



Executive Director's Report

The need for more transportation funding was the underlying theme at the October Regional Council meeting. Members heard updates on the rising costs of freeway projects currently in the Regional Transportation Plan, and the inadequate funding for safety measures that could potentially reverse the alarming rise in crashes on the region's roadways. The answer is not to shift limited resources from one need to another. The solution lies in a comprehensive plan to expand funding opportunities and the extension of the half-cent sales tax for transportation known as Proposition 400.

The Regional Council advanced this core mission with the passing of the first *MAG Policy Principles*, a document that outline and summarizes MAG's positions regarding priority legislative and policy issues. The document can be used by MAG member agencies, the legislature, and external stakeholders in preparation for the 2019 Arizona legislative session and beyond. This effort will complement outreach efforts to explain what MAG is, what we stand for, and the importance of maintaining a first class transportation system for growing the region's economy.

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



Meeting Report for Wednesday, October 24, 2018

Action Items

Smart Region Initiative

The Greater Phoenix Economic Council (GPEC), Arizona State University (ASU), and the Institute for Digital Progress (IDP) have invited the Maricopa Association of Governments to join the Smart Region Initiative. This initiative pulls together a unique public-private consortium dedicated to helping leaders build better places to live, work and visit. The goal is to leverage smart technologies, policies and strategies to enhance or even replace outdated systems and infrastructure, making government agencies more efficient and effective.

The consortium is part of a national and global movement to advance regional innovation to make more inclusive, vibrant, resilient and sustainable communities. The first goal is to stimulate technology innovations through research, pilot projects, and technical assistance. The ultimate goal is to improve efficiency, enhance resident well-being, and solve complex problems through the use of innovative technology.

The Regional Council approved MAG's involvement as a primary partner in the role of data collection and analysis. MAG staff will work with GPEC, ASU and IDP to develop the bylaws for the initiative and to sign a memorandum of understanding to clarify MAG's role in hosting data related to the project. The Smart Region Initiative is scheduled to launch on November 15, 2018.

For more information, please contact Amy St. Peter, MAG Deputy Executive Director, (602) 254-6300.

Deletion of Glendale Light Rail Extension

Members of the Regional Council approved a major amendment to delete a future light rail extension to Glendale from the Regional Transportation Plan (Plan). This light rail extension, included in the 2003 adopted Plan and Proposition 400, was envisioned to extend west from 19th Avenue to downtown Glendale. In December 2017, the Glendale City Council voted to discontinue participation in the West Phoenix/Central Glendale project and requested that the Plan reflect that decision. As prescribed by Arizona statute, a major amendment to the Plan is required to satisfy such a request.

The project was funded through federal, regional and local sources. Valley Metro's FY 2019 Transit Life Cycle Program has moved Glendale's portion of Proposition 400 funding previously allocated to this project, approximately \$51 million, to the program's fund balance.

Consultation with the Regional Public Transportation Authority (RPTA/Valley Metro), Arizona State Transportation Board, and the Maricopa County Board of Supervisors has taken place as required by state statute. The proposed major amendment was considered by all three boards and received unanimous support. The 30-day consultation process also invited Native American Indian communities, cities, towns, and the public to submit comments or recommendations. No comments were received during that time. The approved major amendment to the Plan is contingent upon a finding of air quality conformity, anticipated in December 2018.

For more information, please contact Audra Koester Thomas, MAG Transportation Planning Program Manager, (602) 254-6300.

MAG Policy Principles

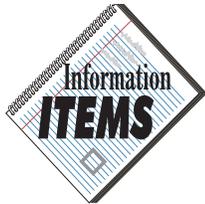
The Regional Council approved a new initiative known as *MAG Policy Principles*, a document that outlines and summarizes MAG's positions regarding priority legislative and policy issues. The intent is to have these principles in a brochure-type document readily available to MAG member agencies, external stakeholders, legislators and legislative staff, in preparation for the 2019 Arizona legislative session and beyond.

MAG has been working on compiling the document since June. The document was vetted through the committee process, with review by the MAG Management

Committee, Economic Development Committee, Transportation Policy Committee, and Regional Council, and through significant positive conversations with legislative staff, elected officials, and other stakeholders.

The idea is to revisit these policy principles, which lay out both specific and broad positions MAG supports, annually and to update as needed.

For more information, please contact Nathan Pryor, MAG Policy and Government Relations Director, (602) 254-6300.



Information Items

MAG Region Road Safety Trends

MAG staff presented an update on roadway safety trends and steps being taken to address the rising number of crashes.

The overall annual number of crashes on the region's roads has been increasing since 2013. Data confirm that the more vehicles there are on the road, the more crashes occur. The crash numbers go up seasonally as the population increases October through March. They also increase at peak driving times.

