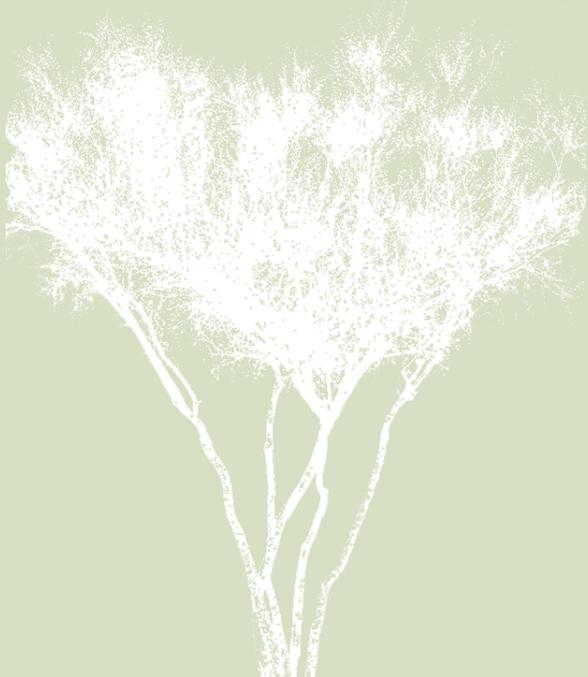
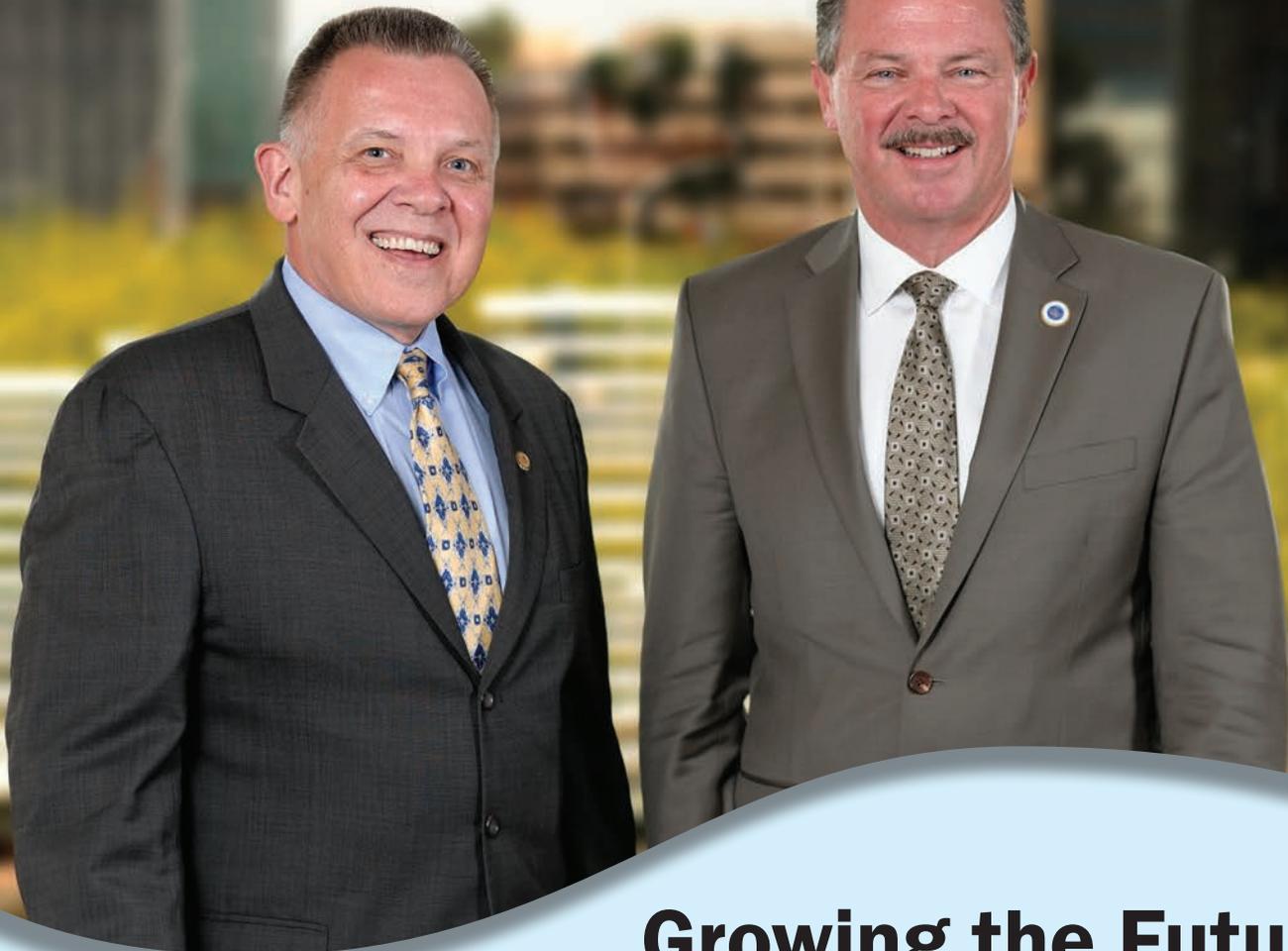




