



## **Deliverable 2: Issues and Opportunities Paper**

**Prepared for: Pima Association of Governments  
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**June 2008**

**Prepared By:**



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*Regional Access Management Plan*  
**RAMMP**

**PIMA COUNTY REGIONAL ACCESS  
MANAGEMENT PLAN (RAMP)**

**ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES PAPER  
DELIVERABLE NO. 2**

**June 2008**

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## Introduction

Beginning in the early 1970s, a number of County and municipal functions started to be addressed from a regional perspective. In 1972, the Pima Association of Governments (PAG) was created to regionalize transportation and environmental planning. Later in the 1970s, agreements between the City of Tucson and Pima County created a regional wastewater management agency: the Pima County Wastewater Management Department (now named the Pima County Regional Wastewater Reclamation Department). In 2004, the Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) was established to develop and oversee a regional transportation plan. Addressing major issues on a regional basis continues to be a trend within Pima County.

Access management is a critical component of land use and transportation planning. If it is addressed properly, access management better ensures that traffic safety and roadway capacity are provided at reasonable levels. In addition, it can create conditions that encourage the use of alternate travel modes, enhance corridor aesthetics, and provide a desirable urban form. In order to help achieve these goals, access management cannot continue to be implemented on a case-by-case basis. To be truly effective, access management needs to be addressed in a planned, long range, organized manner for the roadway network.

Considering the small number of government entities in the PAG Region, it is very possible to adopt a regional set of access management policies and design guidelines for use by all of the local jurisdictions. In fact, some of the local jurisdictions are currently using parts of the policies and/or design guidelines of other local jurisdictions. In 2005, PAG initiated a limited regional access management effort by authorizing and financing the PAG Access and Mobility Study, which was completed in November 2005.

Some of the immediate benefits of the Regional Access Management Plan (RAMP) include:

1. Creating policies and design guidelines that do not change when one crosses an invisible municipal boundary or when those boundaries change through annexation or incorporation;
2. Providing architectural/civil engineering professionals with one set of policies and design guidelines for the entire PAG Region; and
3. Knowing that access management approvals for land development in unincorporated Pima County will still be satisfactory for municipalities that annex these developments at a later date.

In 2003, the Transportation Research Board (TRB) published the *Access Management Manual*, which was the single, most comprehensive publication on

this subject up to that time. The Introduction of the document includes both a brief discussion of the benefits of reasonable access management policies and design guidelines and the negative consequences when they do not exist. Exhibit 1, taken directly from the Introduction of the *Access Management Manual*, provides a discussion of these benefits and negative consequences.

## **Exhibit 1 – Why is Access Management Important?**

Source: Transportation Research Board Committee on Access Management. *Access Management Manual* Washington, D.C.: Transportation Research Board, 2003 (pp 4-5). Italics have been added to set this section apart from the remainder of this section of the document.

### ***General Benefits of Access Management***

*Roads are an important public resource. They're costly to build and to improve or replace. In a revenue-constrained environment, effective management of the transportation system is not an option—it is essential. It is simply not practical to allow major arterial roadways to deteriorate under the assumption that they will be replaced or reconstructed in the future. Yet many areas continue to do just that—by allowing closely spaced curb cuts, median openings across a turn lane, driveways in a major intersection, or poorly coordinated traffic signals—thus creating unsafe and congested conditions on major roadways.*

*By managing roadway access, government agencies can extend the life of roads and highways, increase public safety, reduce traffic congestion, and improve the appearance and quality of the built environment. Not only does access management preserve the transportation functions of roadways, it also helps preserve long-term property values and the economic viability of abutting development. From an environmental perspective, improved traffic flow translates into greater fuel efficiency and reduced vehicular emissions. Consolidating access roads is also less damaging to rural landscapes or environmentally sensitive areas than numerous individual private drives.*

### ***Who Benefits from Access Management?***

#### ***Motorists***

- *Face fewer decision points and traffic conflicts, which simplifies the driving task and increases driver safety*
- *Experience fewer traffic delays and arrive more quickly at their destinations*

#### ***Cyclists***

- *Face fewer decision points and conflicts with traffic, which simplifies the cycling task and increases safety for cyclists*
- *Benefit from more predictable motorist travel patterns*
- *Can choose alternative travel routes as local supporting roadway systems are developed*

