

**MINUTES OF THE
MARICOPA ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS
REGIONAL COUNCIL MEETING**

April 22, 2020
Web Conference

MEMBERS ATTENDING

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| <p>#Tempe: Mayor Mark Mitchell, Chair #Glendale: Mayor Jerry Weiers, Vice Chair *Apache Junction: Councilmember Robin Barker #Avondale: Mayor Kenneth Weise #Buckeye: Mayor Jackie Meck *Carefree: Mayor Les Peterson #Cave Creek: Vice Mayor David L. Smith #Chandler: Mayor Kevin Hartke *El Mirage: Mayor Alexis Hermosillo *Florence: Mayor Tara Walter *Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation: President Bernadine Burnette #Fountain Hills: Mayor Ginny Dickey *Gila Bend: Mayor Tommy Lee Sikes *Gila River Indian Community: Governor Stephen Roe Lewis #Gilbert: Mayor Jenn Daniels #Goodyear: Mayor Georgia Lord</p> | <p>*Guadalupe: Mayor Valerie Molina #Litchfield Park: Mayor Thomas Schoaf #City of Maricopa: Mayor Christian Price *Maricopa County: Supervisor Clint Hickman #Mesa: Mayor John Giles #Paradise Valley: Mayor Jerry Bien-Willner #Peoria: Mayor Cathy Carlat #Phoenix: Mayor Kate Gallego *Pinal County: Supervisor Todd House #Queen Creek: Mayor Gail Barney #Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community: President Martin Harvier #Scottsdale: Mayor W.J. "Jim" Lane #Surprise: Mayor Skip Hall *Tolleson: Mayor Anna Tovar *Wickenburg: Mayor Rui Pereira #Youngtown: Mayor Michael LeVault #State Transportation Board: Mr. Sam Elters</p> |
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* Those members neither present nor represented by proxy.

Attended by telephone conference call.

1. Call to Order

A quorum of the MAG Regional Council was present. Chair Mark Mitchell, Tempe, called the meeting of the MAG Regional Council to order at 11:39 a.m.

Joining the meeting by teleconference were Mayor Barney, Mayor Bien-Willner, Mayor Carlat, Mayor Daniels, Mayor Dickey, Mr. Elters, Mayor Gallego, Mayor Giles, Mayor Hall, Mayor Hartke, President Harvier, Mayor Lane, Mayor LeVault, Mayor Lord, Mayor Meck, Mayor Mitchell, Mayor Price, Mayor Schoaf, Vice Mayor Smith, Mayor Weiers, and Mayor Weise.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

Chair Mitchell led the Council in the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Approval of Consent Agenda

Chair Mitchell noted that agenda items *3A through *3J were on the Consent Agenda.

Chair Mitchell asked if members had questions or requests for a presentation on any of the Consent Agenda items.

Mayor Hall asked several questions about item *3E and the material included in the agenda packet as part of this item. He asked about information on page 46 of the agenda material regarding program revenue reduction, increase in general government expenses, and a large increase in deficit in ending net position; a plan to reduce the net pension liability; net change in fund balance; and program and administration in 2019.

MAG Executive Director Eric Anderson asked Mayor Hall to send a list of questions that staff could respond to and address following the meeting. Item *3E was on the consent agenda for information only.

Mayor Hartke moved to approve the consent agenda. Mayor Gallego seconded the motion. Mayor Barney, Mayor Bien-Willner, Mayor Carlat, Mayor Daniels, Mayor Dickey, Mr. Elters, Mayor Gallego, Mayor Giles, Mayor Hall, Mayor Hartke, Mayor Lane, Mayor Lord, Mayor Meck, Mayor Mitchell, Mayor Price, Vice Mayor Smith, Mayor Weiers, and Mayor Weise voted in favor of the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

3A. Approval of the February 26, 2020, Meeting Minutes

The Regional Council, by consent, approved of the February 26, 2020, meeting minutes.

3B. Conformity Consultation

The Maricopa Association of Governments is conducting consultation on a conformity assessment for an amendment and administrative modification to the FY 2020-2024 MAG Transportation Improvement Program and 2040 Regional Transportation Plan Update. The amendment and administrative modification involve changes to several projects, including general highway projects, transit projects, Arterial Life Cycle Program projects, and Freeway Life Cycle Program projects. The amendment includes projects that may be categorized as exempt from conformity determinations. The administrative modification includes minor project revisions that do not require a conformity determination.