Growing the Future Through Collaboration, Innovation

FY 2015 Annual Report



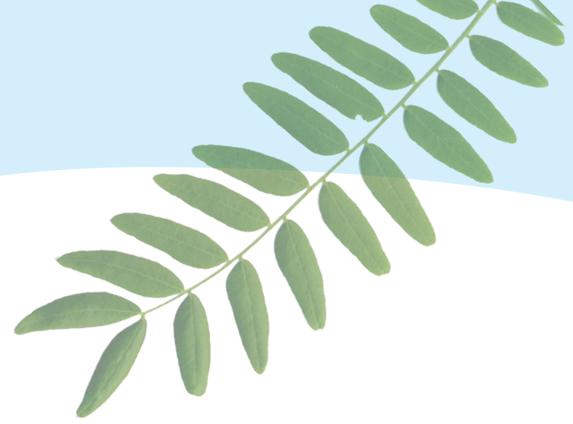
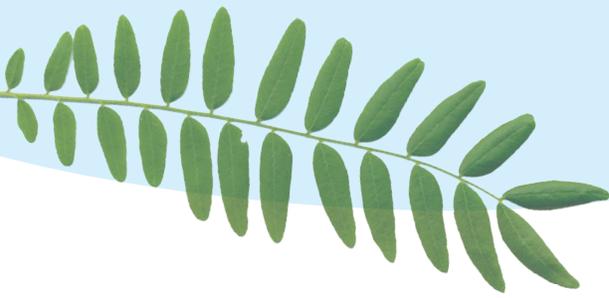


Mayor Michael LeVault
Youngtown, Outgoing Chair
Mayor W. J. "Jim" Lane
Scottsdale, Incoming Chair

Growing the Future Through Collaboration, Innovation

As elected leaders in this region, we are proud to serve as members of the Maricopa Association of Governments. MAG is principally known as the planning agency for the Regional Freeway System. Since 1985, working with the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT), we have seen the completion of approximately 180 miles of freeway. This freeway system is the economic heartbeat of our region and the state. This has been core business at MAG. The great recession taught us that we need to be nimble to succeed.

Being nimble and having the ability to change is vital to being a healthy organization. Since MAG was formed in 1967, it has consistently changed to adapt to the needs of the region. While MAG has changed in significant ways, one of its founding principles has not: to ensure "through cooperation and the pooling of common resources, maximum efficiency and economy in governmental operations, which will provide every citizen with the utmost value for every dollar."



A major change at MAG has been the formation of the Economic Development Committee (EDC). This decision was made during the height of the recession. MAG has repurposed its tools for transportation planning to provide better data analytics to the economic development departments throughout the region, to assist in growing the economy.

We continually search for innovative solutions to find added value in the activities we undertake. One recent example was using the fiber owned by the cities through the MAG Regional Community Network to enhance security for Super Bowl XLIX in Glendale. The network was developed utilizing federal dollars to assist cities with traffic control, but MAG recognized the value in the extra bandwidth, and applications were expanded to include 9-1-1 operations and public safety.

In the transportation arena, MAG, working with ADOT, analyzed “cost risk” as assigned to various projects (money that is set aside in the budget for unknown contingencies). The MAG/ADOT team identified approximately \$106.7 million in risk that could be retired based on the progress of the projects. That funding can now be budgeted for future projects. MAG will continue to work with ADOT to rigorously review other project budgets to identify more savings that can be used for new or accelerated projects.

The underlying concept of MAG is that local governments (cities, towns, counties and Native American Indian communities), which are closest to the people, should have the primary responsibility for addressing issues that require action on a regional basis. MAG has been recognized for bringing many different parties to the table to ensure all voices are heard. The MAG Economic Development Committee and Transportation Policy Committee are examples of this collaborative process.

In this report, you will learn about the many ways MAG is serving the people of this region. We will describe just a few of the accomplishments made over the past year. Our hope is to demonstrate MAG’s many roles and responsibilities in the region and how we continue to look for ways to partner with the public, other government agencies, and the business community to make our vibrant, dynamic region even better as we grow into the future.





About MAG

Central Station with the MAG building in the background.

The Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG) is a Council of Governments and the designated Metropolitan Planning Organization for regional planning in the greater Phoenix region. Established in 1967, MAG provides regional planning and policy decisions in the areas of Transportation, Environmental Programs, and Human Services, with support from its Administration, Communications, Fiscal Services, Human Resources, Information Services and Information Technology divisions. A recent focus for MAG has also been in the area of Economic Development.

MAG consists of 27 incorporated cities and towns, three Native American Indian Communities, Maricopa County, and portions of Pinal County.

The Regional Council serves as the governing board and includes representatives from the above agencies, as well as the Arizona Department of Transportation and the Citizens Transportation Oversight Committee. MAG's policy-making structure includes the Regional Council, the Executive Committee, Transportation Policy Committee, Economic Development Committee, Management Committee, and a number of advisory and technical advisory committees.