***Pedestrians***

- *Face fewer and less frequent access points where motorists enter and exit the roadway, thereby making it safer to walk along major roadways*
- *Can use medians as a refuge when crossing several lanes of traffic*

***Transit riders***

- *Experience reduced delay and reduced travel times*
- *Benefit from a safer walking environment*
- *Experience more convenient access to transit stops as connectivity of streets, sidewalks, and pedestrian ways is improved*

***Business persons***

- *Are served by a more efficient roadway system that captures a broader market area*
- *Benefit from stable property values due to a well-managed roadway corridor*
- *Experience a more predictable and consistent development environment*

***Freight industry***

- *Benefits from reduced delay and increased safety, which results in lower transportation costs and shorter delivery times*

***Government agencies***

- *Benefit from the lower cost of delivering an efficient and safe transportation system*
- *Benefit from improved internal and intergovernmental coordination*
- *Are more effective in accomplishing their transportation objectives*

***Communities***

- *Receive a safer transportation system*
- *Benefit from less need for road widening, which causes displacement of businesses, homes, and communities*
- *Benefit from more attractive roadway corridors*
- *Help protect and preserve their investment in transportation facilities and may reduce capital improvement costs for new or reconstructed roadways*

**WHAT HAPPENS WHEN ROADWAY ACCESS IS NOT MANAGED?**

***Adverse Consequences of Lack of Access Management***

*Without access management, the function and character of major roadway corridors can deteriorate rapidly. Failure to manage access is associated with the following adverse social, economic, and environmental impacts:*

- *An increase in vehicular crashes;*
- *More collisions involving pedestrians and cyclists;*
- *Accelerated reduction in roadway efficiency;*
- *Unightly commercial strip development;*

- *Degradation of scenic landscapes;*
- *More cut-through traffic in residential areas due to overburdened arterials;*
- *Homes and businesses adversely affected by a continuous cycle of widening roads; and*
- *Increased commute times, fuel consumption, and vehicular emissions as numerous driveways and traffic signals intensify congestion and delays along major roads.*

*Not only is inadequate access management costly for government agencies and the public, but it also adversely affects corridor businesses. Over time, closely spaced and poorly designed driveways make it more difficult for customers to enter and exit businesses safely. Access to corner businesses may be blocked by queuing traffic. Newer businesses seek out locations that are more attractive and have fewer access and congestion problems. Customers begin to patronize businesses with safer, more convenient access and avoid businesses in areas of poor access design. Gradually the older developed areas begin to deteriorate because of access and aesthetic problems, and investment moves to newer, better-managed corridors.*

## **Purposes of this Document**

The purposes of this document are:

1. To identify several of the relevant access management issues that the local jurisdictions are currently facing,
2. To describe some of the significant differences between the policies and design guidelines of the local jurisdictions within the PAG Region,
3. To describe several current statewide programs and legislation that either affect the RAMP effort or are affected by the RAMP effort, and
4. To identify access management opportunities for the PAG Region.

## **Local Access Management Issues**

Based on information obtained from monthly RAMP project management meetings with the PAG and Pima County staffs; from interviews with management representatives of the local jurisdictions and the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) involved in access management; from interviews with upper management representatives of the development community; and from reviewing the PAG *Access and Mobility Study Report* (November 2005), many issues were identified. The issues can be divided into the following six categories:

- A. Policies and Standards;

- B. Regional Mandates;
- C. Enforcement;
- D. Information Sharing and Education;
- E. Alternative Modes and Amenities; and
- F. Funding Commitment and Political Will.

Discussions of the issues related to each of these six categories follow.

## **A: Policies and Standards**

### ***A1. Need for Uniform Policies: There is no uniform set of clear and comprehensive access management policies for the PAG Region.***

Currently, there are no regional access management policies or guiding principles. Even the 2005 PAG *Access and Mobility Study Report* did not attempt to develop regional policies. Based on the interviews conducted in 2008 with the government officials, it could be possible to develop regional policies or guiding principles that the local jurisdictions would agree on. However, agreement by the local jurisdictions might be dependent on the restrictive wording of the policy statements or guiding principles. Based on the interviews with the government officials, it will be easier to develop regional policies or guiding principles than to develop regional regulations, guidelines, or standards. Since ADOT has invested more than two years of time and effort in developing its own Statewide Access Management Plan, it is unknown how the ADOT staff would respond to regional policies or guiding principles that differed significantly from their own.

