

ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING ADVISORY COMMITTEE (EPAC) SUMMARY REPORT

EPAC Items of Interest

Rich Franz-Under, Pima County's Green Building Program Manager, gave a presentation on the state of green building in Pima County. He reviewed historic changes to the Energy Code, LEED for homes, the City-County efforts toward Net-Zero Energy Buildings and the 2030 District. He emphasized the need to focus on the long term return on investment rather than focusing on the short term. He discussed the need to promote the benefits of green building so that it will become regular practice in the future and will help create a healthy place with energy and water efficiencies.

Jennie MacFarland, Conservation Biologist with the Audubon Society, highlighted the diverse habitat of southeast Arizona with its sky islands. Habitat loss and changing climate pose significant threats to birds in Pima County, but tend to be hard to quantify. She highlighted other urban threats that include outdoor cats and window strikes, and gave suggestions to mitigate bird mortality. She mentioned the Sonoran Desert Conservation Plan and its work in preserving habitat and biological corridors, as well as efforts that can be taken to mitigate habitat loss such as creating food-rich landscapes for birds in places such as road medians as well as yards.

EPAC Subcommittee and Program Updates

Air Quality

The biennial Air Quality Forum will take place on May 24, 2017, 8:00am to 12:30pm at the PAG offices. Presentations include: the importance of clean air to the current and future regional economic and human health; Valley Metro transit initiatives; new alternative fuel programs and funding opportunities; introduction to the 2017 Assessment of Climate Change in the Southwest U. S. project; industry and government programs to reduce air emissions. For more information: PIMACLEANAIR.COM.

PAG staff completed the modeling and analyses for the transportation conformity assessment and the updates for the EPA-mandated air pollution control programs in the TIP 2018/2022.

PAG staff conducted the modeling and analyses of onroad and nonroad vehicle emissions and provided demographic, employment and other requested data for inclusion in the Pima County Department of Environmental Quality's Ozone Precursor Emissions Inventory.

Watershed Planning

The Watershed Planning Subcommittee will meet to be introduced to the PAG 208 Plan Scope of Work on May 22 at 2:30pm. Westland Resources' contract began to update the PAG 208 Plan with a Notice to Proceed on April 10, 2017.

The Stormwater Management Working Group met on March 15 to focus on small MS4 Phase 2 guidance for new Notice of Intent paperwork. Working Group discussions with ADEQ resulted in the posting of valuable tools for Notice of Termination look-ups online on the state website.

PAG staff contributed to the March 13 Low Impact Development Working Group.

PAG staff assembled new members for a meeting of the Stakeholders Advisory team of the Lower Santa Cruz River Basin Study to collect feedback on high risk scenarios for the water demand model.

Future EPAC Agenda Items

The next EPAC meeting is currently scheduled for October.