The good news is that the number of fatal and injury crashes went down slightly from 2016 to 2017. Regardless of severity, more than 70 percent of crashes occur on local and arterial streets compared to the state system in the MAG region. Nearly half of all serious injury and fatal crashes in the region happen at intersections, accounting for more than 12,000 serious injuries and fatalities a year. Left-turn and angle crashes result in the most fatalities and serious injuries.

While the overall number of crashes involving pedestrians is small at one percent, nearly 30 percent of all fatal crashes involve pedestrians. An *Arizona Republic* article dated July 2, 2018, reported that 52 pedestrian involved fatal crashes had occurred as of that date just in Maricopa County. Using that number to project fatal pedestrian crashes through 2018, MAG estimates approximately 103 pedestrian involved fatal crashes by year's end. While no death is acceptable, that would represent a decrease from the 155 who died in 2017.

Crashes involving bicyclists are also on the increase from 2013. These crashes are even more troubling, since it is difficult to assess the potential causes when reviewing the available data.

So what is being done to address these crash trends in the region? The MAG Road Safety Assessment Program, which began in 2011, evaluates safety performance at intersections. Road Safety Assessments, or RSAs, have identified 945 locations that could potentially be improved with a number of countermeasures, such as better sight

visibility and brighter lighting. However, only 17 of these locations are programmed for improvement, highlighting the need for more funding options.

Another example of inadequate funding is in the area of safety education programs. Crash data show that the percentage of occupants not using a seat belt or car seat are significantly more likely to die in comparison to nearly the same percentage of occupants who do use a safety device experiencing no injury in a fatal crash.

Currently, MAG has no funding mechanism for this type of education initiative. Education programs are a key element missing in implementing comprehensive safety improvements regionwide.

In the coming year, MAG will be developing an update to the 2015 MAG Strategic Transportation Safety Plan. These crash trend data will help inform the new safety plan and also highlight the need for more safety funding, potentially with an extension of Proposition 400, the half-cent sales tax for transportation. The development of the strategic safety plan is expected to produce additional enhancements to the RSA program, address upward trends in crashes involving bicyclists and pedestrians, and work to implement a comprehensive public education program.

In the meantime, the MAG safety program will continue to partner with member agency staff to explore low cost initiatives, including those for education programs, to improve safety in the region.

For more information, please contact Margaret Boone, MAG Safety Program Manager, (602) 254-6300.

Freeway Life Cycle Program Update

The MAG Regional Council heard a status report on the Freeway Life Cycle Program (FLCP), which represents the management tool for the freeway component of the Regional Transportation Plan. The Regional Council approved the rebalancing of the FLCP in September 2017. There are 35 projects programmed to be completed under Proposition 400, the regional half-cent sales tax for transportation funding.

Three material cost change actions were taken through the committee process in the last fiscal year. In April 2018, MAG and the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) initiated a thorough review of the FLCP program. While the analysis is ongoing, an initial review indicates that project costs are rising. Factors driving the cost increases are structural program issues, right of way cost increases, increases in scope, and market conditions.

MAG and ADOT expect the program analysis to conclude in early 2019. MAG is working with ADOT's program management consultant to review estimated construction costs and further analyze right of way increases.

MAG staff anticipates that changes will need to be made to the program, including schedule changes, reductions in scope, and project deferments outside of the funded Proposition 400 program. A request for additional funding for three of the four projects scheduled to go to construction in Fiscal Year 2019 will likely be brought to the committee. More detailed information on those projects will be presented in November 2018 for possible action.

For more information, please contact John Bullen, MAG Economic and Finance Program Manager, (602) 254-6300.

Ozone Standard Issues

The Regional Council heard an update from MAG staff on meeting the requirements for ozone set by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The Maricopa nonattainment area is currently classified as a Moderate Area for the 2008 ozone standard of 0.075 parts per million.

In order to meet the standard by the July 20, 2018, attainment date, the region needed three years of clean data at the air quality monitors in 2015-2017. Based upon 2015-2017 monitoring data, it appears that the ozone standard has been met, pending the approval of two wildfire exceptional events by the EPA.

However, based upon preliminary data from the 2018 summer ozone season, there are three monitors that are violating the standard. The exceedances in 2018 need to be evaluated to determine if they are due to exceptional events from the high number of large wildfires in California, Arizona, and other Western states.

The Arizona Department of Environmental Quality, the Maricopa County Air Quality Department and MAG worked with EPA staff to complete the required documentation of the wildfire exceptional events. The EPA has not taken action on those submittals. If the EPA determines that the standard has not been met, the region may be reclassified to a Serious Area, which could have an economic impact on the region.

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

Next Meeting

The next meeting of the MAG Regional Council will be held on Wednesday, November 28, 2018, at 11:30 a.m. at the MAG offices, 302 N. 1st Avenue, Phoenix, second floor, Saguaro Room. Agenda items are pending.