction benefits of rubberized asphalt through a program begun in 2003. In a cooperative effort among the Governor’s Office, Arizona Department of Transportation, and MAG, a total of 115 miles would be covered with rubberized asphalt.

This program was further enhanced with the passage of Proposition 400, which provided funding to put rubberized asphalt on the rest of the system. Along with being quieter than other pavement, rubberized asphalt prevents pavement cracking and is waterproof and skid-resistant.

Prop 400 also included about \$20 million for additional noise walls at various locations around the freeway system.



Quiet pavement installation on the State Route 51 freeway.

*Under the Clean Air Act, one air quality plan builds upon another. We have been very fortunate to have such a wide variety of control measures in place. Taking a look at the air quality trend data, the numbers keep coming down.*

*-MAG Environmental Director Lindy Bauer*



Former Arizona Governor Janet Napolitano helped launch the *Don't Trash Arizona* campaign in 2007.

## Don't Trash Arizona! (Don't Spray Paint It, Either)

In 2007, MAG, ADOT, and the Governor teamed up to identify freeway litter hot spots and bring recognition to the *Don't Trash Arizona* litter education campaign, still in its infancy. At a May press conference, 500 bags of trash were lined up along one of the freeway hot spots. The row upon row of black trash bags represented just one day's worth of litter pickup along Valley freeways.

In a separate effort, a number of Valley cities voted to adopt graffiti laws patterned after a MAG model ordinance. The aggressive anti-graffiti plan made it illegal for retailers to sell implements of graffiti to children and required them to lock up cans of spray paint.



Former Queen Creek Mayor Mark Schnepf won the first Regional Excellence Award in 1998. The award was presented for outstanding efforts that brought together neighboring cities in a variety of development projects, including the revitalization of Williams Air Force Base into Williams Gateway Airport.

## Desert Peaks

With so many cooperative efforts around the region leading to collective success, in 1998 MAG launched the Desert Peaks awards program. The awards recognize innovation and achievements in regional partnership programs. The awards are still held on a biennial basis today.



*Don't Trash Arizona!*  
*-Former Arizona Governor Janet Napolitano*

# Decade 5: 2007-2017



Economic uncertainty in MAG's fifth decade led to the creation of the Economic Development Committee to look at ways transportation infrastructure can be linked to economic development. Major initiatives included improving international trade and collaborating with the public and private sectors to develop strategies to further economic development. A 2017 rebalancing effort put \$1.25 billion back into the Regional Freeway and Highway program.

	<p>MAG publishes the first Human Services Transportation Coordination Plan.</p> <p>MAG launches the Transportation Ambassador Program.</p>	<p>2007</p> <p>2008</p>	<p>MAG, in partnership with regional planning agencies, initiates <i>Building a Quality Arizona</i>.</p> <p>The final section of the Red Mountain Freeway is completed, finishing the Prop 300 program.</p>	
	<p>MAG 2009 Eight-Hour Ozone Redesignation Request and Maintenance Plan approved.</p> <p>MAG helps publicize Census 2010 efforts in the region.</p> <p>MAG Complete Streets Guide published.</p>	<p>2009</p> <p>2010</p> <p>2011</p>	<p>MAG, PAG and CAG form the Joint Planning Advisory Council for the Sun Corridor megaregion.</p> <p>The Economic Development Committee (EDC) is formed.</p> <p>Arizona Age-Friendly Network created.</p>	
	<p>Congress designates Interstate II.</p> <p>MAG Planning Area boundary was expanded due to the 2010 Census urbanized area updates.</p>	<p>2012</p> <p>2013</p>	<p>Arizona COGs join with MAG to support infrastructure improvements along the Mexico border.</p> <p>New members join MAG: Pinal County, the Town of Florence, and the City of Maricopa.</p>	
	<p>MAG signs partnering charter with Mexico to create the Ari-Son Megaregion.</p> <p>The first extension of the light rail system opens to Mesa Drive.</p>	<p>2014</p> <p>2015</p>	<p>The Loop 303/Interstate 10 interchange opens to traffic.</p> <p>MAG streamlines the Water Quality Management Planning Process.</p>	
	<p>Construction begins on South Mountain Freeway.</p> <p>MAG celebrates 50 years of serving the region.</p>	<p>2016</p> <p>2017</p>	<p>Freeway crash clearance times dramatically reduced through MAG/DPS/ADOT program.</p> <p>Regional Council approves rebalancing of RTP, adding \$1.25 billion back into the program.</p>	



Construction of the San Tan Freeway.