This item was on the agenda for consultation.

3C. Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Project Changes

The MAG Regional Council, by consent, approved of amendments and administrative modifications as appropriate to the FY 2020-2024 MAG Transportation Improvement Program and 2040 MAG Regional Transportation Plan Update, as appropriate.

The Fiscal Year (FY) 2020-2024 MAG Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and the 2040 MAG Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) Update were approved by the Regional Council on February 26, 2020. Since then, MAG has received additional changes and modification requests by member agencies.

3D. Regional Freeway System: Rubberized Asphalt Overview and Alternatives

Nearly all of the region's urban freeway system is covered in a layer of Asphalt Rubber Asphaltic Concrete Friction Course, better known as rubberized asphalt or quiet pavement. Rubberized asphalt provides a smooth ride for motorists and helps mitigate freeway noise. Much of the rubberized asphalt overlay was installed between 2003 and 2008, and is either approaching, or has exceeded, its 10-year life cycle. No dedicated funding has been programmed for its replacement. As a result, the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) has begun testing alternative surface treatments that still reduce freeway noise but have lower life cycle costs.

An overview on the region's rubberized asphalt overlay, alternative surface treatments, and potential options moving forward will be provided.

This item was on the agenda for information and possible discussion.

3E. Fiscal Year 2019 Single Audit Report and Comprehensive Annual Report

The accounting firm, HeinfeldMeech, has completed the audit of MAG's Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) and the Single Audit for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2019. An unqualified audit opinion was issued on the financial statements, which comprise the respective financial position of governmental activities, each major fund, and the aggregate remaining fund information. The independent auditors' report on compliance with the requirements applicable to major federal award programs, expressed an unqualified opinion on the Single Audit. The CAFR financial statements and related footnotes were prepared in accordance with the Government Finance Officers Association's (GFOA) standards for the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting awards program. Management has submitted the June 30, 2019, CAFR to the GFOA awards program for review. If awarded the certificate for the June 30, 2019, CAFR, this would be the agency's 22nd consecutive award.

This item was on the agenda for information.

3F. Transit Program Administration Funding for City of Phoenix

The MAG Regional Council, by consent, approved of a \$1.1 million sub-allocation to the City of Phoenix for program administration in FY 2020 and to increase the amount by three percent annually.

The Urbanized Area Formula Funding program (FTA § 5307) makes federal resources available to urbanized areas (UZAs) for transit capital, transportation related planning, and operating assistance, where eligible. As the designated recipient for the region, the City of Phoenix is responsible for Federal Transit Administration (FTA) grant management, compliance, and sub-recipient oversight. The amount of funding programmed to the City of Phoenix for Program Administration, or grant management, is insufficient to cover the actual cost of grant management for the region. This agenda item represents a request to increase in the amount for Program Administration support through the annual Program of Projects (POP).

3G. 2020 Municipal Response to Homelessness Report

The MAG Regional Council, by consent, approved of the 2020 Municipal Responses to Homelessness Report.

In November of 2017, MAG surveyed cities, towns and the County on local government responses to homelessness. The report was approved by Regional Council at the September 2018 meeting. MAG staff have worked with local governments to update the report to reflect an expanded response to homelessness throughout the region.

3H. Extension of Time to Review Executive Director Compensation

The MAG Regional Council, by consent, ratified the Executive Committee's determination to revisit the MAG Executive Director's compensation in six months.

On April 13, 2020, pursuant Section 2.01(5) of MAG's Committee Operating Policies and Procedures (Policies and Procedures), the Regional Council Executive Committee conducted its annual performance evaluation of the MAG Executive Director, Eric Anderson. Simultaneously, pursuant Section 2.01(3) of the Policies and Procedures, the Executive Committee reviewed Mr. Anderson's compensation provided to him under his Employment Agreement.

The Executive Committee determined that current economic conditions in Maricopa County caused by the COVID-19 pandemic dictated that Mr. Anderson's compensation should not be increased at this time but would be reviewed again in six months. The determination to defer such review was not based upon Mr. Anderson's performance, which was determined to be uniformly positive.