Based on the 2008 interviews with the representatives from the development community, all of those interviewed could accept a uniform set of regional policies or guiding principles. Prior to purchasing property for development, the developers would know the general access management expectations of all of the local jurisdictions by just reviewing the regional policies or guiding principles. Regardless, if the local jurisdictions could agree to a single set of clear and comprehensive access management policies or guiding principles, progress would be made in the PAG Region.

### ***A2. Need for Uniform Standards: There is no uniform set of clear and comprehensive access management regulations, guidelines, or standards for the PAG Region.***

Similar to the issue related to regional policies or guiding principles, there are no regional access management regulations, guidelines, or standards (hereafter referred to as “standards”). However, achieving agreement on standards by the local jurisdictions will be much more difficult. The 2005 PAG *Access and Mobility Study Report* did not even suggest the development of regional standards. That document only recommended uniform sets of

access management standards along corridors passing through multiple jurisdictions.

Based on the interviews conducted in 2008 with the government officials, there is no agreement about whether these standards should be written as strict regulations or as less restrictive guidelines. Several of those interviewed wanted the flexibility to make minor adjustments to the guidelines in the review/approval process. Others preferred the use of strict regulations linked with an appeal process to address noncompliance. One individual interviewed suggested having multiple standards for the same subject with the appropriate jurisdiction stated for each. This methodology was used in the development of some of the joint Pima County/Tucson traffic engineering design manuals. This is certainly possible, if the use of this methodology is limited. If it is used excessively, there is no point in having regional standards. Another government official interviewed stated that having a reasonable set of standards and applying them consistently would be beneficial to the development community. This individual believed that the development community would quickly learn what was expected from them and, as a result, would ultimately submit development plans that reflect the approved standards on the first submittal. These statements were supported by a consultant who frequently works for developers. In addition, consultants for the development community would welcome regional standards because they would facilitate the training of staff and reduce the potential for making errors.

Based on the 2008 interviews conducted with the representatives of the development community, these representatives believe that regional standards would be an improvement compared to the existing condition. These individuals stressed that they are seeking fair and consistent treatment from the government agencies that they are dealing with. Several individuals stated that they could accept regional standards. In addition, these same individuals stated that they could accept strict regulations with an appeal/waiver process if the regulations were applied fairly and consistently by the local jurisdictions. These development representatives stated that they do not like surprises in the development review process. Typically, surprises adversely affect both development schedule and budget. This is one important reason why the development community wants more consistency in the development review process.

***A3. Lack of Local Policies and Guidelines: There are some local jurisdictions that have few or no access management policies and standards.***

Within the PAG Region, only Sahuarita and Tucson have separate documents addressing access management. The other local jurisdictions have access management policies and standards within other public

documents, e.g., zoning codes, subdivision street standards, and other development related documents. Currently, South Tucson does not have any documentation related to access management; however, standards developed by Tucson are typically used. ADOT is currently developing a Statewide Access Management Plan (SAMP), which should be completed in 2008. Based on the interviews conducted in 2008 with the government officials, several individuals stated that their jurisdictions would like to either develop access management documents when none exist or update existing documents. The need for the updates is based on the experiences of using the existing documentation for several years and discovering shortcomings. The representatives of the development community who were interviewed in 2008 would also like to see these documentation deficiencies addressed. Establishing a regional set of policies and standards in 2008 will benefit all of the local jurisdictions of the PAG Region. It would be desirable if the SAMP could somehow be linked to the regional effort.

***A4. Lack of a Hierarchical Classification: There is no single regional access management roadway network (with some type of roadway functional classification hierarchy identifying either an emphasis on mobility or access) being used for making decisions related to access management.***

Although there is no single regional roadway network plan used by the local jurisdictions in their access management efforts, several jurisdictions have roadway network plans similar to the Tucson Major Streets and Routes Plan that could be used for this purpose. In addition, there is an approved Roadway Functional Classification Map for the PAG Region that is regularly prepared for the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). Starting with the regional and local network plans, a regional access management roadway network plan could be developed. Currently, ADOT is in the final stages of developing a Statewide Access Management Plan (SAMP). A principal feature of the SAMP is to designate sections of state highways into various rural and urban classifications for access management purposes.