As MAG entered its fifth decade, the region was looking ahead to the continued progress of the new Regional Transportation Plan. The final leg of the Red Mountain Freeway was finished, completing the projects included in Proposition 300. MAG, in partnership with the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) and a coalition of regional and state planning agencies, initiated *Building a Quality Arizona* to better analyze infrastructure needs. The effort included a series of “framework” studies to get ahead of growth and identify future strategies for both freeways and transit.

Collection of the half-cent sales tax under Prop 400 had begun, netting \$391 million in 2007. No one guessed that it would be the last time the region would see such revenue for nearly a decade.

## The Great Recession

“We were starting to see signs that the housing industry in particular may have some issues and we were starting to see a decline in our sales tax revenues from where we thought they were going to be,” says MAG Transportation Director Eric Anderson. “That was the first time we’d ever had a decline in sales tax revenues in this county, so it came as a shock to everybody.”

In 2009, due to the falling revenues, the MAG Regional Council swallowed hard and cut \$6.6 billion from the Regional Transportation Plan. Another \$300 million would be cut in 2012. The housing industry continued to falter. By March 2010, the number of pending and foreclosed homes had swelled to more than 63,000.

Phoenix Councilmember Peggy Neely, who chaired MAG from 2009-2010, recalls that the decline of the housing market was a huge wake-up call for the region.

“I really believed, from a regional approach, we needed as elected officials to have a dialogue about what we could do to bring economic development to the community,” recalls Neely.

MAG Executive Director Dennis Smith notes that federal transportation legislation states that planners should consider projects and strategies that support the economic vitality of the metropolitan area by enabling global competitiveness, productivity, and efficiency.



Former Phoenix Councilmember Peggy Neely, MAG Chair, 2009-2010

*I really believed, from a regional approach, we needed as elected officials to have a dialogue about what we could do to bring economic development to the community.*

*-Former Phoenix Councilmember Peggy Neely*



“Since 1985, working with ADOT and the Federal Highway Administration, we’ve built 181 miles of freeway that has been the economic backbone of this region, to allow growth throughout the Valley, so people can live and work in the places they love, whether it is West Valley, East Valley, or Central Valley,” says Smith.

The need to diversify the economy resulted in the creation of the MAG Economic Development Committee in 2010.

“We were able to develop a committee and that committee was to look at things that we could do that could spur economic development,” says Neely. “It was a committee that no one was really quite sure what it would do or how we would work together, because again it was all of the cities and towns that were in MAG coming together to form this. So we put the committee together and it was given a sunset clause for one year.”

The 35-member committee, which included 20 elected officials, a representative from the Arizona Department of Transportation, and 15 business representatives, began working on a number of successful initiatives. The efforts were supported by MAG’s Information Services division, which provided detailed analytics to support economic development efforts. Efforts ranged from developing important employment and labor force data to improving trade relations with Mexico. The committee soon proved itself, and the sunset never came.

“I think the Economic Development Committee has been extremely important, not only in building relationships within our own context of the state, but nationally and internationally,” says former Avondale Mayor Marie Lopez Rogers, who chaired MAG from 2012-2013.



First Economic Development Committee meeting, November 18, 2010.



Former Avondale Mayor  
Marie Lopez Rogers,  
MAG Chair, 2012-2013

*I think the Economic Development Committee has been extremely important, not only in building relationships within our own context of the state, but nationally and internationally.*

*-Former Avondale Mayor Marie Lopez Rogers*





Youngtown Mayor Michael LeVault (left) and former Avondale Mayor Marie Lopez Rogers at the Second Bi-National Economic Forum.

## Building Bridges With Mexico

Mayor Rogers believed that building relationships with Mexico was a key to economic recovery. Over the next few years, MAG began partnerships with the Arizona Mexico Commission, the Arizona Commerce Authority, the Greater Phoenix Economic Council, chambers of commerce, and other economic development leaders to improve the dialogue with Mexico.