3I. Extension of Proposition 400: Regional Freeway System Review

Efforts to develop a new Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) that will serve as the basis for the extension of Proposition 400 are underway. To help facilitate the planning effort, MAG has generated a map book to provide an overview of the Proposition 400 freeway program. The map book includes a corridor-by-corridor breakdown of 1) original Proposition 400 projects, 2) projects that have been completed or are currently under construction, 3) projects that are programmed through the end of the Proposition 400 funding horizon, 4) projects that have been deferred beyond the Proposition 400 funding horizon, and 5) studied improvements.

Once finalized, the information will represent one of the components that comprise the fourth RTP development task, Existing & Future Needs Assessment.

This item was on the agenda for information.

3J. Avondale-Goodyear Transit Feasibility Study Consultant Selection

The MAG Regional Council, by consent, approved of the selection of Nelson\Nygaard for the Avondale-Goodyear Transit Feasibility Study for an amount not to exceed \$250,000.

The Avondale-Goodyear Transit Feasibility Study will gauge the need for enhanced and/or expanded transit service throughout the cities of Avondale and Goodyear. MAG received proposals from four consultants prior to the March 17, 2020, deadline, including CivTech, Michael Baker & Associates, Nelson\Nygaard, and Transportation Management & Design, Inc.

On March 31, 2020, the evaluation team met, reviewed proposals, and recommended the selection of Nelson\Nygaard to complete the Avondale-Goodyear Transit Feasibility Study for an amount not to exceed \$250,000.

4. CARES Act Federal Transit Administration Funding Distribution

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on transit operations throughout the MAG region. MAG Transportation Economic and Finance Program Manager John Bullen gave an overview of the request for approval of the proposed Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act funding distribution. Mr. Bullen stated today's request is a direct result of the CARES Act that was signed into law on March 27, 2020. The CARES Act provides \$25 billion nationwide for public transit formula operating and capital grants to prevent, prepare for and respond to COVID-19. The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) has prioritized funding for operational expenses. Apportionments for the Act were released April 2, 2020. MAG, Valley Metro, and the City of Phoenix as the region's designated recipient for FTA funding, have been tracking these developments closely and just last Thursday, received additional detail on apportionments and eligibility.

Mr. Bullen explained that the FTA distributed the CARES Act fund proportionally based on the ratio for specific programs. In the MAG region this included urbanized area formula grants (FTA § 5307); state-of-good-repair formula grants (FTA § 5337); and, growing/high density formula grants (FTA § 5340). A total of \$198 million was apportioned to the MAG region for CARES Act funding.

Mr. Bullen stated all of the funding has been put into FTA§ 5307, the urbanized area (UZA) program, which is the most flexible funding type in the FTA program, with each UZA receiving an apportionment of funds. Phoenix-Mesa UZA will receive \$188.4 million and Avondale-Goodyear UZA will receive \$9.6 million. The funding is available for capital, operating, and other expenses generally eligible to prevent, prepare for and respond to COVID-19. Operating expenses – including those in large urbanized areas like the Phoenix-Mesa UZA – incurred beginning on January 20, 2020, are eligible for the funding. Additionally, the funding is available at 100-percent federal share. FTA has encouraged transit systems to spend the funds expeditiously to respond to local needs.

Mr. Bullen indicated there has been a lot of coordination in taking a regional approach to the CARES funding. When apportionments were made available on April 2, 2020, MAG, Valley Metro, and the City of Phoenix responded quickly and have been working in close partnership to develop a distribution methodology. Timing allowed MAG and Valley Metro to get feedback from member agencies through the committee process at both Valley Metro and MAG. This agenda item propose to program CARES Act funding to transit operations. Mr. Bullen noted that transit operators have had to incur additional expenses as a result of increased cleaning and changes to operating procedures. At the same time, operators are

also seeing drastic declines in ridership which has resulted in decreased fare revenue. Further, nearly all of the revenue base that supports transit operations in the region comes from sales taxes, which have decreased dramatically due to the public health measures that have been put in place.

Mr. Bullen stated in an effort to distribute the funds as quickly and efficiently as possible, MAG is using established distribution methodologies. MAG is proposing to program the funds using a combination of the CARES Act distribution formula and the MAG region's preventive maintenance formula to allocate the funding between transit operators. He highlighted that all agencies that purchase or operate transit service will benefit.