Based on the interviews conducted in 2008 with the government officials, several individuals voiced their concerns about using this methodology. Some thought that obtaining agreement on both the roadway classifications and the access management classifications for individual roadway segments would be extremely difficult. Even if this were achievable, some individuals wanted to have a certain degree of freedom to make adjustments. Finally, others thought that this methodology was more appropriate for a state highway network.

## **B: Regional Mandates**

***B1. Lack of Mandates: There are no state or regional mechanisms, possibly using funding, to force local jurisdictions to improve how each addresses access management.***

This issue was discussed at the interviews with the government officials conducted as part of this project. Those interviewed could not imagine what mechanism could be used to improve how each local jurisdiction addressed access management. Typically, the individuals interviewed believed that they were already trying very hard to provide reasonable access conditions for the public. They also believed that enforcing their current standards and practices was already very difficult. The concept of withholding funding was considered unreasonable.

***B2. Need for Corridor Planning: There are no corridor access management plans or special access requirements for State Highways or other major/principal arterial roadways, with the exception of I-10, I-19, and SR 210.***

Currently, the only corridor access management plans that exist are for the two Interstate freeway corridors (excluding the frontage roads) and the Barraza-Aviation Highway (SR 210) expressway corridor. Addressing access management on a corridor basis may be achievable; however, it will be difficult. Compared to a methodology using roadway and access management classifications, this approach is certainly simpler. It was also supported in the 2005 PAG *Access and Mobility Study Report*. In fact, it was recommended that the phrase “Access Management Plan” be included in the title of the corridor improvement plans. Finally, one of the local jurisdictions has created overlay zones for two critical roadway segments passing through its jurisdiction.

***B3. Need to Address Roadway Segments: Typically, access management is addressed on a case by case, parcel by parcel, approach instead of addressing it on a corridor or a regional approach.***

This is a critical issue in the subject of access management. As much as the government professionals involved in access management might want to address access over a long segment of roadway, the typical situation is to deal with it on a parcel by parcel basis. Some of the government officials interviewed in 2008 stated that some progress is being made through rezoning proceedings, redevelopment/infill development activities, and roadway reconstruction projects. Consideration of shared driveways involving multiple property owners is occurring more frequently. Roadway widening projects involving significant right of way acquisitions provide additional opportunities for improving access and reducing the number of existing driveways.

***B4. Need to Preserve Arterial Capacity: Typically, the most important, regionally significant roadways for mobility are not being adequately protected against a proliferation of access points.***

Unfortunately, there are a number of examples of this occurring within the PAG Region. The roadway that probably most typifies this problem in the PAG Region is Oracle Rd. (SR 77). The government officials interviewed in 2008 recognize this problem and are taking steps to better address this problem now and in the future. Considering the capital cost to reconstruct major roadways; the number of issues that need to be addressed to plan, design, and implement a major roadway reconstruction project in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century; and the adverse effects of major reconstruction projects on both the motorists using the roadway and the owners of the adjacent development, there is a great need to better protect the functionality (capacity and safety) of the major roadways within the PAG Region.

***B5. Need for Better Inter-jurisdictional Coordination: The coordination between ADOT and the local jurisdictions regarding the development of land and the provision of access needs to continue to improve.***

Based on the interviews conducted as part of this project, there is no agreement about whether or not the coordination between ADOT and the local jurisdictions is adequate. Some of the government officials interviewed in 2008 stated that they were either pleased with the coordination or that it had improved in the past three years. Others believed that more improvements in coordination are needed. Of particular concern to some is the lack of control of access in the vicinity of traffic interchanges. Unfortunately, the ADOT staff is at a disadvantage compared to the staffs of the local jurisdictions since ADOT can only control access to the roadway (and not how land is developed). It is hoped that coordination between ADOT and the local jurisdictions will continue to improve.

***B6. Need to Integrate Context Sensitive Design and Sustainable Infrastructure/Development: There are no special considerations for sustainable infrastructure/development and Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS) concepts incorporated into any access management policies, guiding principles, regulations, guidelines or standards.***

Both of these concepts are relatively new. However, both are important as they relate to the improvement and management of arterial roadways and major streets. Sustainable infrastructure, as it relates to roadways, is a concept that supports using care and good judgment to provide for our transportation needs while still conserving our natural resources. Context Sensitive Solutions, as it relates to roadways, is a concept that encourages having the surrounding development influence how roadways are improved. To date, these concepts have not been incorporated into the local access management policies and standards.