“It seemed like an opportune time for us to create some synergy between our governments, our business partners and all the economic development folks that were trying to create not only a positive atmosphere, but certainly a revenue for our state,” recalls Rogers.

Rogers also was a champion of MAG efforts to extend the travel zone for those with Border Crossing Cards from the current limit of 75 miles to the entire state of Arizona. Holders of these cards are low-risk, short-term travelers who have been pre-cleared through rigorous background checks for frequent travel in the U.S. Extending the travel zone would mean an increase in tourism and shopping revenue for Arizona of about \$181 million annually.

“That means they could visit the Grand Canyon, they could visit Yuma, they could visit Snowflake, they could visit the whole state, spend their money in those cities and towns and then also bring that revenue into our state coffers,” says Rogers.

Another champion of improving trade relations is Phoenix Mayor Greg Stanton. Since taking office, Mayor Stanton has led 18 trade missions to Mexico.

“The two things we have to do to be successful in economic development: innovation and building an export-based economy,” says Stanton, chair of MAG in 2017. “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.”

In 2014, MAG signed a partnering charter to create the Ari-Son Megaregion to promote dialogue and collaboration between Arizona and Sonora. In 2015, the Mexico State Congress formally recognized MAG for its efforts to further trade relationships with Sonora.



Phoenix Mayor Greg Stanton cuts the ribbon opening the Phoenix trade office in Mexico City on October 4, 2014.



*The two things we have to do to be successful in economic development: innovation and building an export-based economy.*

*-Phoenix Mayor Greg Stanton*

# Transportation Funding: From Rocky to Reborn

Although MAG leaders had made the difficult decision to cut nearly \$7 billion from the Regional Transportation Program, by no means did transportation progress stop. Major milestones included the Loop 303 connection to I-17 in 2011, the opening of the first section of State Route 24 in 2014, and the start of construction of the South Mountain Freeway in 2016.

In 2012, after a concerted push by Arizona and Nevada, Congress officially designated the I-11 corridor. In 2014, “Future I-11 Corridor” signs were installed near Hoover Dam and unveiled by the governors of the two states. That same year, MAG approved funding for a three-year pilot program to place Department of Public Safety troopers at the ADOT Traffic Operations Center. An evaluation of the program in 2016 found that the amount of time taken to clear freeway crashes was reduced by nearly an hour. In 2017, MAG completed the I-10/I-17 Corridor Master Plan and the Freight Transportation Plan.



Former Arizona Governor Jan Brewer (second from left) helps unveil the “Future I-11 Corridor” sign near Hoover Dam on March 21, 2015.

There also were advancements in other transportation modes. Major amendments in 2013 and 2015 paved the way for new light rail corridors in Mesa and south central Phoenix. Between 2001 and 2017, MAG had invested \$150 million in bike paths and in 2015, MAG produced its first online *Bikeways* map to augment its popular printed map of the regional bike network.

But the best news came in April 2017, when the Regional Council moved to add \$1.25 billion back into the regional transportation program. This additional revenue was due to a combination of improved revenues and cost efficiencies identified by MAG staff working with ADOT and the Federal Highway Administration to provide more reliable cost estimates and schedules. When added to the existing program, the investment totaled more than \$5 billion for the region.

The rebalancing marked a well-deserved fork in what had been a rocky economic road.



*I-11 will serve a vital role in commerce and trade, not only for Arizona and Nevada, but for the country and neighboring nations. Equally important, it will connect the two biggest cities in the United States without an interstate between them: Phoenix and Las Vegas.*

