



Executive Director's Report

The June Regional Council meeting was MAG's Annual Meeting, which included election of officers, followed by a special "Passing of the Gavel" ceremony. The ceremony included a MAG year-in-review video in which the qualities of "TEAM" were highlighted. In this case, TEAM is an acronym for: "Thrive. Enjoy. Achieve. Make a Difference." It takes a team to make a region successful, and bringing vitality to our region is the goal of MAG, in cooperation with local, state and regional partners. While our leaders may change, MAG will always consist of a great team of elected officials working collaboratively to make this a vibrant, dynamic, attractive region.

We greatly appreciate the exemplary public service provided by Youngtown Mayor Michael LeVault, who has given generously of his time in serving as MAG chair over the past 15 months. Mayor LeVault has been a dedicated advocate for this organization. His positive attitude and unflagging energy have been very much appreciated by the entire MAG staff. As I noted at the ceremony, every time Mayor LeVault was asked, he gladly offered his time and expertise. We look forward to continuing to work with Mayor LeVault as he moves into his position as chair of the Economic Development Committee and continues to serve on the MAG Regional Council.

We also had an opportunity to welcome Scottsdale Mayor WJ. "Jim" Lane as the new chair of MAG. Mayor Lane outlined his priorities for the year ahead, and discussed that having the ability to change and adapt makes for a healthy organization. Despite recent economic challenges, he noted that since MAG was formed nearly 50 years ago, it has evolved to meet the changing transportation needs of our region. This has been demonstrated in activities ranging from transportation to environmental programs to new efforts related to economic development. We look forward to assisting Mayor Lane in his goal of further evolving these efforts to grow our region's economy and make us globally competitive.

In describing the work of MAG, I am often reminded of the adage, "From everyone to whom much has been given, much will be demanded; and from the one who has been entrusted with much, much more will be asked." In other words, we are held responsible for what we have. If we are blessed with talents, resources, and knowledge, not only are we expected to share these gifts, but we can expect to be asked to do even more. MAG serves a region of more than four million people,

representing the economic driver for the state of Arizona. We have a stewardship responsibility that carries us well beyond our regional borders.

To that end, MAG will continue to work as a “TEAM” to thrive, enjoy, achieve, and together make a difference.

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

Meeting Report for Wednesday, June 24, 2015

Action Items



Election of Regional Council Officers and Executive Committee Members

As part of its Annual Meeting, the MAG Regional Council elected a slate of officers to serve for a one-year term. Scottsdale Mayor W. J. “Jim” Lane was elected as Regional Council chair, Phoenix Mayor Greg Stanton as vice chair, and Buckeye Mayor Jackie Meck as treasurer. Elected as at-large members are El Mirage Mayor Lana Mook, Queen Creek Mayor Gail Barney, and Tempe Mayor Mark Mitchell. Youngtown Mayor Michael LeVault remains on the committee as past chair.

Mayor Lane will lead the organization for the next year and will also preside over the MAG Executive Committee. The committee serves as MAG’s finance committee and is responsible for a number of administrative responsibilities, such as amendments to the budget and contract selections.

Mayor Lane has served on the MAG Regional Council and on the MAG Executive Committee since 2009. He served as treasurer of the Regional Council from 2013 to 2014, and as vice chair from 2014 to 2015. He has served as chair of the Transportation Policy Committee and as a member of the Economic Development Committee.

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

Election of Officers of the Transportation Policy Committee

The Regional Council voted to elect Glendale Mayor Jerry Weiers as chair of the MAG Transportation Policy Committee (TPC). Mesa Mayor John Giles was selected as vice chair. The TPC was established by the MAG Regional Council in 2002 to oversee the development of the 20-year Regional Transportation Plan and to guide transportation planning in the region. The TPC is made up of 23 members representing cities and towns across the region, the business community, the Arizona Department of Transportation, Maricopa County, the Native American Indian Community, and the Citizens Transportation Oversight Committee. The TPC provides a unique opportunity for business representatives to have a direct say in developing transportation policy for the region. The TPC is charged

with developing regional transportation policy positions for Regional Council consideration and provides oversight for the implementation of Proposition 400. Three of the business members are appointed by the President of the Arizona Senate and the other three by the Speaker of the House.

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

Legislative Update on House Bill 2617

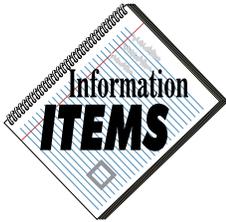
An update was provided regarding House Bill 2617 and the possible ramifications of the diversion of Proposition 400 sales tax funds for transportation to the Arizona Department of Revenue (ADOR).