## **C. Enforcement**

***C1. Need for Enforcement and “Follow-through”: There are no state or regional mechanisms, possibly using funding, to force local jurisdictions to commit to enforcing future regional access management policies and standards.***

This issue was discussed at the interviews conducted in 2008 with the government officials. Those interviewed could not imagine what mechanism could be used to achieve compliance with regional policies and standards by the local jurisdictions. They believed that enforcing their own policies and standards was already very difficult without considering strict adherence to or compliance with regional policies and standards. The concept of withholding regional funding was considered unreasonable. It should be noted that the linking of regional funding with compliance to an adopted corridor access management plan was recommended in the 2005 PAG *Access and Mobility Study Report*. However, nothing was done to implement such a linkage.

***C2. Need to Properly Use Existing Authority/Power: There is the mistaken belief that additional local ordinances and state laws are needed to adequately address access management.***

All of the representatives of the local jurisdictions and ADOT believe that they have sufficient authority and power to satisfactorily address the subject of access management. If this is true, then this authority and power can and should be used to better manage access. Based on the interviews conducted in 2008, it was frequently stated that improvements to access management policies, standards, and practices should be made. Any obstacles to the local jurisdictions using their authority and power to improve access management need to be identified and properly addressed.

***C3. Need for Flexibility and Common Sense: There is some interest in allowing individuals administering access management to have a certain degree of latitude to be flexible (and use good judgment) in the access management review/approval process, e.g., waiver processes and design exceptions.***

Several of the government officials interviewed in 2008 discussed the need to have a certain degree of freedom to allow for adjustments to the standards being used. These individuals stated that they regularly encounter situations where the approved standards cannot be applied. As a result, they require the need to either allow variances/design exceptions to the standards or to have a prescribed waiver process. Even those individuals who preferred using a set of regulations approved by their governing board, e.g., City/Town Council or County Board of Supervisors, stated that they need some type of appeal process to address situations that just cannot be adequately addressed by the approved standards.

## **D. Information Sharing and Education**

***D1. Lack of Regional Clearinghouse: There is no regional clearinghouse or forum for discussing access management issues, policies, standards, and practices.***

Currently, there is no mechanism for the representatives of the local jurisdictions involved in access management to periodically meet to discuss general issues or whether particular policies, standards, or practices are working. Several published documents prepared by some of the local jurisdictions are either being used as reference guides by other jurisdictions or parts of these documents are being incorporated into the documentation of other jurisdictions.

***D2. Need to Promote and Educate: There are no mechanisms to promote the benefits of good access management practices or to educate the development and business communities about them.***

Other than parts of some of the guidance documents prepared by the local jurisdictions, there are no materials to educate the business and development communities about the benefits of good access management practices. Also, there are no local brochures on the subject. There is one PowerPoint presentation on the subject that has been used at technical conferences and professional society meetings by the Traffic Engineering Manager of one of the local jurisdictions. Based on the interviews conducted in 2008, several government officials involved in this subject have attempted to either educate developers individually and/or educate members of City/Town Councils about the merits of good access management standards and practices. These limited efforts have been beneficial to the government officials attempting to enforce good access management practices. The 2005 PAG *Access and Mobility Study Report* recommended that a program be established to promote the benefits of reasonable access management practices; however, this has not occurred.

## **E. Alternative Modes and Amenities**

***E1. Need to Address Alternative Modes: Typically, there are no special considerations for alternative modes of travel (transit, bicycle, and pedestrian modes of travel) when addressing access to roadways.***

Some of the government officials interviewed in 2008 stated that they are currently doing a better job to address the needs of those using alternative modes of travel. However, several of those interviewed believe that ADOT needs to address the treatment of alternative travel modes better, particularly pedestrian movements. The 2005 PAG *Access and Mobility Study Report* recommended that access management standards address alternative

modes of transportation. This same PAG document included a statement that perhaps ADOT was more focused on rural issues than urban issues. That statement may partially explain why alternative travel modes typically occurring in urban areas were not addressed properly by ADOT in the past. In addition, over the past decade, ADOT has “turned back” a number of state highway segments located in urban areas. As a result, ADOT may be addressing this issue less frequently in the future.