*-Former Arizona Governor Jan Brewer at the unveiling of the future I-11 signs.*



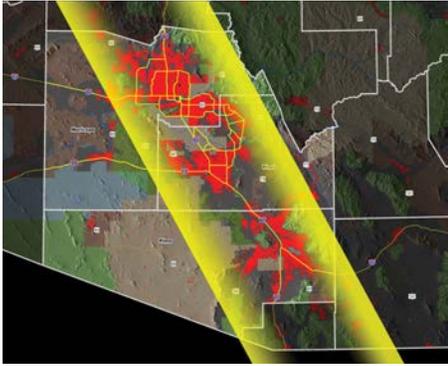


Illustration of the Sun Corridor through Maricopa, Pinal and Pima counties

## Partnerships

Throughout its fifth decade, MAG's path was marked by partnerships. The region had already begun joint planning efforts among Maricopa, Pinal and Pima counties through the creation of the Joint Planning Advisory Council in 2009. The Economic Development Committee expanded its table to include educational institutions. In 2013, MAG signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the state's universities to support research, innovation and entrepreneurial grant proposals to help the region be more competitive. In 2015, MAG was recognized by Transportation for America as a national leader among Metropolitan Planning Organizations in *The Innovative MPO*, a guide showcasing best practices that demonstrate ways MPOs can help their communities prosper.

MAG grew in other ways. In 2013, the MAG Planning Area Boundary was expanded due to the 2010 Census, which updated urbanized areas. The updated boundary for MAG included areas in Pinal County. The MAG Regional Council amended the By-Laws to recognize the new boundary and welcomed new members from Pinal County, including the Town of Florence, City of Maricopa, and a representative from Pinal County. The expanded region represents 64 percent of the state's population and more than 72 percent of the state's sales tax revenues.

In 2010, MAG worked with ADOT to complete the first fiber connections for the Regional Community Network. The fiber optic network lets safety personnel see video of traffic coming from one city into another and provides critical access for public safety agencies. The extra bandwidth also serves to back up the region's 9-1-1 system.



## Human Services Achievements

Partnership also was the byword in Human Services planning. Since 1999, the region has been awarded \$374 million to provide permanent housing and services for people who are homeless as part of its "continuum of care" coordinated application process. A number of heat-related deaths in the summer of 2005 resulted in the creation of the Heat Relief Network, providing specific places for residents to donate water and for those affected by the heat to seek refuge. In 2009, one business located 12,000 bottles of water and another 7,000 bottles of water as an example of the network's success.



*What MAG has done on the issue of trying to end homelessness, to change the mindset of this region, that we're not going to manage homelessness, but that we are going to end chronic homelessness in this region.*

*-Phoenix Mayor Greg Stanton*

Mayor Stanton, who chaired MAG's Continuum of Care from 2005 to 2009, credits MAG's efforts "to change the mindset of this region that we're not going to manage homelessness, but that we are going to end chronic homelessness in this region."

In efforts to end domestic violence, MAG launched new programs on healthy dating to reach teens experiencing abuse. It also developed best practices for the region when it comes to arresting and prosecuting offenders.

"Domestic violence is still, sadly, a huge issue in our region," says Mayor Stanton. "It cuts across all socioeconomic, demographic, and racial backgrounds. Everybody, unfortunately, is impacted by domestic violence," he says. In 2017, MAG updated its Regional Plan to End Domestic Violence with 15 strategies and a five-year scope.

Adults aged 60 and over are another community of interest for MAG. In 2013, MAG launched its age-friendly network to connect older adults with meaningful efforts to engage in their communities. The network has since expanded statewide to include nine programs that provide customized services to help older adults stay connected.

In 2015, the programming responsibilities moved to MAG to administer grant funds related to the Federal Transit Administration's Elderly and Persons with Disabilities Transportation Program. MAG's efforts in human services transportation were recognized with a "United We Ride" leadership award.

## Air Quality Improvements

In 2008, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) established another more stringent ozone standard. In the meantime, the EPA was in the process of reviewing the MAG 2007 Eight-Hour Ozone Plan, which addressed the 1997 standard. The EPA approved that plan and a "redesignation to attainment" request in 2014. MAG Environmental Director Lindy Bauer sorts out the confusion.

"There are four ozone standards," says Bauer. "The region has successfully met two of the ozone standards, and, in fact, this summer the region may very well meet the third ozone standard."

Another major development had to do with dust pollution. After the region challenged an EPA decision in 2010 partially disapproving MAG's dust plan, MAG withdrew the plan. In July 2011, the Valley was rocked

Hundreds of students will be participating in a live TEXT-A-THON to help spread the message about dating violence.