Regional Council



Robin Barker
Vice Mayor, Apache Junction



Kenneth Weise
Mayor of Avondale



Jackie Meck
Mayor of Buckeye



Mike Farrar
Councilmember, Carefree



Dick Esser
Councilmember, Cave Creek



Jay Tibshraeny
Mayor of Chandler



Roc Arnett
CTOC Chair



Lana Mook
Mayor of El Mirage



Tom Rankin
Mayor of Florence



President Ruben Balderas
Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation



Linda M. Kavanagh
Mayor of Fountain Hills



Chuck Turner
Mayor of Gila Bend



Governor Stephen Roe Lewis
Gila River Indian Community



John Lewis
Mayor of Gilbert



Jerry Weiers
Mayor of Glendale



Georgia Lord
Mayor of Goodyear



Rebecca Jimenez
Mayor of Guadalupe



Thomas Schoaf
Mayor of Litchfield Park



Christian Price
Mayor of Maricopa



Denny Barney
Supervisor, Maricopa County



John Giles
Mayor of Mesa



Michael Collins
Mayor of Paradise Valley



Cathy Carlat
Mayor of Peoria



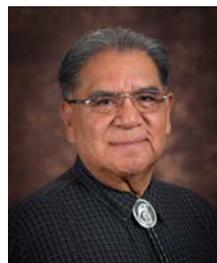
Greg Stanton
Mayor of Phoenix



Todd House
Supervisor, Pinal County



Gail Barney
Mayor of Queen Creek



President Delbert Ray
Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community



Joseph E. La Rue
State Transportation Board



Jack Sellers
State Transportation Board



W. J. "Jim" Lane
Mayor of Scottsdale



Sharon Wolcott
Mayor of Surprise



Mark Mitchell
Mayor of Tempe



Adolfo F. Gamez
Mayor of Tolleson



John Cook
Mayor of Wickenburg



Michael LeVault
Mayor of Youngtown



Downtown Phoenix, Central Avenue.

Growing the Region's Economy

Think back to 2008. Our economy was in a tailspin—the housing market had crumbled, and the region faced the fact that 65,000 homes were experiencing foreclosure or the threat of foreclosure. As a regional agency, MAG knew it couldn't turn its back on an issue that was drastically affecting so many of our residents.

With transportation serving as 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 Economic Development Committee (EDC) was born, with a mission to “develop an opportunity-specific and action-oriented plan” that advances infrastructure in the MAG region—especially transportation infrastructure—to further economic development. The EDC includes local elected officials, business and education representatives, and a representative from the Arizona Department of Transportation.

Innovation has been at the heart of MAG's economic development initiatives, bringing together numerous stakeholders from governments, private businesses, economic development organizations, universities,

and state and regional agencies to identify potential opportunities.

A major accomplishment this year was the launch of ConnectBIEN.com, a free, first-of-its-kind website that allows companies in Arizona, Mexico and Canada to directly connect with each other using online technology instead of travel. “BIEN,” an acronym for “Building an International Economic Network,” is available in English, Spanish and French. Its purpose is to link businesses to improve trade opportunities and to help them better connect to their supply chain and distribution networks.

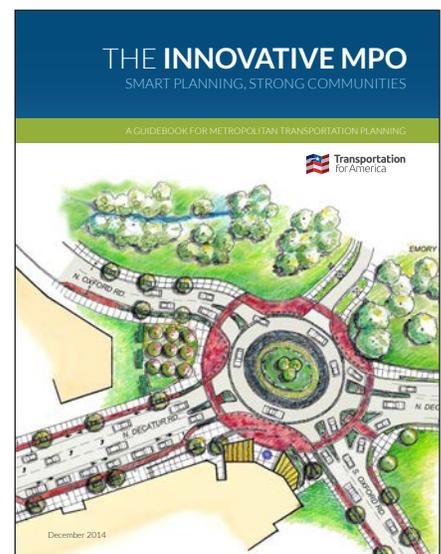


Other activities to support economic development have included:

- The creation of GreaterPhoenixRising.com, a website focused on regional data of interest for companies looking to relocate or expand in the greater Phoenix area.
- Financial support for a trade office in Mexico City.
- The creation of the Ari-Son Megaregion to advance “projects of local and regional significance,” and for continuing initiatives that promote dialogue and collaboration among local and regional leaders in Arizona and Sonora.
- Efforts promoting the extension of the border crossing card zone from 75 miles to the entire state, which would allow pre-cleared Mexican visitors to spend their tourism dollars throughout Arizona.
- Partnerships with the Canada Arizona Business Council. Between residential and commercial properties, Canadians have invested \$12 billion in our region.
- Use of MAG’s incredible repository of data to create online mapping tools to help identify economic conditions by geographic area, including employment trends, workforce availability, demographics—even performing and underperforming schools. These tools are helping MAG focus its economic development efforts.



\$181
million per year
The impact of extending
the border crossing card
zone statewide.

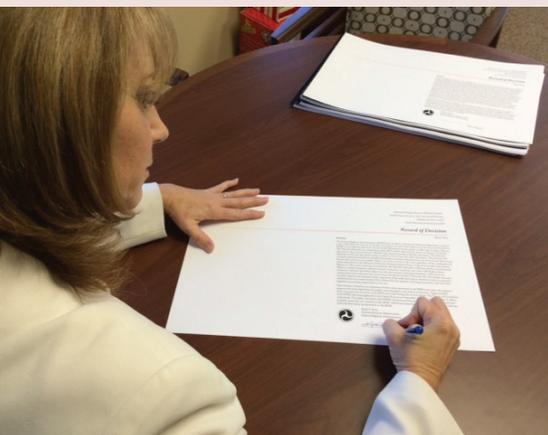


MAG’s economic development activities were highlighted in *The Innovative MPO*, a national publication published by Transportation for America, which cited MAG as a national leader and model for other metropolitan planning organizations.



Aerial photo of Loop 303 construction.

Growing the Future Through Infrastructure



The Loop 202 South Mountain Freeway receives final federal approval.