***E2. Need to Address Community Amenities: Typically, there are no special considerations for wildlife corridors, drainageways, golf cart paths, and hiking/equestrian trails when addressing access to roadways.***

These issues are rarely addressed in typical access management discussions; however, in some parts of the PAG Region they are very real and important issues. The need to address this issue is partially due to the climate of this area and the ability to conduct certain activities throughout the year, e.g., hiking, horseback riding, and playing golf.

## **F. Funding Commitment and Political Will**

***F1. Lack of Funds: Typically, there are no funds designated specifically for access management in either project budgets or agency operating budgets to fund either the purchase of access rights or the provision of access enhancements.***

Several of the government officials interviewed in 2008 noted that there should be funds in the operating budgets of government agencies involved in access management to purchase access rights or entire small parcels, to encourage certain access treatments, or to enhance access management in some small way. The 2005 PAG *Access and Mobility Study Report* discussed this same subject.

***F2. Need to Minimize Political Influence: There is always the possibility that access management issues can be politically influenced at the review/approval stage.***

Many of the government officials interviewed in 2008 are concerned about members of their governing boards being asked by developers to intervene on their behalf when some of the design features of development projects do not satisfy all of the access management standards. This could certainly be an issue if the local jurisdiction is attempting to be “pro-growth” and encourage development in their community. Several individuals stated that they have made serious efforts to educate the members of their governing boards of the importance of reasonable access management standards and practices.

## Differences in the Local Access Management Guiding Principles and Standards

This section of the *Issues and Opportunities Paper* is based on a review of access management documents used by the five local municipalities and Pima County. There are no two documents addressing this subject that are alike or even similar. At one extreme, Tucson has a fine single access management document that covers this entire subject in good detail. At the other extreme, South Tucson does not have any documentation on this subject. The South Tucson staff relies on Tucson documentation to provide guidance. Between the two extremes, the local jurisdictions rely on a collection of documents to evaluate the access issues related to development proposals. These documents include the zoning code and subdivision street standards of the individual local jurisdiction, parts of the documentation from another jurisdiction or ADOT, and national publications. In most cases, it is extremely difficult to navigate through all of the various documents without the assistance of a local official.

The information that follows will allow the reader to better understand the differences in the access management policies or guiding principles and standards that are readily available from the local jurisdictions. Exhibit 2 has been prepared to assist in the explanation of the differences in the availability of access management policies or guiding principles and standards and other necessary information.

Based on the readily available documents from the local jurisdictions, none of the jurisdictions have access management policy statements. However, Sahuarita and Tucson both have a few guiding principles. Most of the jurisdictions discussed the need to functionally classify roadways into four categories, i.e., freeway, arterial, collector, and local. This is very important because the functional classifications relate directly to either emphasizing access or mobility. In addition, most of the jurisdictions have some type of Major Streets and Routes Map. This is a critical document because it establishes the most important roadways within the jurisdiction for mobility. As a result, these important roadways should be carefully evaluated with respect to access management.

There is significant diversity regarding both the access management standards discussed and the level of detail in which they are discussed. The *Transportation Access Management Guidelines for the City of Tucson, Arizona* has the most information and the most detailed guidance. Sahuarita has its own access management guidelines document, but it is not as comprehensive as the Tucson document. Oro Valley and Pima County rely heavily on their Subdivision Street Standards documents. Marana regularly uses a combination of the *Subdivision Street Standards Manual* and its procedures manual for the preparation of traffic impact studies.

## Exhibit 2 – Differences in Local Access Management Information

What Information or Criteria is Readily Available?	Marana	Oro Valley	Pima County	Sahuarita	South Tucson	Tucson
Access Management Guidelines Document	No	No	No	Yes	No	Yes
Policies or Guiding Principles	No	No	No	Yes	No	Yes
Discussion of Roadway Functional Classifications and Relationship to Mobility and Access	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Major Streets and Routes Map	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Driveway Spacing	1	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Unsignalized Intersection Spacing	1	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Signalized Intersection Spacing	1	2	3	Yes	No	Yes
Median Opening Spacing	1	Yes	3	Yes	No	Yes
Right Turn Lane Warrants	Yes	2	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Left Turn Lane Warrants	Yes	2	Yes	Yes	No	Yes

1. Information provided in documents referenced in the *Marana Subdivision Street Standards Manual*.
2. Information provided in documents referenced in the *Oro Valley Subdivision Street Standards and Policy Manual*.
3. Information provided in the *Pima County Roadway Design Manual*.