**SPEAK OUT AND BE HEARD.**

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**MARICOPA ASSOCIATION of GOVERNMENTS**  
 Governor's Office for Children, Youth & Families, Division for Women

**Youth Empowerment News Conference**  
 Thursday, September 27, 2007, at 9:30 a.m.  
 Coronado High School, Lecture Hall  
 2501 N. 74th Street, Scottsdale  
 (NE corner of Miller Rd. and Virginia Ave.)

Help stop teen dating violence. For more information, please call Renae Tenney at 602-254-6300.

**WEBOFFRIENDS.ORG**



*Domestic violence is still, sadly, a huge issue in our region. It cuts across all socioeconomic, demographic, and racial backgrounds. Everybody, unfortunately, is impacted by domestic violence.*

*-Phoenix Mayor Greg Stanton*



On July 5, 2011, a massive dust storm, or haboob, hit Phoenix.

by major dust storms, making the word “haboob” a household name. In 2012, MAG resubmitted its dust plan and provided reams of documentation regarding air quality exceedances caused by the haboobs. In 2014, the EPA approved the 2012 plan, a move celebrated in a press conference attended by elected officials. They highlighted the continued air quality improvement in Arizona accomplished through the efforts of MAG, the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality, the Maricopa County Air Quality Department, and multiple industry, business and agricultural stakeholders.

As far as the region’s other major pollutant? The region is not only in attainment for carbon monoxide, it is 73 percent below the carbon monoxide standard.

“It has taken leadership from all levels of government,” says Bauer. “The cities, the towns, the county, the Arizona Legislature, the governors, state agencies, and the private sector.”

# Now to the Next 50

When asked to reflect on MAG's success, former business leader Dennis Mitchem says that MAG's achievements have exceeded his expectations.

"And I'm surprised at the number of people who will casually say, 'One good thing about Phoenix is we have a very great freeway system,'" says Mitchem. "And the long term role that the Maricopa Association of Governments has played in that has been the glue that has held together all of what has come."

Former Mayor George Renner says, "I think that observing milestones like the 50th anniversary of MAG is a very important and an appropriate thing to do, because it reminds us how tough it was to deal with some of the issues that we now take for granted today. The foundations that were built 30, 40, 50 years ago are what serve us and support the ongoing efforts today," he says.

"I think the key to MAG has been the quality of the staff," says Executive Director Smith. "The staff, from the very beginning when I was there, they were the best and the brightest. Nimble. Risk takers. And the quality level was extremely high."

MAG Founder Jack DeBolske also credits the elected leaders who have shaped MAG's history.

"I think we had some people who were elected to office who were willing to take risks," says DeBolske. "They were willing to take advice and counsel and then make decisions. They weren't afraid to make decisions and take chances with it. You know, staff can do a lot, but they can't provide leadership, that just has to come from the elected officials."

Former Tempe Mayor Neil Giuliano says the issues MAG addresses have become more complex. "So we have to hold MAG together and MAG has to stay strong...Because standing alone we can't individually be successful. We can only be successful when we stand together."

Adds former Avondale Mayor Marie Lopez Rogers, "This whole idea of MAG becoming a forum for regional

*One good thing about Phoenix is we have a very great freeway system, and the long term role that the Maricopa Association of Governments has played in that has been the glue that has held together all of what has come.*

*-Former business leader Dennis Mitchem*



Dennis Mitchem  
headed Residents  
for Safe and Efficient  
Transportation





MAG Transportation  
Director Eric Anderson

issues really has come to fruition. I think that's what really has impressed me over the years, is how MAG has become so much more than just a federal requirement."

As for the next 50 years? Transportation Director Eric Anderson says it's all about change.

"I think we're going to see even over the next five or 10 years more change in transportation than we've seen over the last 50 years, because of the rapid change in technology, autonomous vehicles and those kinds of things," he says.

And that change, says Phoenix Mayor Stanton, means the basic MAG model needs to stay the same.

"That model, that decision making model, coming together around a common table to solve issues, that's what MAG is all about, and we need that moving forward."