Mr. Bullen displayed a slide showing the proposed programming for the two UZAs. For the Phoenix-Mesa UZA, MAG will split the apportionment proportionally based on the CARES Act distribution between FTA § 5307, FTA § 5337, and FTA § 5340 programs; split the CARES Act apportionment representative of FTA § 5337 state-of-good repair funds between the bus and rail programs; and then split the balance of the CARES Act funding utilizing the approved Preventive Maintenance (PM) formula. For the Avondale-Goodyear UZA, which is smaller and has unique characteristics staff worked closely with the working group to identify the best methodology. MAG proposes sub-allocating to operators proportionally based on budgeted cost of service in the UZA for FY 2021. One percent of the funds would go towards new cameras at the Goodyear Park and Ride to fulfill FTA safety and security requirements. Staff will work with member agencies to seek funding from ADOT for unused statewide CARES Act funding.

Mr. Bullen displayed a table showing how the funding for the Phoenix-Mesa UZA would be allocated and the split between rail and bus and by which operators would receive the funds. Another table showed the Avondale-Goodyear UZA apportionment and the split between the operators.

Mr. Bullen highlighted key points about the CARES Act. Funding allocated to the MAG region will provide much-needed financial assistance to the region's transit operators. The proposed distribution methodology ensures a quick, equitable, and simple distribution of funds. He also discussed the close coordination between MAG, Valley Metro, and the City of Phoenix.

Mayor Carlat made a motion to approve the proposed CARES Act funding distribution. Mayor Barney seconded the motion. Mayor Barney, Mayor Bien-Wilner, Mayor Mayor Daniels, Mayor Dickey, Mayor Gallego, Mayor Giles, Mayor Hall, Hartke, Lane, Lord, Elters, Mayor Meck, Mayor Mitchell, Mayor Price, President Harvier, Mayor LeVault, Mayor Weise, and Mayor Weiers all voted in favor of the motion that passed unanimously.

5. Coronavirus Update

MAG's Executive Director Eric Anderson thanked council members for their patience over the last month and a half as the agency has moved to holding meetings electronically and as staff continues to refine the process. Mr. Anderson reported almost all MAG work is being done through telecommuting. Mr. Anderson recognized MAG's Information Technology (IT) Division for their work allowing the agency to maintain a high level of productivity during this crisis.

Mr. Anderson stated MAG has been tracking changes in traffic volumes on arterial streets and freeways that are now running at about two-thirds normal volumes. He reported speeds are higher and delay times reduced. Mr. Anderson noted today is Earth Day and as a result of people staying home and driving less, the region has seen an approximately 20 percent reduction in nitrous dioxide from last year to this year. He commented this is good news as we head into ozone season.

MAG Deputy Executive Director Amy St. Peter discussed MAG's outward facing work to help the community deal with this pandemic. Ms. St. Peter stated that the health and well-being of this region is a top priority and MAG is happy to be able to deliver resources to assist in this effort. She thanked MAG's Regional Analytics team for identifying a need in this crisis and working quickly to develop the MAG Health Asset viewer. The viewer features a Vulnerability Index that comprises demographics including age, income, and access to medical care and technology. There are a number of features on the viewer, including legislative and congressional districts to assist with policy planning, as well as locations of medical care facilities, contact information, and bed capacity. The viewer also makes available the number of COVID-19 cases by week and by zip code. She asked membership to let staff know if there are other resources or functions they would like to see added to the viewer.

Ms. St. Peter next highlighted MAG's "Thank You" campaign. She expressed gratitude to the member agencies who have already communicated their thanks to the people working on the front lines fighting the COVID-19 pandemic, including healthcare workers, first responders, state and local government leaders, and to all of the residents of this region who are doing their part to keep themselves and others in the community safe. Ms. St. Peter stated there are several ways for member agencies to post "thank you" messages. These including posting videos or photographs to social media using the hashtags #MAGgratitude and #thankyou, emailing staff directly, or submitting a message through azmag.gov/comments. Ms. St. Peter thanked MAG Communication Division staff for their work on this effort.

Ms. St. Peter indicated MAG's website continues to feature links to resources offered by member agencies on the "Response to COVID-19" page. Also on this page are links to sector specific resources for populations more vulnerable to an economic crisis. This includes extensive resources for businesses, older adults through the Age Friendly Arizona website,

people experiencing domestic violence, as well as people experiencing homelessness. She noted MAG remains focused on Heat Relief efforts that begin May 1. MAG is being mindful of keeping people safe and limiting their exposure to COVID-19 while continuing to offer this life-saving service in partnership with member agencies.