The past year marked a significant transportation milestone for MAG, when the Loop 202 South Mountain Freeway received final federal approval, enabling the region to move ahead with the last critical piece of our loop freeway system. This will significantly improve traffic movement between the southeast and southwest areas of the Valley and help reduce congestion on Interstate 10.

Another major freeway opened this year with the 17-mile completion of Loop 303 from I-10 to just below Grand Avenue—including a freeway interchange connecting I-10 to Loop 303.

MAG embarked on a new study to create a master plan for the Interstate 10/Interstate 17 “spine” corridor—a 35-mile segment used by more than 40 percent of daily freeway traffic. MAG continued to involve the public in exciting new ways to hear their thoughts on improving Valley transportation, including an online survey.



HOV 2+ ONLY
2 OR MORE PERSONS
PER VEHICLE

The MAG region has the
4th
largest HOV lane
network in the U.S.

MAG continued to use technology to make the region’s roadways safer and more efficient. For example, MAG helped fund a Department of Public Safety officer at the Arizona Department of Transportation’s traffic operations center, with the goal of clearing freeway crashes more quickly to reduce congestion and save lives. MAG even used its Regional Community Network camera-sharing capabilities to make the Super Bowl safer.

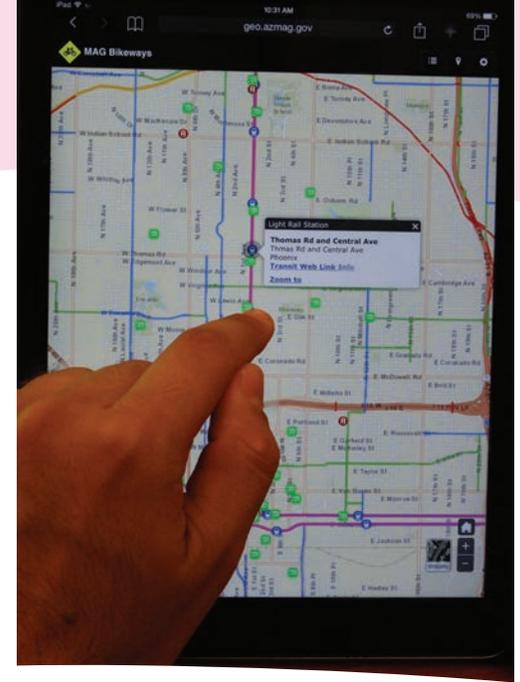
Carpooling to Cardinals football games and other West Valley events got easier, with the completion of new direct High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) ramps allowing commuters to directly exit from the Loop 101 Agua Fria Freeway to Maryland Avenue.

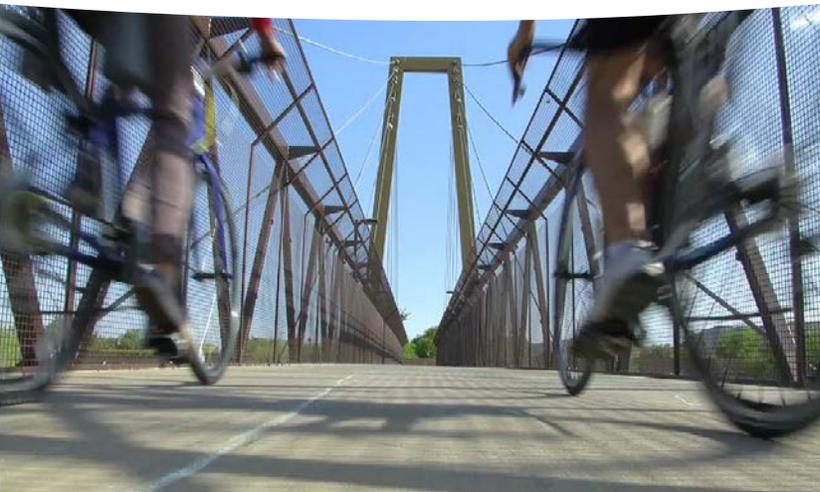
The region saw significant progress in two light rail extension projects—with more than two-thirds of the Mesa extension to Mesa Drive completed and the laying of the first track for the Northwest Phoenix alignment. Transit ridership continued to be strong, with 72 million boardings (bus and light rail) in FY 2014.