MAG Executive Director Dennis Smith, who has been with MAG 40 of its 50 years, puts it into final perspective.

"The cornerstone for MAG was laid in April 1967. It is remarkable to consider the amount of change our region has experienced in 50 years. The leadership of the elected officials at MAG has consistently risen to the challenge. With the quality of the MAG organization, this region will continue to be a beacon for quality of life and opportunity."



MAG Executive Director  
Dennis Smith



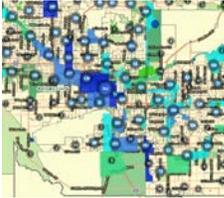
MAG 50th Anniversary

*It is remarkable to consider the amount of change our region has experienced in 50 years.  
The leadership of the elected officials at MAG has consistently risen to the challenge.  
-MAG Executive Director Dennis Smith*

# Top 10 MAG Accomplishments

- Proposition 300:** Approved by an overwhelming majority of voters (72 percent) in 1985, Prop 300 implemented the half-cent sales tax for transportation, enabling the construction of Loop 101. Prop 300 included funding to establish the Regional Public Transportation Authority.
- Proposition 400:** Approved by 58 percent of voters, Prop 400 extended the half-cent sales tax for transportation for 20 years. The plan included funding for both freeways and transit, representing the first regional funding for transit. Since MAG's inception and in collaboration with the Arizona Department of Transportation, 181 miles of freeway have been built in the region. In addition, working with Valley Metro, the region has implemented 26 miles of light rail and 100 bus routes.
- Improving Air Quality:** MAG was designated by the governor in 1978 to serve as the lead Regional Air Quality Planning Agency. MAG develops air quality plans required by the Clean Air Act to reduce carbon monoxide, ozone and particulate pollution. MAG works with its member agencies and the state to implement a wide variety of control measures to address air pollution.
- 9-1-1:** Another MAG-led program that forever changed lives in the Valley was the creation of a regional 9-1-1 system. Working with the Arizona Corporation Commission to identify funding, and with technical expertise from police and fire officials, the system went live September 9, 1985.
- Human Services Planning:** MAG champions many efforts aimed at strengthening communities and supporting people. These include keeping people safe from domestic violence; ensuring they have access to homeless services; and helping them stay connected with their communities at every age. Since 1999, the MAG Continuum of Care has successfully secured \$374.4 million in funding from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to provide housing and support for people experiencing homelessness. The MAG Regional Domestic Violence Council works to address domestic abuse issues and develop best practices. MAG created the Arizona Age Friendly Network to connect older adults with people of all ages to ensure meaningful opportunities to participate in their communities.





6. **Economic Development:** Following the economic tailspin of 2008, MAG created the Economic Development Committee (EDC) in 2010. With transportation a backbone for the economy, MAG recognized that it had a role to play in bringing the best minds to the table to brainstorm solutions for diversifying the economy. The EDC includes local elected officials, business, and education representatives, as well as a representative from ADOT. Initiatives have ranged from improving international trade to workforce development.
7. **Big Data:** MAG conducts extensive applied research to accomplish its core mission of strengthening the greater Phoenix region and Arizona. “Big data” refers to extremely large datasets that can be analyzed to reveal patterns in areas such as human behavior. MAG collects a wide variety of information, ranging from population and demographic information to highly detailed trends in travel behavior. MAG then analyzes the information and puts it into online, interactive, user-friendly maps that anyone can use to get important information about the region or their community.
8. **Safety Planning:** MAG conducts a transportation safety program that brings together safety professionals from throughout the state. The goal is to identify current and potential transportation safety issues, concerns and needs in the region, and find ways to address them. MAG also oversees the Regional Community Network, a vital data and information connection that helps MAG member agencies with operations ranging from traffic control to emergency police and fire calls.
9. **Public Outreach:** MAG seeks to keep residents informed on regional issues and MAG initiatives, to ensure that the public has a voice in MAG plans, policies, and programs. MAG conducts targeted outreach to minority populations, people with disabilities and to people with low incomes. MAG allows for public input at all of its technical and policy committee meetings, and encourages residents to sign up for automatic delivery of our newsletters, meeting agendas, and project communications through the website at [www.azmag.gov](http://www.azmag.gov).
10. **Regional Leadership:** MAG’s legacy of excellence is built upon the leadership of numerous former and current members who have made MAG a world-class organization. No other organization brings together elected officials, business leaders and community members as effectively to address issues that touch the lives of every resident. MAG provides a forum for discussion and study of regional problems that include transportation, air quality, economic development, and meeting the human needs of the region.