Mr. Anderson added MAG is tracking the impact of this pandemic on transportation revenues. He stated with the reduction in driving, gas tax revenues are down and new car sales also are down, which will likely impact Highway User Revenue Funds (HURF). Proposition 400 sales tax revenues will be negatively impacted by the reduction in taxable sales. MAG will begin to get data on both of those items in mid-May. Mr. Anderson indicated ADOT revised down its forecasts for next fiscal year for both the sales tax and HURF by approximately 20 percent. He stated MAG will work with ADOT to refine the numbers and provide that information to member agencies when it becomes available.

6. 9-1-1 Regional Update

9-1-1 Region Administrator Liz Graeber provided an update on three different areas of interest relating to the 9-1-1 regional network including the impact of COVID-19 on Public Safety Answering Points (PSAP) and 9-1-1 services, funding, and the development of a new statewide 9-1-1 services request for proposal (RFP).

Ms. Graeber first touched on how PSAPs are responding to the COVID-19 pandemic and how it is affecting daily operations. She noted that 9-1-1 calls are down. Normal call volumes are about 700 calls on a weekday and on April 13, there were less than 200 calls. She attributed some of the reduction to less traffic on the roads leading to less crashes. Ms. Graeber noted PSAPs have always prepared for different crisis situations. She stated the PSAPs have not experienced any staffing shortages at this point, but have used the health crisis as an opportunity to strengthen their crisis management planning. Since March, there have been weekly calls with PSAP managers. PSAPs have been in discussions about the steps they would take to back up staffing, such as utilizing retired personnel and sharing resources to create a hub network of 9-1-1 systems. Ms. Graeber reported there have been no staffing issues at this time.

Ms. Graeber moved on to discuss the 9-1-1 grant awarded earlier this month for FY 2021. She explained the State recently moved to a grant process for disseminating 9-1-1 funding each year although it technically is not a grant the department receives. The grant process allows 9-1-1 to conduct budget forecasting and makes the process more consistent. This year 9-1-1 requested just more than \$11 million and received more than \$9.9 million. Ms. Graeber indicated the funding will go through the City of Phoenix procurement process on behalf of all MAG member agencies.

Ms. Graeber noted a statewide RFP for 9-1-1 equipment services and managed services

platform is in development. The State and PSAPs are working together to develop an RFP to meet the needs of the 9-1-1 network. The contract would allow the 9-1-1 department to buy equipment and services off of one statewide contract.

Mayor Gallego stated that the City of Phoenix recently experienced the loss of Commander Greg Carnicle, a 31-year veteran of the Phoenix Police Department. Commander Carnicle was killed after responding to a domestic violence call. She explained this loss led to discussions about how to reduce domestic violence and noted there has been an uptick in domestic violence calls. From these discussions, Phoenix has learned that it is a good idea to remind domestic violence victims that they can call as well as text for 9-1-1 services. Mayor Gallego suggested working regionally through MAG, to let the community know a text-to-9-1-1 option is available. She asked for MAG to consider developing a public service announcement (PSA) or education campaign about text-to-9-1-1 services.

Chair Mitchell commented he supports Mayor Gallego's suggestion and added it is always a good idea to let residents know about services and programs available to them.

Ms. St. Peter stated MAG would be happy to follow up on Mayor Gallego's request and to promote this very important public safety tool throughout the region.

7. Air Quality Update

MAG Environmental Director Lindy Bauer provided an air quality update, presenting information on ozone and particulates and discussing the MAG 2017 Eight-Hour Ozone Moderate Area Plan. She began the update with the good news that this region currently is not going over the ozone standard.

In accordance with the Clean Air Act for ozone, the Maricopa Ozone Nonattainment area is classified as a Moderate Area. Ms. Bauer indicated MAG submitted a Moderate Area Plan for the 2008 standard to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) on January 1, 2017. The plan includes 93 existing measures from the federal, state, and local government committed control measures approved by EPA and that are still being implemented to help reduce ozone. She stated the attainment date was July 20, 2018. Since the attainment date was in the middle of the summer ozone season, the plan was required to demonstrate attainment in the summer prior to the 2017 ozone season. The region needed three years of clean data at the monitors in 2017 to meet the standard (2015-2017 monitoring data).

