



## Executive Director's Report

At the March Regional Council meeting, we unveiled the new MAG website to connect businesses in Arizona to businesses in Mexico and Canada—our number one and two export partners. The name of the site is [www.ConnectBIEN.com](http://www.ConnectBIEN.com). BIEN is an acronym for Building an International Economic Network. “Bien” in Spanish and French also means “good.”

Developing innovative ideas like BIEN requires vision and support from MAG elected officials. At the March Regional Council meeting, we said goodbye to our chair, Mayor Scott Smith, whose efforts can also be described as “bien,” and who had vision and support for many of the projects at MAG. The support of the Regional Council is the key to our collective success. Doing business the way it has always been done will not be enough. BIEN is a great example of a transformative project that can assist in leading Arizona to a better future.

The ConnectBIEN website uses an online platform to link businesses across international boundaries, improve cross-border freight and trade opportunities, and help businesses connect to their supply chain and distribution networks in the trade region. It is an innovative means for developing relationships through technology rather than travel.

We saw a demonstration of how a business can quickly provide a profile about its products and services. Once posted, other businesses searching the site can see what is offered and find ways to collaborate in mutually-beneficial partnerships. Those accessing the site can search for connections using a variety of search factors, including company name, distance, or the type of business or industry. The site will also soon be available in Spanish.

In order to have a viable transportation system, it is essential to connect people to centers of employment and commerce. To sustain that system, we need a robust economy. The past decade, while difficult, has taught us valuable lessons about the importance of growing our region's revenue base beyond housing and tourism. By growing the funding pie, we can continue to meet the needs of our growing region.

**For more information, please contact Dennis Smith, MAG Executive Director, (602) 254-6300.**

## Meeting Report for Wednesday, March 26, 2014

### Action Items



#### Regional Council Supports I-11 Resolution

The Regional Council voted to approve a resolution of support regarding items MAG is requesting be included as part of the Interstate 11 (I-11) and Intermountain West Corridor Study. The Arizona and Nevada departments of transportation have been developing the study, which will be completed this summer. MAG is requesting that ADOT include the adopted, illustrative corridors identified in the Hassayampa and Hidden Valley studies on all relevant maps of study alternatives, to inform the public of past actions by the MAG Regional Council. MAG is also requesting that the I-11 study establish segments of independent utility (individual segments outside of the prioritized corridor) to encourage rapid development of environmental and construction activities. Additionally, the resolution supports a Pima Association of Governments' request for further study of a segment known as the "South Arizona Connectivity Segment's Alternative C," which encompasses eastern Pima County as part of an overall I-11 route from Mexico to Nevada.

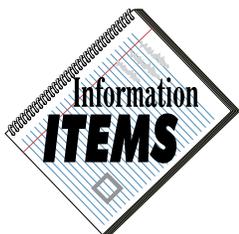
For more information, please contact Bob Hazlett, MAG Senior Engineering Project Manager, (602) 254-6300.

#### Second Deferral Request

Under the MAG Federal Fund Programming Guidelines, projects that are deferred for a second time require the project sponsor to justify the request with final approval considered by the Regional Council. The city of Scottsdale requested to defer the construction phase of the *Bicycle and Pedestrian Improvements on the Arizona Canal from Chaparral Road to Indian Bend Wash* project from 2014 to 2015. The city reported the delays were necessary to authorize design and complete extensive public outreach efforts to neighborhoods affected by the project. The public involvement process required 11 months to complete and involved multiple public meetings. Although substantial work has been completed on the environmental clearance and design of the project, the timeline left little room for delays and entailed the risk of possible loss of funding should the project not be able to move forward as programmed. The Regional Council approved the request.

For more information, please contact Teri Kennedy, MAG Transportation Improvement Program Manager, (602) 254-6300.

### Information Items



#### Second Binational Forum Collaboration Agreement

The Regional Council was provided an update on the upcoming Second Binational Economic Forum scheduled for April 10-11, 2014, in Nogales, Sonora. The main

purpose of the forum is to convene mayors from Arizona and Sonora to sign a collaboration agreement to establish a megaregion to address important policy matters impacting both states, and to position the Arizona-Sonora megaregion to be globally competitive. The agreement would be similar to the CaliBaja model between the San Diego/Imperial Valley region and Baja California, Mexico. It is envisioned that the megaregion initiative will further enable the development of local relationships to advance projects of local and regional significance on both sides of the border. Areas to be explored include transportation and infrastructure, education, economic development, border security and public safety, trade area promotion, commerce and tourism. To date, 41 mayors from the state of Sonora and 30 elected officials from Arizona are scheduled to attend.

**For more information, contact Alana Chávez-Langdon, MAG International Economic Development Analyst, (602) 254-6300.**

### **FY 2015 MAG Unified Planning Work Program and Annual Budget**

The Regional Council received an update on the development of the FY 2015 MAG Unified Planning Work Program and Annual Budget. The Work Program and Budget are presented incrementally to the Regional Council prior to requested action in May. The detailed draft budget is about 60 percent complete. This month, the draft budget documents included the detailed work program and the *Programs in Brief* summary of new projects proposed for FY 2015. Staff noted that the current draft includes program narratives, the estimated budget amounts for each project and program, and estimated carry forward amounts.

Staff noted that a project has been added for the Grand Avenue Transit Feasibility Study, which is a pass-through amount for a joint MAG/Regional Public Transportation Authority (RPTA) project, which will study the needs and feasibility of different levels of bus transit improvements in the Grand Avenue corridor. Staff reported that the budget included another transit project that was added to the list of projects last month, an Onboard Survey of Transit Users. This project will perform a detailed survey of transit users to determine rider characteristics. The information will also feed into the MAG travel demand model. Staff reported that the draft transit planning agreement, approved earlier by the Regional Council, is additionally included in this draft budget document. Most of the changes to this document were updates due to the new transportation legislation.

Staff noted that the FY 2015 draft budget would be reviewed at the Intermodal Planning Group meeting on March 28, 2014. This budget review is conducted by the Federal Highway Administration and the Federal Transit Administration. Comments from that meeting will be presented in April.

**For more information, please contact Rebecca Kimbrough, MAG Fiscal Services Manager, (602) 254-6300.**

### Next Meeting

The next meeting of the MAG Regional Council will be Wednesday, April 23, 2014, at 11:30 a.m. at the MAG offices, 302 N. 1st Avenue, Phoenix, second floor, Saguaro Room. Agenda items are expected to include recommended approval of a Phoenix capital project for a U.S. Department of Transportation TIGER Grant, update on the MAG 2012 Five Percent Plan for PM-10 and Exceptional Events, and an update on the development of the MAG FY 2015 Unified Planning Work Program and Annual Budget. Additional agenda items are pending.

**For more information, please contact Dennis Smith, MAG Executive Director, (602) 254-6300.**