

Briefing to Member Agencies from Executive Director James M. Bourey



Executive Director's Report

As the space of days continues to grow between the here and now and September 11, we find ourselves focusing more on our daily lives, pausing long enough to catch up on the headlines from Afghanistan before going on with our many professional and personal activities.

Certainly it is healthy to move on, and it is only natural to begin to relax at least a bit. But complacency should never again replace caution.

That's one of the reasons why the Maricopa Association of Governments is hosting a series of Contingency Planning Forums to help cities, towns, and Indian Communities be better informed about preparedness efforts within various communities. The purpose of the forums is to allow member agencies to share best practices, identify resources, and exchange valuable information. Participants in the forums include terrorism and emergency management experts, first responders (including police and fire), city managers, public works directors, communicators, utility providers, and others.

What we have learned to date is at least somewhat reassuring. The region has already laid a solid groundwork when it comes to preparedness planning. But we also find that needs remain in the areas of resources, training and communication.

It is our hope that by facilitating discussion and exchanging information, MAG can help meet these needs. I encourage member agency attendance at future forums, and ask that you please let us know if you have any input as to how we might continue to serve our member agencies through this venue.



Regional Council Meeting Report for December 12, 2001

MAG Approves Changes to Santan Freeway Design

At the request of the Town of Gilbert, the MAG Regional Council approved a design change that will allow the Santan Freeway at Rittenhouse Road to be depressed under the Southern Pacific railroad tracks. The original design for the segment had the freeway going over the tracks, which created noise and clearance concerns. A number of residents from the neighborhood near the affected section were in attendance at the council meeting. The additional cost of depressing the segment is estimated at \$4 to \$5 million, of which Gilbert is willing to contribute up to \$2 million.

In a concurrent move, the Regional Council approved the transfer of \$16.8 million in FY 2002 funding from the South Mountain Corridor to the Gilbert to Williams Field segment of the Santan Corridor. This transfer will allow for additional right-of-way purchases in the Santan Corridor which should result in program savings. Since the Environmental Impact Statement for the South Mountain Corridor is underway and will not be completed until 2004, there are only limited advance purchase right-of-way opportunities in that corridor. The funds will be transferred back to the South Mountain Corridor in 2003-2004.

For more information contact Eric Anderson, MAG Transportation Manager, 602-254-6300.

Airport Road Decision Leads to Discussion on Land Use

The MAG Regional Council approved a Transportation Improvement Program amendment to allow the addition of a road that will serve a large West Valley development—after a discussion of the role of the Regional Council in considering these types of amendments.

The amendment involved adding the Buckeye project, Airport Road from I-10 to Osborn Wash, to the Transportation Improvement Program. In earlier actions, the Regional Council had approved an Airport Road Traffic Interchange at I-10 and an amendment to the 208 Water Quality Management Plan for the project.

A delay in the action was suggested until after the Regional Council Retreat January 11, 2002, when a discussion about the integration of land use and transportation is scheduled. After discussion, council members indicated a belief that the project was too far along to deny approval, but agreed that a discussion of the Council's future role when it comes to developments of regional impact should be held at the retreat.

For more information, contact James M. Bourey, Executive Director, 602-254-6300.

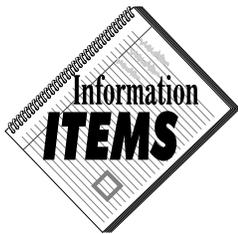
Streetsweeper Study Approved

MAG recently conducted a study to look at the operational characteristics of PM-10 certified (dust-efficient) street sweepers. The review examined characteristics of both certified and noncertified sweepers, including driving characteristics, sweeper speed, dumping and bin capacity, pick-up efficiency, reliability, safety and other factors.

The study looked at experiences with street sweepers both in California and locally. Findings from public works departments in California were that certified sweepers cleaned streets better than noncertified, but that the costs of the equipment and maintenance were a little higher. In local studies, agencies rated certified sweepers in 47 areas. The certified sweepers were rated higher in 10 categories, the same in 25 categories, and lower in 12 categories.

The Regional Council voted to approve the MAG study.

For more information contact Lindy Bauer, MAG Environmental Manager, 602-254-6300.



Information Items

Governance Recommendations Reviewed

The MAG Regional Council was provided an overview of the final recommendations of the MAG Governance Task Force. The Task Force was established to analyze the organizational responsibilities and governance structures of MAG. The Task Force developed nine recommendations, including:

- That the Regional Council consider the concept of a policy and advisory committee structure that would integrate transportation, land use and air quality policy. This would include business representation and other stakeholders. The policy committee would have additional power that could not be overruled with a simple majority vote.
- That MAG expand the business and other stakeholder representation on all of the MAG technical and advisory committees.
- That MAG integrate the local and regional transit planning into the regional transportation system planning effort.
- That MAG delegate more responsibility and authority to an expanded executive committee, comprised of members from the MAG Regional Council.
- That MAG hold Town Hall meetings, with a specific identified invitation list, that will advise the Regional Council on goals.

- That there be a review and report of the impact of proposed significant residential development on the regional facilities for transportation, open space, wastewater and water, prior to the jurisdiction taking action on the development.
- That data compiled on residential developments of significance would be integrated into the TIP and Long Range Transportation Plan, and 208 approval processes, where there is an action that would be going forward to the Regional Council.
- That the Regional Council consider whether it wants to extend voting participation to local governments in the contiguous urbanized area.
- That after these recommendations are accepted, MAG look at re-branding the organization.

The Governance Task Force recommendations will be discussed further at the Regional Council Retreat in January.

For more information contact Dennis Smith, Assistant Director, (602) 254-6300.



Upcoming Events

Regional Council Retreat to Focus on Governance

The MAG Regional Council Retreat will be held on January 11, 2002. Agenda items will focus on a discussion of recommendations put forth by the MAG Governance Task Force, and on identifying goals for the coming year.

For more information contact James M. Bourey, Executive Director, (602) 254-6300.

Next Regional Council Meeting

The next Regional Council meeting will be held on Wednesday, January 30, 2002 at 5:00 p.m. at the MAG offices, 302 N. 1st Ave., Suite 200. Agenda items are expected to include review and possible approval of the MAG Governance Task Force recommendations. Additional agenda items are pending.

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