



Executive Director's Report

The September Regional Council meeting focused on work being done toward the extension of the half-cent sales tax for transportation known as Proposition 400. The Regional Council heard updates on the development of *MAG Policy Principles* to identify MAG legislative priorities, and of the process underway to identify the regional values that will inform the building blocks of the next Regional Transportation Plan.

The timing of when to bring an extension proposal forward is still an open question. The half-cent sales tax will expire in 2025. Right now, we are preparing to begin discussions about the need for transportation funding. Conversation about the development of the Regional Transportation Plan is just now beginning and will help to inform any necessary legislative steps to bring the plan to the region's voters. Much work is ahead of the region as we outline the future of our transportation system.

In our ongoing efforts to meet the human needs of the region, we saw our member agencies' renewed commitment to ending domestic violence. It was inspiring to see Regional Council members wearing the color purple as a unifying symbol of courage and honor to the victims and survivors of domestic abuse. Many of our member agencies will be displaying purple in their communities in support of October's Domestic Violence Awareness Month, sending a powerful message that there is no place for domestic violence in our homes, neighborhoods, workplaces, or schools.

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

Meeting Report for Wednesday, September 26, 2018



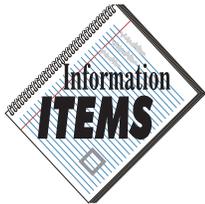
Action Items

Resolution of Support for Domestic Violence Awareness Month

An estimated 87 people lost their lives due to domestic violence in Arizona last year, with at least 53 deaths occurring in the MAG region. The MAG Regional Domestic Violence Council has coordinated a regional response to domestic violence through the criminal justice system since 1999. Gilbert Town Councilmember Eddie Cook, who chairs the MAG Regional Domestic Violence Council, gave an update on the Council's efforts. Mr. Cook reported that while the number of domestic violence fatalities in Maricopa County is going down, the number of domestic violence cases

is going up—and has been on the rise for the last three years. Following Mr. Cook’s presentation, the Regional Council approved a resolution expressing support of October as Domestic Violence Awareness Month.

For more information, please contact Brande Mead, MAG Human Services Director, (602) 254-6300.



Information Items

MAG Regional Commuter Rail Study Update

Regional Council members heard an update of the Regional Commuter Rail System Study, first done in 2010. The update provided a fresh look at the planned commuter rail system, projected ridership, cost estimates, benefits to the region, and other related data.

The proposed 110-mile system is based on four existing freight rail corridors that would connect 18 community centers/urban cores and two airports. It would give a higher speed, longer distance travel option for commuters to a variety of housing opportunities, jobs, and entertainment and cultural centers.

The study estimates weekday ridership at about 21,000, which would place the Maricopa region in the top 10 of commuter rail systems in the country. Capital costs per mile would run about \$24 million. Basing a fare assumption of \$3 dollars one-way, the estimated fare recovery is about 36-40 percent.

Discussion points included what impact the number of riders on commuter rail would have on reducing traffic congestion. MAG staff informed the Regional Council that the proposed rail corridors are different from any other transit mode, but even in the metropolitan areas with the highest ridership of commuter rail, traditionally only about 4 percent of daily trips use public transit. MAG Executive Director Eric Anderson noted that estimates on return on investment are exactly the type of data members need in order to make informed decisions about transit options in the next Regional Transportation Plan. New transportation technologies also will be a factor, and more technical studies are needed to inform the policy discussion.

Next steps for potential implementation include updating ridership forecasts, coordinating with the railroads, working out legal issues, and identifying funding. Rail operations would likely begin three to five years after funding commitments.

For more information, please contact Marc Pearsall, MAG Transportation Planner, (602) 254-6300.

MAG Policy Principles

MAG staff provided an update on *MAG’s Policy Principles*, a document that outlines and summarizes MAG’s positions regarding priority legislative and policy issues. MAG

has been working on compiling the draft document since June, with the intent to have these principles in a brochure-type document readily available to MAG member agencies, external stakeholders, legislators and legislative staff. The document vetting process accelerated in August, with review by the MAG Management Committee and Transportation Policy Committee, and significant positive conversations with elected officials.

The idea is to revisit these policy principles annually, which lay out both specific and broad positions MAG has taken in the past.

More vetting will take place during the Economic Development Committee, Management Committee, Transportation Policy Committee and Regional Council meetings in October. The goal is to have the draft MAG policy principles ready for consideration by Regional Council at the October 24, 2018, meeting.

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

Update on Proposition 400 Extension Tasks

The Regional Council heard an update from MAG staff on the planning work underway for the extension of Proposition 400, the voter-approved half-cent sales tax for transportation. The tax expires at the end of 2025. For internal planning purposes, November 2022 is being used as the possible timeline for a ballot measure to extend the tax, knowing the situation is fluid and the schedule will modify accordingly.

A timeline with four phases to develop the new Regional Transportation Plan was presented. The first phase, the Foundation, features an important values mapping exercise that kicked off on September 19, 2018. Members of the Transportation Policy Committee responded to a series of thought-provoking questions intended to identify the things our region cares about most. The exercise also was conducted with a diverse group of regional stakeholders and leaders. The exercise will feed into a larger public and stakeholder engagement effort to better understand regional priorities to best develop the Plan's goals and objectives.

Concurrent to the Foundation phase is the Analysis phase, which consists of critical technical studies to identify the scope of multimodal transportation needs. Examples of these technical studies include analyses of commuter rail, high-capacity transit, freight, safety, maintenance and operations, and arterial and bridge needs. Additionally, a series of projections will be completed, including socioeconomic projections that will be adopted in summer 2019. This technical work is critical to ensure that MAG policy committees will have the information needed to weigh trade-offs, and to make the critical policy decisions guiding the development of the Regional Transportation Plan.

The major work on the Plan takes place in the third phase, Development, projected to begin toward the end of 2020. This phase will include the key policy decisions regarding funding considerations, Plan drafting and refinement, air quality conformity analysis and plan adoption. The final phase is Election, with MAG requesting ballot placement in early 2022. At that point, MAG would shift into an information-providing role only as campaign activities would begin without MAG engagement.

Critical to all of these phases is continuous public and stakeholder engagement. The feedback loop this provides will ensure the Plan resonates with voters.

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

Legislative Outlook

MAG staff provided an update on work being done to prepare for the next session of the Arizona Legislature in January 2019. In looking back on lessons learned during the last legislative session, MAG realized that some elected officials and staff were unfamiliar with the agency and what it does.

The *MAG Policy Principles* under development will certainly help in this regard. Other initiatives included a well-attended “legislative boot camp” in August to raise awareness of MAG’s role and responsibilities. MAG staff also has met with members of the Maricopa County Board of Supervisors to discuss opportunities going forward in 2019 for the extension of transportation funding. Once the State Legislature grants authority to seek a ballot initiative extending the transportation sales tax, the Board of Supervisors would be responsible for placing it on the ballot.

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

Next Meeting

The next meeting of the MAG Regional Council will be held on Wednesday, October 24, 2018, at 11:30 a.m. at the MAG offices, 302 N. 1st Avenue, Phoenix, second floor, Saguaro Room. Agenda items are expected to include consideration of MAG’s draft policy principles. Additional agenda items are pending.