

Maricopa Association of Governments FY 2016 Title VI and Environmental Justice Annual Report

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Introduction

The Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG) is committed to ensuring the full participation of all populations in regional planning activities. MAG's nondiscrimination policy addresses Title VI, Environmental Justice, and other federal and state statutes. The protected classes include race, color, national origin, age, sex, disability, income status, Limited English Proficiency (LEP), religion, sexual orientation, and gender identity. Extensive outreach and data analysis are conducted to provide equal benefit to these populations and to protect them from shouldering a disproportionate burden. This annual report details progress made, activities undertaken, and goals to give voice to communities of concern.

For more information about this report or other civil rights issues, please contact the Title VI Coordinator, Amy St. Peter, at (602) 254-6300.

Accomplishments

Since the last annual report dated August 1, 2015, MAG has completed the following accomplishments.

- Provided outreach to nonprofit agencies providing services to persons with disabilities to discuss regional coordination and collaborative planning opportunities in human services transportation.
- Interacted routinely with members of the public through various social media tools that include Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and LinkedIn.
- Provided outreach to the Gila-Pinal Rides Coordination meeting to ensure rural communities are included in regional coordination and collaborative planning opportunities in human services transportation.
- Provided outreach to nonprofit agencies serving domestic violence survivors to discuss regional coordination and collaborative planning opportunities in human services domestic violence planning.
- Staffed information booths at the following events: National Federation of the Blind Statewide Conference, White Cane Day (event for people who are blind or who have visual impairments), African American Symposium on Disabilities, Health and Wellness Fair at Ability360, Governor's Highway Safety Day at the Arizona State Fair, Tempe Tardeada Festival, Martin Luther King Day Event, American Indian Disability Summit, and Juneteenth Event.
- Hosted a community outreach event regarding domestic violence for law enforcement.
- Provided presentations to the following groups at meetings in the community: the STAR East, STAR West and STAR Central disability groups, East Valley Clubhouse disability group, Arizona Bridge to Independent Living, Northwest Stroke Survivor Group, Brain Injury Association support group, Granite Reef Senior Center support group, Hope Keepers Disability support group, Apache Trails deaf community support group, West Valley Human Services Alliance, Northwest Valley Community Transportation Stakeholders Group, East Valley Age Friendly Planning Committee, and the Native Health Center in Phoenix.
- Integrated the transportation needs of adults over the age of 65 years into the Arizona Age-Friendly Network. The network is designed to assist people 60 years and more in finding the resources they need to live independently in their homes. Access to transportation has been identified as a critical element to achieving this goal. Efforts are underway to meet the transportation needs of older adults in nine pilot projects in Phoenix, Tempe, Surprise, the Northwest Valley, Scottsdale, Wickenburg, the City of Maricopa, Parker, and Bullhead City.

Funding

In FY 2016, MAG planned for approximately \$5,256,824 in pass-through transportation-related funding from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). For a detailed breakout of this budgeted funding, please refer to the FY 2016 MAG Unified Planning and Work Program.

Grants

The grants that MAG might pursue in the next fiscal year will be determined as needs and opportunities arise.

Public Meetings

MAG holds more than 200 public meetings each year through 26 different committees. Every committee at MAG complies with the Open Meeting Law. Hundreds of people attend committee and stakeholder meetings each year. We do not ask or require people to report their race and ethnicity at any meeting, nor do we estimate their status. In keeping with Open Meeting Law, meeting attendees are also not required to sign in. We ensure minorities are represented in our public meetings through targeted outreach to Title VI neighborhoods and community groups that serve minorities. The accomplishments listed earlier in this report provide examples of the targeted outreach.

In addition to the hundreds of committee meetings and targeted outreach, MAG hosted the following public hearings and special events:

- Held four MAG Transportation Ambassador Program meetings to disseminate transportation information and to collect feedback from communities of concern regarding transportation challenges and opportunities. The program has more than 620 participants. The information collected at the meetings drives the development of strategies included in the MAG plans to coordinate human services transportation.
- Collaborated with Ability360 Center, Valley Metro, and the Arizona Statewide Independent Living Council to present the 2016 Ability360 Center Transportation Conference providing resources on accessible transportation options available to the public.
- Conducted the Annual Report Public Hearing on the Status of Proposition 400 on November 19, 2015. The presentation and comments received during the hearing were provided to MAG policy committees for review prior to taking any action on the Annual Report.
- Conducted the November 17, 2015 Public Hearing on the Draft MAG 208 Water Quality Management Plan Amendment for the Central Buckeye Wastewater Treatment Plant Arizona Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Permit Discharges to the Roosevelt Canal and Buckeye Canal. On October 3, 2015, the public hearing was advertised in *The Arizona Republic*. On October 8, 2015, letters were sent to Title VI stakeholders inviting them to the public hearing and notifying them that the draft document is available for public review at the MAG Offices, Glendale Public Library, Mesa Public Library, Phoenix Central Public Library, and on the MAG website.
- Conducted the Mid-Phase Public Hearing on Wednesday, April 27, 2016. The hearing provided members of the public an opportunity to comment on the Draft FY 2017-2021 Transportation Improvement Program, Draft FY 2016 Transit Program of Projects, and amendment to the 2035 Regional Transportation Plan. Documents were made available for review at the MAG offices and on the MAG website. Comments and responses to comments made during the phase were provided in the FY 2016

Mid-Phase Input Opportunity report and provided to policy makers before action was taken. The public hearing was announced with a targeted mailing to the MAG public involvement mail list of more than 3,000, including Title VI communities. It was also noticed through display advertisements in *The Arizona Republic* and *La Voz* (Spanish language) publications. Twenty postcard notices were sent to each of the 20 regional libraries in the Valley.

- Conducted the June 7, 2016 Final Phase Public Hearing on the Draft Amendment to the 2035 MAG Regional Transportation Plan, Draft FY 2017-2021 MAG Transportation Improvement Program, Draft FY 2016 Transit Program of Projects, and Draft April 2016 MAG Conformity Analysis. On May 5, 2016, the public hearing was advertised in *The Arizona Republic* and *La Voz* (Spanish language) newspapers. On May 13, 2016, postcards were sent to the public involvement mail list and Title VI stakeholders inviting them to the public hearing and notifying them that the draft documents are available for public review at the MAG Offices and on the MAG website. Comments and responses to comments were provided in the FY 2016 Final Phase Input Opportunity report and provided to policy makers before action was taken.
- Hosted a conference of the Arizona Age-Friendly Network to build capacity throughout the state for better connecting older adults with people of all ages. Transportation was a significant theme of the conference.

Data Collection

The MAG Information Services Division collects a range of data, including demographic data from the U.S. Census Bureau. In addition to general population concentrations, MAG also collects data regarding minorities, age, poverty level, and Limited English Proficiency. Population concentrations for these protected classes are mapped out with overlays of the capital transportation investments and the bus service. This allows for analysis to determine if Title VI neighborhoods are receiving equal benefit and not a disproportionate burden. Title VI neighborhoods are identified by the presence of communities of concern that are higher than the regional average. The exception for this is LEP neighborhoods. MAG follows the federal Safe Harbor Provision of five percent or 1,000 people within a tract or neighborhood. The census tract is the geography for all analysis.

The MAG viewers experience robust traffic each month with more than 3,000 hits on average. MAG provides extensive training and outreach to ensure the public can easily access and use these data in meaningful ways. The trainings focus on how to use the MAG Regional Demographic Viewer, the Statewide Demographic Viewer, and the Employment Viewer. In the last year, more than 165 people received training from MAG on how to utilize the viewers. The trajectory of people being trained increases each month. Examples of training participants include representatives from social services, realty, insurance, education, healthcare, finance, transit, consulting, even the Girl Scouts, as well as local, county, tribal, and state government agencies. Examples of agencies participating in the training sessions include Inter Tribal Council of Arizona, Inc.; Greater Phoenix Chamber of Commerce; Arizona Age-Friendly Network; Maricopa County Head Start; Northwest Valley Connect; First Things First; Sonoran Institute; ICM Food & Clothing Bank; Mesa Arts Center; HOPE VI; Girl Scouts of America; Mountain Park Health Center; Valley of the Sun United Way; American Lung Association; Valle del Sol; Arizona at Work; Child Crisis Arizona; Gompers Employment Services; Gompers Habilitation Center; International Rescue Committee; Hospice of the Valley; Salvation Army; Valley of the Sun YMCA; and Friendly House.