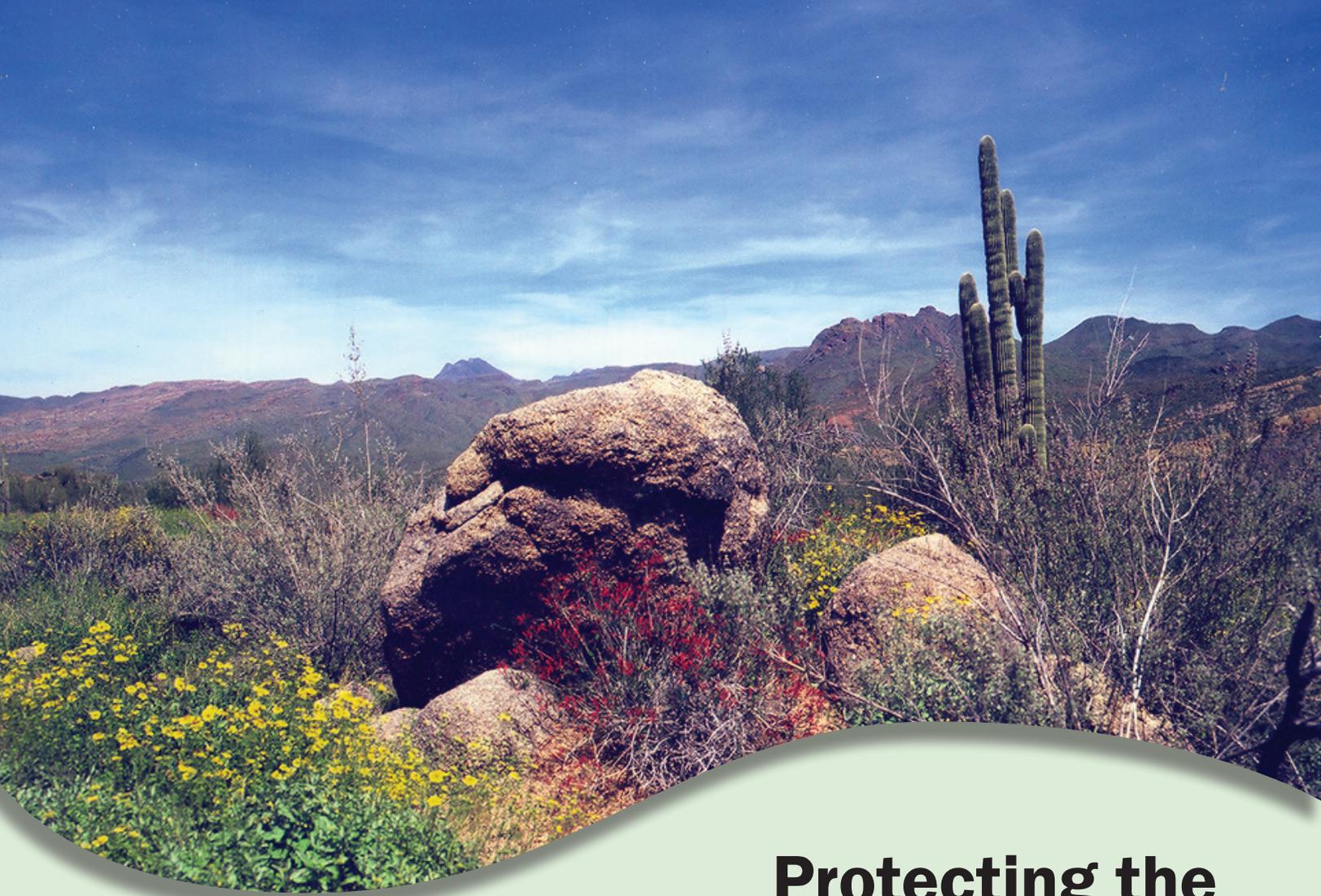
Bicyclists were another important part of the mix—MAG upgraded its online bike map to make finding the perfect bike trail a click away. Using a smart phone, computer, or tablet, bicyclists can access the map at azmag.gov/bike and quickly search for the nearest trail, bike lanes, canal routes, paved paths, crossings—even bike rental or repair shops. Photos and videos are available to give more information about navigating the bike trail system.

These are just a few of the transportation projects that were undertaken this year. In all, the Regional Transportation Plan outlined under Proposition 400 is now more than 50 percent complete, including the opening of 375 general purpose lane miles and 360 HOV lane miles, for a total of 1,080 completed lane miles under Prop 400.









Protecting the Environment

Developing air quality plans to protect our environment and our health is a core mission at MAG. There was great news on the air quality front this year, when the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) approved the air quality plan that has resulted in Maricopa County achieving compliance with the health-based standards for dust, or PM-10.

This plan is known as the MAG Five Percent Plan for PM-10, because its goal is to reduce coarse particulates at least five percent each year. The development of the plan was a collaborative effort by MAG, the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality, the Maricopa County Air Quality Department, and other stakeholders. The plan includes many of the most stringent dust control measures in the country, and the collective efforts have resulted in dramatic improvements in the concentration of dust in the Valley.

MAG continues to make headway in the area of ozone pollution, while at the same time monitoring new federal proposals to tighten the ozone standards. MAG received good news this year when the EPA



Carbon monoxide levels
in the region are
67%
BELOW
the national standard.



issued a notice of federal approval to redesignate the region to attainment status for the 1997 ozone standard of .08 parts per million. There have been no violations in our region of the eight-hour or the one-hour ozone standards since 1996, and no violations of the 1997 eight-hour ozone standard since 2004. However, in 2008, the EPA tightened the ozone standard to .075 parts per million, and in 2012 redesignated the Maricopa region for that standard to a Marginal Area. The EPA has recently proposed a stricter range for ozone of .065 to .070 parts per million for the standard, which would pose an attainment challenge for our region.



MAG received additional good news this year when it learned that those clunky “vapor recovery” nozzles at the gas pump will soon be going away. The vapor recovery nozzles were originally designed to prevent the escape of harmful ozone emissions, but they have outlived their usefulness as modern-day vehicles now come equipped with their own vapor recovery systems. The nozzles have been in place in the region since 1992. They will be phased out by 2018.



As the designated regional water quality management planning agency for the Maricopa County area, MAG develops an areawide water quality management plan as required under Section 208 of the Water Pollution Control Act of 1972. MAG is currently working with its partners to identify opportunities for making the 208 Water Quality Management Plan process more efficient and the region more globally competitive.





An intergenerational dance at the Mesa Arts Center. The Arizona Age-Friendly Network supports communities in connecting older adults with people of all ages.