# History of MAG Regional Council Chairs



Mayor  
Greg Stanton  
Phoenix  
2016-2017



Mayor  
W.J. "Jim" Lane  
Scottsdale  
2015-2016



Mayor  
Michael LeVault  
Youngtown  
2014-2015



Mayor  
Scott Smith  
Mesa  
2013-2014



Mayor  
Marie Lopez Rogers  
Avondale  
2012-2013



Mayor  
Hugh Hallman  
Tempe  
2011-2012



Mayor  
Thomas Schoaf  
Litchfield Park  
2010-2011



Councilmember  
Peggy Neely  
Phoenix  
2009-2010



Mayor  
Mary Manross  
Scottsdale  
2008-2009



Mayor  
James Cavanaugh  
Goodyear  
2006-2008



Mayor  
Keno Hawker  
Mesa  
2004-2006



Mayor  
Wendy Feldman-Kerr  
Queen Creek  
2002-2004



Mayor  
Skip Rimsza  
Phoenix  
2000-2002



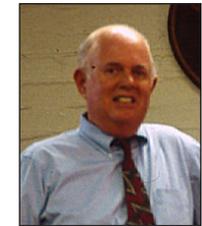
Mayor  
Neil Giuliano  
Tempe  
1998-2000



Mayor  
Elaine Scruggs  
Glendale  
1996-1998



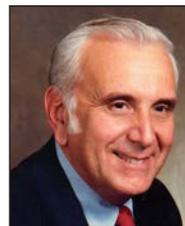
Mayor  
Wilburn Brown  
Gilbert  
1994-1996



Mayor  
Charles Hayes  
Tolleson  
1992-1994



Mayor  
Peggy Rubach  
Mesa  
1990-1992



Mayor  
Ron Travers  
Peoria  
1988-1990



Mayor  
Terry Goddard  
Phoenix  
1986-1988



Supervisor  
Fred Koory  
Maricopa County  
1984-1986



Mayor  
George Renner  
Glendale  
1982-1984



Councilmember  
Ken O'Dell  
Phoenix  
1980-1982



Mayor  
Charles Salem  
Goodyear  
1974-1980



Mayor  
Bud Tims  
Scottsdale  
1967-1974



# Acknowledgements

- Eric Anderson, *MAG Transportation Director*
- Arizona Department of Transportation
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- Jack DeBolske, *MAG Founder, former MAG Secretary*
- Ken Driggs, *former MAG Staff Coordinator*
- Wendy Feldman-Kerr, *former Queen Creek Mayor*
- Calvin Goode, *former Phoenix Councilmember*
- Roger Herzog, *MAG Senior Project Manager*
- Carol Kratz, *former MAG Human Services Manager*
- Karen Novachek, *former Director, MAG Human Services Planning Office*
- Neil Giuliano, *former Tempe Mayor*
- Terry Goddard, *former Phoenix Mayor*
- Marie Lopez Rogers, *former Avondale Mayor*
- Dennis Mitchem, *former Chair, Residents for Safe and Efficient Transportation*
- Peggy Neely, *former Phoenix Councilmember*
- George Renner, *former Glendale Mayor*
- Bob Robb, *journalist, former staff member, Phoenix Chamber of Commerce*
- Charlie Salem, *former Goodyear Mayor*
- Elaine Scruggs, *former Glendale Mayor*
- Dennis Smith, *MAG Executive Director*
- Greg Stanton, *Phoenix Mayor*
- Valley Metro

*Finally, special thanks go to the Maricopa Association of Governments staff, who contributed documents, photos, and other historical information to assist in the creation of this book.*





**50<sup>th</sup>**  
*Anniversary*



**MARICOPA  
ASSOCIATION of  
GOVERNMENTS**



*1967–2017*

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