Ms. Bauer reported on November 12, 2019, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) published a final rule to determine that the Maricopa Nonattainment Area has met the 2008 ozone standard by the attainment date of July 20, 2018. The attainment determination is based on complete quality assured and certified air quality monitoring data between 2015 and 2017.

Ms. Bauer stated that over time, the region has made tremendous progress in reducing ozone. In 2017, the EPA determined this region met the ozone standard. There have been no violations to the one-hour ozone standard since 1996 and no violations of the 1997 standard since 2004. The 2008 ozone standard has been met. She reported there is a trend downward with ups and downs along the way. In 2018, there was an uptick in ozone concentration at the Mesa monitor. In 2019, there were a number of exceptional events, including ozone wildfires that increased the amount of ozone and officials believe this number will come back down to the 2008 ozone standard. Ms. Bauer indicated this region does not currently meet the tougher 2015 ozone standard.

Ms. Bauer commented that officials will continue to monitor the situation this summer because everything is changing due to the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. She said as Mr. Anderson noted earlier, this region has seen a reduction in traffic, air travel, industry, and weather also is a big factor with ozone.

Ms. Bauer addressed the effect of recent wildfires. She stated in 2018, staff reported there were 46 large wildfires in California. Staff is evaluating those fires for exceptional events. Additionally, in 2019, there were three fires last summer in the Maricopa Nonattainment area – the Mountain Fire, Woodbury Fire, and Verde Fire. Staff is working on documentation for these exceptional events. Maricopa County Air Quality Department has flagged the monitor data because officials believe the increases in ozone were due to the wildfires.

On October 3, 2019, EPA proposed to approve portions of the MAG 2017 Eight-Hour Ozone Moderate Area Plan including emissions inventories; demonstration of attainment by the attainment date; reasonably available control measures; reasonable further progress; new motor vehicle emission budgets for transportation conformity; vehicle inspection and maintenance programs; and new source review rules and offsets.

Ms. Bauer indicated that since the 2008 standard has been met, EPA determined that the requirement for contingency measures would no longer apply. EPA proposed to disapprove them as they were not compliant with a U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit ruling against early implementation. No sanctions or federal implementation plan clocks would be triggered.

Ms. Bauer noted there is some ongoing litigation. On January 9, 2020, the Arizona Center for Law in the Public Interest filed a petition in the U.S. Ninth Circuit Court to review EPA's determination of attainment for the 2008 ozone standard. The Center's brief is due at the end of April and the EPA answering brief is due at the end of May.

Ms. Bauer moved on to discuss particulate matter in Pinal County. On October 3, 2019, EPA published a final rule to determine that the West Central Pinal County Nonattainment Area has met the 2006 PM-2.5 standard by the attainment date of December 31, 2017. The

attainment determination is based on complete quality assured and certified monitoring data for 2015-2017. On February 4, 2020, the Arizona Center for Law in the Public Interest filed a notice of intent to file a lawsuit against the EPA for failure to determine whether or not they have met the PM-10 standard as well as failure to take action on the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality Moderate Area Plan for PM-10 for the West Central Pinal County PM-10 Nonattainment Area. In response to that, on April 7, 2020, EPA published a proposed rule to determine that the West Pinal County Nonattainment Area has failed to meet the PM-10 standard by the December 31, 2018, attainment date and will be reclassified as a Serious Area.

Ms. Bauer stated MAG would continue to closely monitor the air quality situation and asked membership to contact her if they would like additional information.

8. Census 2020 Update

MAG staff Laurie Berg Sapp provided an update on Census 2020 response rates and how the region is pivoting the media plan in response to the impact the COVID-19 pandemic is having on operations and outreach efforts.

Ms. Berg Sapp gave the committee a snapshot of the latest numbers from the U.S. Census Bureau as of April 20, 2020. She noted the response rate for the nation overall is 51 percent; the response rate for Arizona is 48.6 percent; the response rate for Maricopa County is 52.8 percent; and, the response rate for Pinal County is 44.1 percent. The top five highest responses in the MAG Region come from Gilbert, Litchfield Park, Fountain Hills, Chandler, and Peoria.

Ms. Berg Sapp indicated MAG will continue to distribute weekly reports of regional response rates customized to each member agency. The Census Bureau updates response rates daily with data from the day prior, usually around mid-day Arizona time. Those response rates will continue to inform the media strategy moving forward.

