



## Executive Director's Report

At the September meeting we said goodbye to two extraordinary individuals who contributed greatly to the success of the Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG). Roger Herzog provided 38 years of service to MAG in transportation. Roger was the architect of Proposition 300 to build the regional freeway system. This system, which we are driving on today, is the backbone of our economy and the envy of regions across the country. Cathy Arthur worked for MAG over a period of decades on air quality. Cathy's highly technical expertise in managing all the complexities of air quality modeling as required under the Clean Air Act ensured that our transportation system met all of the federal requirements in a period of high growth of our region. A job well done to both of these highly talented people.

Over the years, MAG has relied on exceptional staff such as Roger and Cathy. But their efforts are only successful with the continual support of the MAG Regional Council. As we witnessed at the meeting, an honest and open dialogue that promotes awareness, understanding and acceptance of diversity is the foundation of this body. Even with differing opinions on issues, elected officials at MAG care for one another and are committed to doing what is best for the region. People can disagree in a respectful manner but hold true to the values of the organization, and that is the glue that holds us together. This is emblematic of the officials who have served MAG in the past, and today we continue to carry out this great tradition of service first.

We are blessed at MAG to recognize and champion the council-manager form of government. All MAG member agencies have a seat at the table. Every city regardless of size is represented. This framework is what makes MAG one of the leading metropolitan planning organizations in the nation, to benefit the citizens of our region.

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



## Meeting Report for Wednesday, September 27, 2017

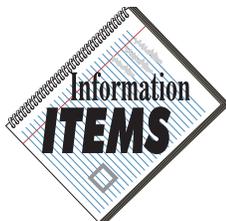
### Action Items

#### Resolution of Support for Domestic Violence Awareness Month

Domestic violence takes a heavy toll on families throughout the region, with 40 percent of respondents in a MAG survey saying they personally know someone who has experienced domestic abuse. The MAG Regional Domestic Violence Council

was formed in 1999 to provide a forum for communication and action to prevent and eradicate domestic violence, and the region spends \$18 to \$26 million a year to address the problem in the criminal justice system. MAG Regional Councilmember Robin Barker of Apache Junction, who chairs the MAG Regional Domestic Violence Council, gave an update on the Council's efforts. She reported that the number of domestic violence fatalities in Arizona is going down, but there is still much work to be done. She noted that on September 30, 2017, MAG would be partnering with the City of Phoenix for a news conference on the deadly link between animal abuse and domestic violence. Following Ms. Barker's presentation, the Regional Council approved a resolution expressing support of October as Domestic Violence Awareness Month.

**For more information, please contact Amy Rebenar, MAG Human Services Planner, (602) 254-6300.**



## **Information Items**

### **Phoenix International Raceway Project**

The Regional Council heard an update on Phoenix International Raceway (PIR), an important economic driver in the region that is now undergoing a major modernization project. PIR has been part of the motorsports scene since 1964, and is the only track in the West to feature two NASCAR Sprint Cup Series weekends a year. A study from Arizona State University estimated that Phoenix Raceway brings in nearly \$473 million annually to the state of Arizona. PIR President Bryan Sperber presented details on the \$178 million improvement project, which includes grandstand and suite renovations, new pedestrian tunnel, redesigned entrances, media center, and a new infield fan zone. The facility will host more than 100 events per year and is scheduled to be completed in the fall of 2018. The raceway also will get a new name: ISM Raceway. The partnership with ISM Connect, a venue technology company, is designed to further enhance technological capabilities and create more opportunities for engaging fans.

**For more information, please contact Denise McClafferty, Regional Program Manager, (602) 254-6300.**

### **Maricopa County Trip Reduction Program**

The Maricopa County Trip Reduction Program (TRP) is designed to find innovative ways to reduce single-occupancy trips, particularly trips to and from work, as part of the effort to improve regional air quality. Staff from Maricopa County provided an overview of the TRP survey, which goes out to employers in Maricopa County with 50 or more employees to gather data on their commuting habits and trends. Approximately 500,000 surveys were returned in 2016, a 70 percent return rate. Survey results show prevention of 12, 849 pounds of pollution annually, and almost five million miles of alternative vehicle miles traveled daily.

In 2018, the survey will have a new database developed by MAG, new questions added, and will go live in January. Staff noted that MAG and Maricopa County have worked together to turn this regulatory program into a powerful tool for economic development. MAG staff discussed how the survey data is used to help member agencies recruit and grow business. In 2016, more than 2,800 businesses were surveyed, providing data on the region's industries, where employees live, where they go to work, levels of education, marital status, income, and more. Christine MacKay, the Community and Economic Development Director with the City of Phoenix, provided insight on how this workforce research can be shared to attract companies and inform stakeholders on development trends.

**For more information, please contact Ahnubav Bagley, MAG Information Services Director, (602) 254-6300.**

### **Appointments to MAG Leadership Positions**

The Regional Council discussed the challenges of finding a way for Pinal County members to be considered for leadership positions, while maintaining balance and fairness among all MAG's member agencies. Typically for leadership positions, efforts are made to ensure that the positions are shared among East, Central and West candidates. With the addition of member agencies that are in the Pinal County portion of the MAG region, these communities do not fit neatly into these geographic categories. In some instances, seats for Pinal members are defined in committee compositions, such as in the Transportation Policy Committee and the Economic Development Committee. The item featured dialogue on the history of MAG leadership, regional equality, and the need for unity moving forward to extend Proposition 400 funding to continue to improve the region's transportation infrastructure.

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

### **Legislative Update**

Staff reported on a federal item that would modify the FAST Act, the funding legislation for state transportation projects. Representative Woodall from Georgia introduced an amendment that would rescind approved limits on funding, thereby reducing amounts states can spend on projects. The proposed bill could also limit end-of-year August redistribution funding, which takes back the funding from states that do not use all their monies and gives it to states that perform well. Arizona has received millions of dollars from the redistribution in past years, and is used for shovel-ready projects in the MAG region. For example, in 2017, the August redistribution by the Federal Highway Administration gave Arizona \$58.8 million for projects, which included \$23 million advanced for the new South Mountain Freeway. Several other MAG projects received early funding, saving finance charges and interest. Reducing the limits to spend these additional funds would limit the state's and

region's ability to distribute funding to needed projects. The reductions could be balanced in each individual funding area, or as in the Woodall bill, may be vastly different based on the state's choice of area, rather than the local MPO's choice, to meet transportation needs. The MAG region has done an excellent job of getting projects aligned and under construction, meeting the target of reducing money carried forward for the past five years. Staff will provide an update on the bill at the next meeting.

**For more information, please contact Nathan Pryor, MAG Government Relations Manager, (602) 254-6300.**

## **Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the MAG Regional Council will be held on Wednesday, October 25, 2017, at 11:30 a.m. at the MAG offices, 302 N. 1st Avenue, Phoenix, second floor, Saguaro Room. Agenda items are expected to include the Quarterly Status on the implementation of the Regional Freeway and Highway Program, and the Regional Plan to End Homelessness. Additional agenda items are pending.