Human Services *Connecting People* *Connecting Resources* *Connecting Communities*

MAG continues to partner with leaders from all walks of life to strengthen communities and support people. The agency has been working on numerous initiatives to help people remain safe from domestic violence, to find access to homeless services, and to remain connected with meaningful opportunities to participate in their communities.

Domestic violence abusers could face swifter justice as a result of collaborative efforts funded through a grant awarded to MAG in early 2015. MAG received a U.S. Department of Justice STOP (Services* Training* Officers* Prosecutors) grant through the Governor's Office for Children, Youth and Families to work with 30 partners, including law enforcement representatives, prosecutors, and victim advocates. The collaborations will address issues related to the criminal justice system's response to domestic violence, with the goal of holding abusers accountable and keeping victims safe.





The MAG Regional Council signs a resolution recognizing October as Domestic Violence Awareness month.

MAG continues to work regionally to develop strategies to end homelessness and ensure people have appropriate access to resources. MAG is working with numerous partners to help homeless people access services in a more timely fashion and reduce the amount of time they spend on the streets. Improvements include coordinating the process for accessing shelter and services and improving how information is shared. MAG also oversees an annual street count in which hundreds of volunteers count and survey people experiencing homelessness. This effort is critical to securing millions of dollars in Continuum of Care Program homeless assistance funding from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) each year. Since 1999, the region has been awarded \$295 million in funding to provide housing and services for people experiencing homelessness.

MAG continues to evolve as a national leader in supporting older adults and connecting people of all generations with each other. MAG received grants totaling nearly \$200,000 from local and national philanthropies to support MAG and the Arizona Age-Friendly Network. The Greater Phoenix region is one of only four “Best Intergenerational Communities” nationwide as recognized by the MetLife Foundation and Generations United. In addition, Virginia G. Piper Charitable Trust recognized MAG for its efforts with a 2014 Piper Trust Encore Prize for “Exceptional Organizations.” The prize included a grant for \$5,000 to support MAG in continuing to go above and beyond its traditional role as a regional planning agency to better connect older adults with people of all ages.

With the support of many partners statewide, MAG continues to address key issues, such as accessing transportation resources, providing heat relief to homeless people during the hot summer, and building the community connections necessary to help people live where they have friends, interests, and a sense of purpose. These connections improve the quality of life for all residents and strengthen the vibrancy of the region.

700,000
 The number of
 people aged 65+ in
 our region by 2020.





Input is collected during one of three public meetings on the Spine Study.

Communicating With Clarity

Understanding the priorities and preferences of the public when making transportation decisions is a critical component of MAG's planning process. Getting this input can be challenging due to the fact that most people live very busy lives. That is why MAG utilizes a variety of communication methods, including public events, small and large group presentations, websites, social media, and videos, to provide information and encourage feedback.

MAG also works to ensure that the input received includes participation by all residents of our region, including people who are protected under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and subsequent laws, such as the Americans With Disabilities Act and age discrimination safeguards. For example, MAG frequently works with Valley Metro staff to provide information and training to people with disabilities to help them better understand and utilize the public transit system in the region.

The latest Transportation Policy Committee e-update is available Site Index >>

MARICOPA ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS

Member Agencies Regional Council Committees Projects	Transportation Environmental Programs Human Services Information Services	Administration Communications Information Technology Fiscal Services
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Commuter Rail

Get on board for a regional rail future

Conceptual Photo Simulation of MAG Region Commuter Rail System

Interactive Maps

Create demographic and employment maps with our online mapping and reporting tool.

Building an International Economic Network

Add your business profile. Search for companies. Grow your business.

Greater Phoenix Rising

The Greater Phoenix Rising website serves as an information center for growing businesses.

MAG Publications

MAG produces numerous publications of benefit to local agencies and businesses.

The Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG) is a Council of Governments (COG) that serves as the regional agency for the metropolitan Phoenix area. When MAG was formed in 1967, the elected officials recognized the need for long-range planning and policy development on a regional scale. They realized that many issues such as transportation, air quality and human services affected residents beyond the borders of their individual jurisdictions.

MAG was founded in the spirit of cooperation. MAG members believe that by uniting, they can solve common problems, take an active role in long-range regional issues and address concerns that affect all of the communities.

MAG is the regional air quality planning agency and metropolitan planning organization for transportation for all jurisdictions in Maricopa County, including the Phoenix urbanized area and the contiguous urbanized area in Pinal County, including the Town of Florence and City of Maricopa. MAG has also been designated by the Governor to serve as the principal planning agency for the region in a number of other areas, including water quality and solid waste management. In addition, through an Executive Order from the Governor, MAG develops population estimates and projections for the region.

The Spine Study: Interstate-10 and Interstate-17 Corridor Master Plan

The Maricopa Association of Governments, in partnership with the Federal Highway Administration and the Arizona Department of Transportation, launched The Spine Study to develop a Corridor Master Plan for the Interstate 10 and Interstate 17 corridor. This corridor is referred to as the "Spine," because it serves as the backbone for transportation in the metropolitan Phoenix area. In fact, the corridor handles more than 40 percent of all daily freeway traffic in the region. Click here to learn more about the Interstate 10 and Interstate 17 corridor master plan.




1,700
Online surveys received on the I-10/I-17 "Spine" Study.