Ms. Berg Sapp gave the committee a brief update on the media outreach campaign performance. The campaign is now at a total combined reach of 90 percent of the target audience who are seeing the message at least 15 times. Television advertising began on March 9, and has greatly increased outreach. As a result of the public health situation keeping people at home, Nielsen Research estimates there is a 60 percent increase in media consumption across all platforms. Television and streaming video services such as HULU and Netflix are showing big audience gains. She reported the campaign has now utilized 73 percent of the media budget and achieved a reach of 90 percent of adults 18 and older in the Maricopa Region.

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has led to a second extension of the Census response deadline to October 31, 2020. Ms. Berg Sapp stated although in-person community events are no longer an option, the messaging continues to be strong that people can safely and

securely fill out their Census forms at home.

Ms. Berg Sapp next indicated how MAG is adjusting the media strategy. She stated as people have stayed home and out of their cars, the campaign has shifted the March and April English and Spanish radio buys and endorsements to May and June. Paid television advertisements have been put on pause until June and July. The schedule with Fox Sports Arizona is on hold until the professional leagues resume live sports. Ms. Berg Sapp commented the Census campaign has negotiated additional free added value in the number of ads and upgrades in programming slots, such as in news programming where viewing is high. Due to the pandemic, many advertisers have cancelled their ads, and television stations are offering public service announcement slots and additional inventory.

Ms. Berg Sapp explained that due to the decrease in vehicle commute traffic, the campaign paused digital billboards until later this month and extended the inventory through September. The campaign has increased buys for impressions for streaming television. The campaign also has implemented a digital tactic called geo-fencing. Geo-fencing marketing is location-based advertising, where a user's location is recorded via the internet, typically on a smart phone, and advertisements are shown to people in a specific location, such as grocery stores. She indicated the campaign is using the response rate map to see which areas are under-performing and then using Google maps to find key grocery and other essential stores in those areas. Communities are also added to this list who have historically been undercounted. Staff continues to closely monitor response rates and the geo-fencing map is updated weekly to target those communities most in need of assistance.

Ms. Berg Sapp stated the campaign also is focused on social media which is low cost and has seen high engagement during the pandemic. The campaign is increasing the digital budget as well as the quantity of posts. It has partnered with several different social media influencers to educate their followers on the importance of the Census and how to fill it out online and is using creative messaging to ensure people are still seeing and engaging the content.

Ms. Berg Sapp indicated the new response deadline of October 31 would lead to further adjustments to the outreach and education campaign. The current MAG budget and scope of work was based on activity through June 30. Staff is adjusting the existing budget to extend the media campaign to reach as far into October as possible and is re-evaluating current media placement to capitalize on cost savings that will maximize dollars and still have maximum impact.

Mayor Giles asked if given that the campaign has been extended there is a need to consider increasing the budget. He stated he understands strategic choices are being made to reallocate funds.

Ms. Berg Sapp stated that additional funds are always welcome but said she understands in

light of the pandemic that resources are being stretched thin.

Mr. Anderson added that MAG would meet with the Census Communication Group to determine if additional resources would be useful. He noted the budget is going further with more attractive advertising rates during the pandemic. Mr. Anderson indicated if the group determines there are areas of the region needing more attention, staff can bring a request back for more funding next month.

Mitchell thanked Mayor Giles for his comments and stated that the Census count will impact all of this region's communities. He said he looks forward to hearing options for the Regional Council to consider.

9. Nominating Committee

Chair Mitchell announced the appointment of the members of the Regional Council Nominating Committee. Members include Mayor Cathy Carlat; Mayor Jenn Daniels; Mayor Alexis Hermosillo; Supervisor Clint Hickman; and, as Past Chair of the Regional Council, Mayor Gail Barney will serve as Chair. He thanked all of the members 2020 Nominating Committee for agreeing to serve.

Chair Mitchell stated a memo would be sent out following today's meeting requesting nominations for MAG officers and members of the Executive Committee. This memo would include details on the nominating process. The Regional Council will vote on the Executive Committee members at the Annual Meeting in June.

10. Update on the Development of a New Regional Transportation Plan

MAG Transportation Planning Program Manager Audra Koester Thomas provided an update on activities associated with the update and development of the next regional transportation plan (RTP). Ms. Thomas indicated staff have completed the economic impact analysis of Proposition 300 and Proposition 400 and summarized the key outcomes into an easy to use information graphic, which she displayed for the committee. The graphic focuses on key economic indicators including employment-based proximity to this region's high capacity transportation system, property valuation, travel time savings, and freight movements. She noted the graphics included in the agenda packet are available to member agencies for use in presentations or other applications.