In addition to demographic data, MAG also collects data from surveys. The MAG Awareness Survey is distributed at every community event. The zip codes of survey respondents' residence are used to ensure outreach

coverage in Title VI neighborhoods. The results of the survey are used to inform human services transportation planning and to provide assistance to those in need. Periodically, MAG will conduct the Household Travel Survey to inform the transportation models. This provides additional data about the travel patterns of people in the region, including communities of concern. The models are used to identify the impacts of transportation planning and to make adjustments as needed.

Planning Studies and Projects

MAG undertakes a plethora of planning studies and projects each year. This includes areas of focus in transportation, environmental quality, human services, information services, and economic development. There were not any Title VI specific studies or projects. The studies are very technical and do not have a Title VI impact because they are not siting projects. The projects comprise pass-through funding to MAG's subrecipients. The contracts and agreements all contain civil rights provisions. The MAG Fiscal Services Division thoroughly reviews these documents for strict adherence to Title VI. This will be described in more detail in the subrecipient review section. For a full listing of planning studies and projects, please refer to the MAG Unified Planning and Work Program and the MAG website at www.azmag.gov.

Limited English Proficiency

MAG is committed to making information available in a variety of formats to meet people's needs. A tri-lingual MAG Communications Division staff member regularly attends community events and verbally communicates in Spanish, and as needed, in sign language. Hearing assisted devices are provided for committee meetings. The MAG disability outreach associate provides information in braille upon request. MAG did not receive any requests from the public for translation services in the past year. MAG did take the initiative to provide the following translation services in addition to maintaining vital MAG documents in Spanish:

- Reached out to Spanish media and Spanish-speaking public on MAG Economic Development Committee efforts led by MAG regarding trade opportunities and outreach to businesses in Arizona, Canada and Mexico; and on MAG Regional Domestic Violence Council efforts led by MAG regarding the Regional Misdemeanor Domestic Violence Protocol Model and available resources. Translated various materials related to efforts of the Economic Development Committee and the Household Travel Survey into Spanish.
- Updated and translated MAG Awareness Survey forms into Spanish.
- Provided translation services at three MAG Transportation Ambassador Program meetings.
- Provided voice translation of English presentation into Spanish via headsets to members of a Mexican delegation that attended the League of Arizona Cities and Towns Annual Conference in Tucson, AZ in August 2015.

Environmental Justice

MAG did not identify any possible adverse side effects from MAG's regional planning on people with low incomes or minority populations.

Title VI Training

The Title VI Coordinator regularly notifies the Title VI Division Liaisons of Title VI training opportunities. The liaisons share the information with the staff in each division. For example, staff participates in monthly Diversity Leadership Alliance workshops. Staff is also attending an Environmental Justice webinar hosted by American

Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO), the Center for Environmental Excellence, the U.S. Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration.

Complaint Procedures

There were no complaints filed during this time period.

Reviews of Program Areas and Subrecipients

Each program area and subrecipient is reviewed by Fiscal Services staff, the Division Managers, and Executive Director as contracts and planning agreements are developed. This includes a careful analysis of Title VI provisions to ensure strict adherence. The review revealed full compliance.

Goals for the Coming Year

In FY 2017, MAG has identified the following goals to ensure full compliance with Title VI, Environmental Justice, and related authorities. These goals were developed by the Title VI Coordinator, reviewed by the Title VI Division Liaisons, and approved by the MAG Executive Director.

- Fully and efficiently respond to requests for Limited English Proficiency services, translation requests, and special accommodations needed to engage communities of concern in MAG's regional planning.
- Maintain vital MAG documents in English and Spanish on the MAG website as well as in hard copy. Provide copies in braille upon request.
- Document and address any civil rights complaints received while notifying the pertinent authorities of the submission and resolution of the complaint.
- Continue to post the public notice on MAG's website, in the MAG offices by the third floor reception desk, and in all vital publications.
- The Title VI Coordinator will continue to offer information about civil rights training opportunities throughout the year to the division liaisons.
- Continue to review all program areas and subrecipients for full compliance with Title VI requirements. Identify, resolve, and report any findings.

For More Information

Please contact the MAG Title VI Coordinator, Amy St. Peter, with any questions at (602) 254-6300 or at astpeter@azmag.gov. The current Title VI Program is available on the MAG website at www.azmag.gov.