

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

What is the Maricopa Association of Governments?

The Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG) is a Council of Governments (COG) that serves as the regional planning and policy agency for the metropolitan Phoenix area. MAG conducts extensive applied research that is fundamental to its core mission of strengthening the Greater Phoenix region and State of Arizona. MAG serves a region of more than four million people.

When MAG was formed in 1967, the elected officials recognized the need for data-driven 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. 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. Extensive primary research drives this work.

Who are MAG's Members?

MAG is made up of the 27 incorporated cities and towns within Maricopa County and the contiguous urbanized area, the Gila River Indian Community, the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community, Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation, and Maricopa and Pinal counties. The Regional Council, which is the governing and chief policy-making body for the organization, is made up of elected officials from all

of the cities and towns in the region, representatives of the Maricopa County and Pinal County boards of supervisors, lead elected officials from the Indian Communities and representatives of the Arizona Department of Transportation and the Citizens Transportation Oversight Committee.

What is a Metropolitan Planning Organization?

Federal transportation law requires that the Governor of each state designate a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for each urbanized area. MAG was designated as the MPO for transportation planning for the Maricopa County region in 1973. MAG is also certified as a Transportation Management Area by the U.S. Secretary of Transportation.

What is MAG's purpose?

MAG provides a forum for research, discussion and study of regional issues. Activities include facilitating agreements among governmental units for the adoption of common policies, laying the groundwork for future growth and development, and identifying and solving regional problems by attaining the greatest degree of intergovernmental cooperation.

It is MAG's goal to ensure that through the cooperation and pooling of resources, citizens get the utmost value for every dollar spent on governmental operations.

How did MAG begin?

When the Maricopa Association of Governments was formed in 1967, elected officials recognized the need for long-range planning and policy development on a regional scale. They realized that many issues such as transportation and air quality affected residents beyond the borders of their individual jurisdictions. Founded in the spirit of cooperation, MAG members believe that by uniting they can solve common problems, take an active role in regional issues, and proactively address concerns that affect all of our communities.

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How is MAG funded?

Funding for MAG 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.

How is the organization structured?

Along with its Regional Council, MAG also has a number of committees to help in regional planning activities. These include the Executive Committee, Management Committee, Economic Development Committee, Transportation Policy Committee and a number of advisory and technical advisory committees.

How do MAG activities affect me?

MAG’s regional activities encompass issues affecting almost every aspect of our lives. For example, its human services division helps study and solve problems in such critical areas as domestic violence, homelessness and at-risk youth. Other MAG committees develop policies such as increasing the use of alternative transportation modes and designing the building codes that determine how your home is built.

MAG was responsible for bringing emergency 9-1-1 service to the Valley and oversees its implementation. The MAG Intelligent Transportation Systems Committee studies how to use technology to make your travel easier. Other committees work to plan better pedestrian and bike pathways. MAG’s *Don’t Trash Arizona* program provides funding for litter prevention and education.

These are just a few of the ways MAG directly impacts your life.

What is the Regional Transportation Plan?

The MAG Regional Transportation Plan represents the most comprehensive planning effort in the Valley in 40 years. Replacing the former Long Range Transportation Plan as the policy framework that directs major transportation investments in the region, the Regional Transportation Plan serves as

the Valley's transportation blueprint for the next 20 years and beyond. The plan includes performance-based measures that allow us to track our progress toward meeting identified regional goals.

The Regional Transportation Plan was developed through the MAG Transportation Policy Committee, a public/private partnership charged with finding solutions to the region's transportation challenges.

Does MAG need my input?

Yes! Because MAG is made up of Valley communities, the decisions made by its members affect us all. MAG actively seeks public participation in all of its meetings and solicits citizen input in virtually every area of planning and policymaking. Valley citizens serve on many of our advisory committees.

Your thoughts, opinions and ideas are more than desired—they are necessary for us to build a community that serves the diverse interests and needs of *all* of its citizens.

How can I learn more?

You can call (602) 254-6300, or send an e-mail to mag@azmag.gov. You can also visit the MAG website at www.azmag.gov. Or, you can write to: Maricopa Association of Governments
302 North 1st Avenue
Suite 300
Phoenix, Arizona, 85003.

You may want to request to be put on the newsletter mailing list. Notices of public meetings are posted on the second floor of the MAG office building, in the newsletter, and on the website.