Additional examples of outreach this year include the creation of an online survey utilizing the Metroquest interactive survey tool to obtain priorities and preferences as part of the Interstate 10/Interstate 17 Corridor Master Plan, or "Spine Study." The corridor is called the "Spine" because it serves as the backbone of the regional freeway system, with more than 40 percent of daily freeway travel accessing the corridor.



A number of videos were produced, including an informational video on MAG's efforts to allow Mexican visitors to travel to the entire state and a video detailing how to access various bike trails in the region. MAG also produced a number of training videos, including one for law enforcement regarding domestic violence procedures, a video for school crossing guards to help keep Valley kids safe, and an instructional video for volunteers participating in the homeless street count.

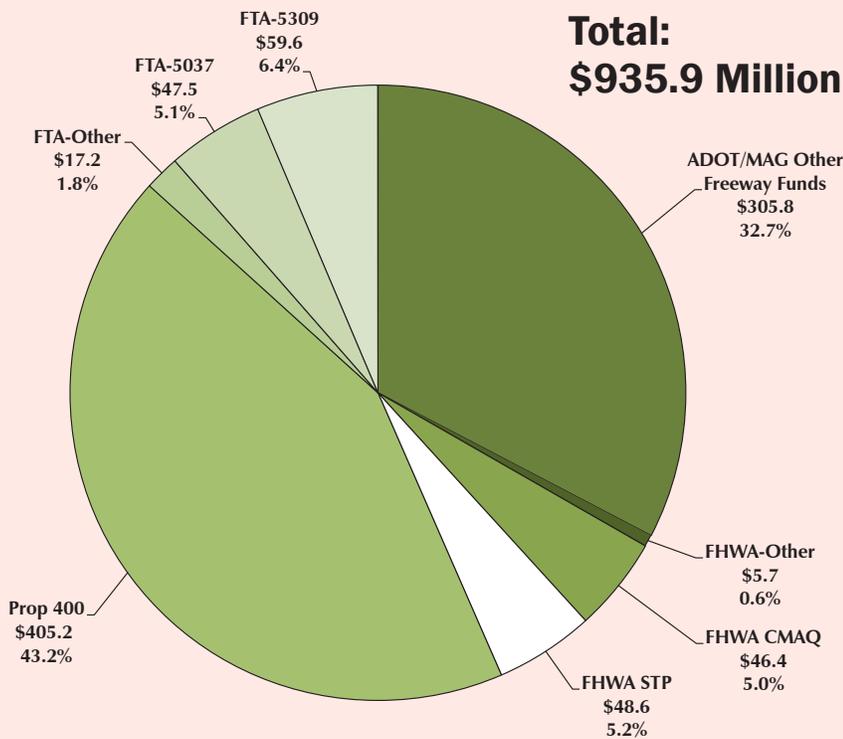


If you would like to learn more about MAG programs or activities, please visit the website azmag.gov, follow MAG on Twitter at twitter.com/MAGregion, or friend MAG on Facebook. You can see MAG videos on YouTube at youtube.com/MAGcommunications.



Financials

Cooperatively Developed Funding (in Millions)