Staff reported that the bill was introduced in the closing days of the 2015 session of the Arizona State Legislature. It was passed and signed into law on April 14, 2015. The bill was meant as a correction to a budget bill designed to assist the state with an economic deficit. Provisions in HB 2617 would direct \$2,520,207 from MAG and \$498,892 from the Pima Association of Governments, per year, as an assessment fee for the cost of ADOR administration. Staff noted there were a number of concerns with the bill, including whether the Voter Protection Act would apply since Proposition 400 was a transportation tax approved by the voters and the funding would be diverted for another purpose. Additional concerns were raised that diverting funding from a voter-approved tax would set a precedent.

Staff noted that the issue was presented at the April MAG Regional Council meeting, during which it was proposed that a small group discussion take place among Mayor Michael LeVault, Mayor Jim Lane, Mayor Mark Mitchell, and Supervisor Denny Barney, along with staff from the Governor's Office, to better understand HB 2617, the underlying factors for the legislation, and potential paths for addressing concerns. The group met in late May and discussed how HB 2617 might be implemented and potential impacts to MAG member agencies. The group also discussed the pros and cons of filing a lawsuit. The group recommended that further meetings be conducted to negotiate with the Governor's Office to have an arrangement to assist the State of Arizona through the structural deficit regarding provisions of House Bill 2617. This was brought to the MAG Executive Committee for consideration and recommended for approval.

At the Regional Council meeting, a member noted that revenues are increasing for the state. The Regional Council additionally discussed that diverting funding from a voter-approved transportation tax would be problematic. The Regional Council approved a motion to have the existing group, along with three officers from the Pima Association of Governments, meet with representatives from the Governor's Office and to report back to the Regional Council.

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



Information Items

Passing of the Gavel Ceremony

Following the Annual Meeting, more than 100 people attended a special Passing of the Gavel ceremony that included a look back on a year of accomplishments for the regional planning agency. A few of the accomplishments highlighted through a year-in-review video included:

- The Loop 202 South Mountain Freeway received final federal approval, meaning the region can move ahead with the last critical piece of the Valley's loop freeway system.
- Another major freeway opened 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, the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT), and the Federal Highway Administration embarked on a study to create a master plan for the I-10/I-17 corridor. Public input included the completion of more than 1,700 online surveys.
- MAG and ADOT joined forces to rigorously review program budgets to identify more than 100 million dollars in funding that could be used for new or accelerated projects.
- MAG helped fund a Department of Public Safety officer at ADOT's traffic operations center, with the goal of clearing freeway crashes more quickly to reduce congestion and save lives.
- The Super Bowl was made safer through the use of the Regional Community Network's camera-sharing capabilities.
- Recent completion of direct HOV ramps allows commuters to exit directly from the Loop 101 Agua Fria Freeway to Maryland Avenue.
- Significant progress was made 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.
- MAG upgraded its online bike map to make finding the perfect bike trail a click away.
- MAG continued efforts to address the environmental, economic, health and safety impacts of litter along our state and regional highways.
- The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) approved the MAG Five Percent Plan for PM-10—meaning Maricopa County has achieved compliance with the health-based standards for dust.
- The EPA redesignated the region to attainment status for the 1997 ozone standard of .08 parts per million.
- The EPA announced those clunky “vapor recovery” nozzles at the gas pump will soon be going away. The nozzles were originally designed to

prevent the escape of harmful ozone emissions, but modern-day vehicles now come equipped with their own vapor recovery systems. The nozzles will be phased out by 2018.

- MAG continued to work through its Economic Development Committee to identify initiatives to improve the economy, including the launch of ConnectBIEN.com to connect businesses in Arizona, Canada and Mexico; financial support for a trade office in Mexico City; the creation of the Ari-Son Megaregion to promote dialogue and collaboration between Arizona and Sonora; and efforts to extend the border crossing card zone from the current 75 mile limit to the entire state. MAG also continued partnerships with the Canada Arizona Business Council to improve trade.
- MAG used its incredible repository of data to create online mapping tools to help identify economic conditions by geographic area, including employment trends, workforce availability, and demographics—even performing and underperforming schools.
- MAG’s economic development activities were highlighted in “The Innovative MPO,” a national publication that cited MAG as a national leader and model for other Metropolitan Planning Organizations.
- MAG continued its human services efforts. It was recognized with a 2014 Piper Trust Encore Prize for Exceptional Organizations for efforts to connect people of all generations with each other and their communities through the age-friendly network. MAG continued to work with 29 partners to improve policies to hold domestic violence offenders accountable and keep victims safe. It also continued efforts to reduce homelessness in the region.

The video can be seen in its entirety on the communications page of the MAG website, www.azmag.gov/communications.

Next Meeting

The MAG Regional Council will not meet in July. The next meeting of the MAG Regional Council will be held on Wednesday, August 26, 2015 at 11:30 a.m. at the MAG offices, 302 N. 1st Avenue, Phoenix, second floor, Saguario Room. Agenda items are pending.

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