Ms. Thomas stated staff is finalizing a peer region analysis with a focus on researching other regional transit programs. This research will be helpful in outlining forthcoming policy conversations related to how this region advances its regional transit system in the next regional transportation plan.

Ms. Thomas noted MAG has concluded the regional transportation plan call for projects associated with the needs catalog. She commented MAG received nearly 1,300 individual project and program submission ideas from member agencies that will need to be analyzed and reviewed.

Ms. Thomas indicated MAG is working on map books to both codify the implementation status of Proposition 400 and contribute to the needs catalog. These map books are in various development stages. Staff presented the freeway program map book last month and that book is currently out for review. She gave a friendly reminder to member agencies for staff to review and provide comments. MAG also is finalizing the Proposition 400 arterial program map book and is working closely with Valley Metro to develop the Proposition 400 transit program map book.

Ms. Thomas noted the consulting team and internal MAG staff are developing the draft performance-based framework. This work includes revisiting federally-required targets, inventorying data sources, sketching out how to evaluate and analyze what projects and programs best address our region's needs, as well as advancing some of the technical work to prepare for a scenario evaluation process that will occur later this year.

Ms. Thomas next provided an update on MAG's public involvement activities. She noted that staff does not anticipate any in-person outreach at this time due to the pandemic. As such, the focus is on advancing development of the comprehensive website that includes several virtual engagement tools. MAG anticipates using these tools extensively to receive feedback from and send information out to the public. Staff is on target to launch the website in mid-May.

Ms. Thomas stated messaging and branding work are emphasizing that the extension and the next regional transportation plan are a continuation of the tremendous investments already made in this region. She noted how helpful it has been to have experts and professionals assisting with this element of the project and indicated staff would be able to provide updates to policymakers later in the month.

Ms. Thomas commented there would be a Management Committee RTP Work Group meeting held at the end of the month. The focus of that meeting will be the arterial program, outline of the performance framework development process, outlining the online engagement strategy in response to COVID-19, as well as the branding effort. She stated staff recognizes the pandemic has been disruptive to committee members' schedules and are sensitive to the competing demands of policymakers during this time. Staff is modifying work to advance some of the more technical aspects of this process to ensure that when the forum to reconvene is appropriate, the schedule stays on track.

There were no questions or comments from membership.

11. Legislative Update

MAG Public and Government Relations Director Nathan Pryor provided an update on legislative activity of interest. He stated MAG continues to monitor both State and Federal action and added that working with the National Association of Regional Councils (NARC) has proven invaluable in terms of tracking what is going with the Administration and Congress as well as in learning from other metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) and councils of governments (COGs). MAG has been watching the different iterations of the CARES Act and the increasing conversation about a transportation component to the Act. Mr. Pryor reported there has been discussion about backfilling state highway revenue and longer term stimulus effort and how that would roll into a reauthorization discussion. He stated MAG will continue to monitor developments and report back as needed.

Mr. Pryor stated in regards to the extension of the Census to October 31, MAG worked with NARC to put the question forward about the potential for funding and resources for the outreach effort and will continue to work with NARC on that issue.

Mr. Pryor reminded membership that the Southwest Tourism Expansion Act was introduced as federal legislation late 2019. The Act is being looked at as something that could help with long-term economic recovery in our state.

Mr. Pryor mentioned the State legislature will adjourn on May 1. He indicated representatives are trying to get a better understanding of revenue and fiscal impacts caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and will reconvene at a later date, possibly in June, with a focus on the FY 2021 budget.

12. Request for Future Agenda Items

Topics or issues of interest that the Regional Council would like to have considered for discussion at a future meeting were requested.

There were no requests.

13. Comments from the Council

An opportunity was provided for Regional Council members to present a brief summary of current events. The Regional Council is not allowed to propose, discuss, deliberate or take action at the meeting on any matter in the summary, unless the specific matter is properly noticed for legal action.

Chair Mitchell urged everyone to stay safe and thanked healthcare workers, first responders,

and employees in our region's cities, towns and Native Nations who are on the frontlines of the pandemic.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 12:39 p.m.

Chair

Secretary