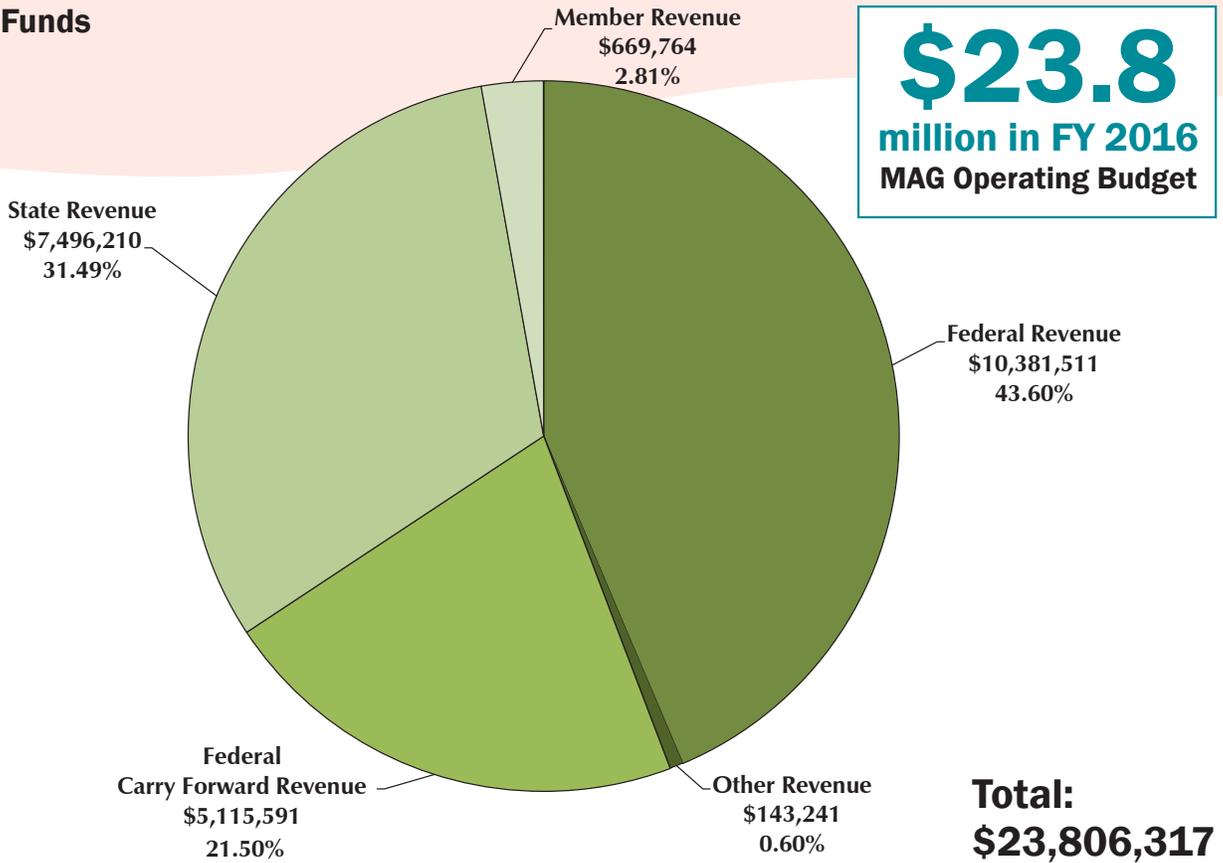


Funding for MAG’s programs and activities comes from a variety of sources, with federal and state funding comprising the principal revenue source. Membership dues and special assessments—which are based on population and assessed from each member agency—provide another source of revenue to support MAG’s regional activities.

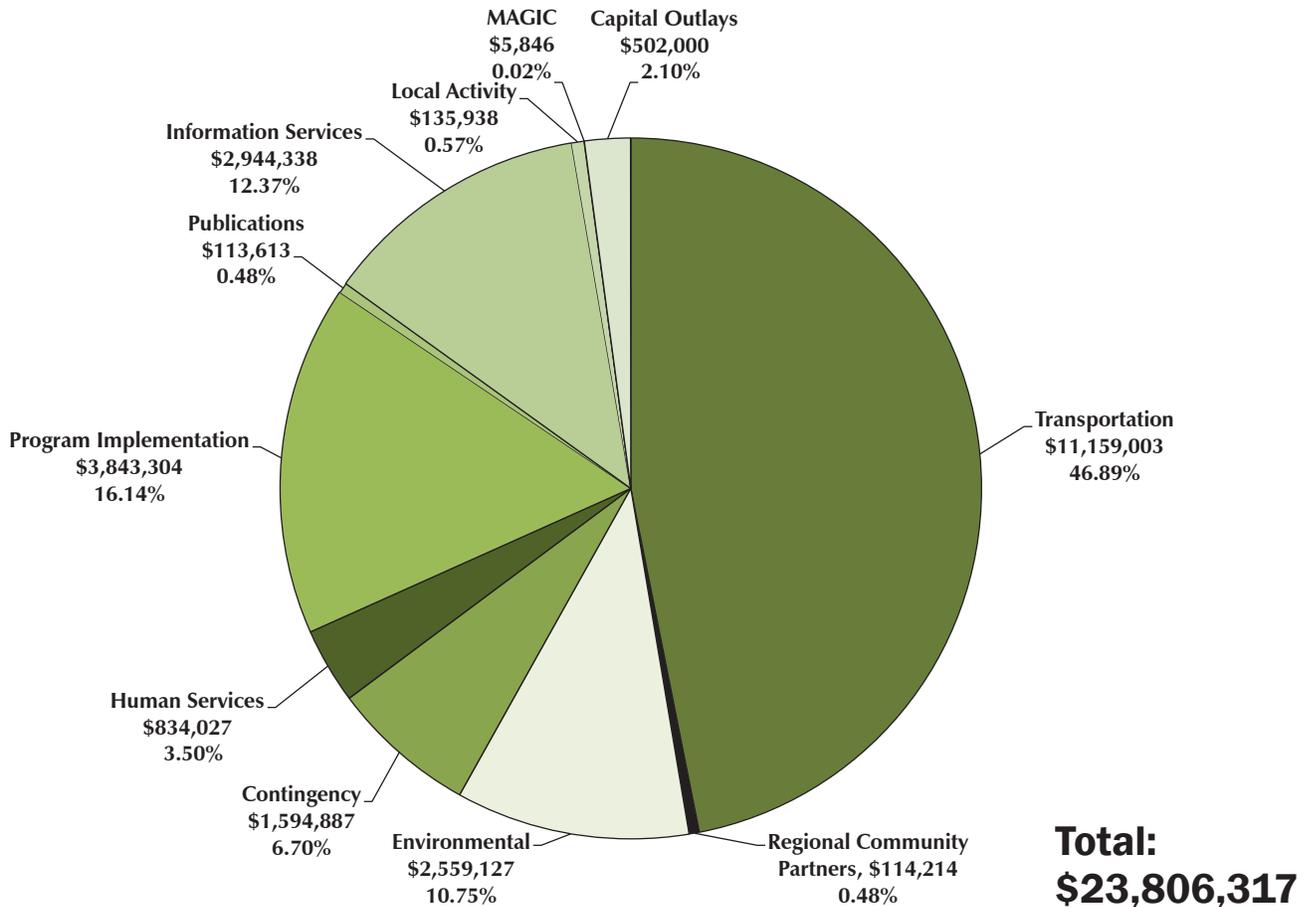
MAG plans for more than \$935.9 million in total regional funding, including funding for the freeway program.

MAG’s FY 2016 Unified Planning Work Program and Annual Budget is \$32.3 million, which includes an operating budget of about \$23.8 million. The difference is for carry forward consulting contracts and funding for other agencies with pass-through agreements.

Source of Funds



How MAG Uses the Funds by Program





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