The spacing of driveways and unsignalized intersections is discussed in a variety of ways. One of the jurisdictions requires minimum separations from major intersections. Another jurisdiction requires minimum separations between adjacent driveways and from intersections. A third jurisdiction discusses both of the previous two sets of requirements. One of the jurisdictions modifies the requirements based on the design speed of the roadway. In general, there is no agreement on guidelines.

Both Sahuarita and Tucson have guidelines regarding the spacing of signalized intersections. Although the basic guidance is similar, the Tucson document discusses mechanisms for deviating from the standard guidance. Marana, Oro Valley, and Pima County utilize information contained in the *Pima County Roadway Design Manual*.

Median opening spacing requirements vary significantly. One jurisdiction requires a minimum separation from major intersections. Several jurisdictions have various spacing requirements depending on roadway functional classification. One of the jurisdictions modifies the requirements based on the posted speed limit of the roadway. One jurisdiction has both desirable and minimum spacing requirements. In general, there is no agreement on median opening spacing guidelines.

Regarding warrants for the construction of auxiliary lanes (right turn and left turn), there appear to be two different sets of requirements being used. Marana, Oro Valley, and Pima County use criteria developed for the Federal Highway Administration. Sahuarita and Tucson use criteria developed by the Idaho Transportation Department that was published in a Transportation Research Board report. In addition, Marana uses some additional criteria contained in a Transportation Research Board report prepared by the Texas Transportation Institute.

Overall, there is little agreement between the local jurisdictions regarding the publishing of policies or guiding principles. There is also little agreement about what standards to use and how detailed the standards should be. As previously stated, some of the jurisdictions are using the standards published by other local jurisdictions in order to overcome the deficiencies of their own documentation.

## **Statewide Programs and Legislation**

Over the past 10 years, the Arizona Legislature, the Arizona State Transportation Board, and the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) have taken steps to address continuing population growth and development in a logical fashion. Starting in 1998, the Arizona Growing Smarter Act, the ADOT Statewide Access Management Plan, and the Building a Quality Arizona planning process have been implemented or are currently being implemented. Typically, the RAMP policies, standards, and practices will advance these statewide efforts. A short summary of each of these statewide efforts follows. Also included is information about how the RAMP project supports them.

### ***Arizona Growing Smarter***

The Growing Smarter Act was approved by the Legislature in 1998. According to a 2002 report prepared by the Growing Smarter Oversight Council, the Act “clarified and strengthened planning elements in the required plans of municipalities and counties ... ” In 2000, the Legislature approved the Growing Smarter Plus Act. One of the highlights of the 2000

Act is that it “requires cities and counties to exchange plans, coordinate with regional planning agencies, and encourages comments between entities prior to adoption to encourage regional coordination ...”

In September 2006, the Growing Smarter Oversight Council published *Growing Smarter Guiding Principles for Arizona*. In the section addressing the guiding principles related to infrastructure, the following guiding principles are included:

- “Meeting each community’s long-range needs for adequate essential infrastructure such as water, sewer, power, communications, and transportation systems as well as public facilities, in a timely and fiscally responsible manner should be an essential objective of all future plans.”
- “Future land use plans and community infrastructure plans should be integrated and implementation of such plans coordinated.”
- “Future local planning efforts should encourage public and private organizations, working cooperatively, to efficiently and effectively develop and use community infrastructure and to develop methodologies that provide for the cost of this essential infrastructure to be borne equitably by all.”

Accompanying these guiding principles were implementation recommendations. One of the recommendations related to infrastructure was as follows: “Ensure that state and regional planning agencies work with local communities to fully understand the regional traffic congestion impacts of future, proposed development on both local transportation systems as well as major inter-regional systems. Future local plans should recognize that efficient, effective, and reliable transportation for people and products is essential for economic vitality and quality of life.”

Although the subject of access management is not mentioned in the Growing Smarter or Growing Smarter Plus documentation reviewed, the RAMP project appears to support the intent of the Arizona Legislature. Based on the documentation reviewed, there is recognition of the importance of coordinating land use planning with transportation planning, the importance to the general public and business of efficiently moving people and goods, and the harm of traffic congestion related to land development. The RAMP project will help to address the wishes of the Arizona Legislature.

## **Statewide Access Management Plan (SAMP)**

In August 2005, ADOT initiated a project to develop a Statewide Access Management Plan (SAMP) for the state highway system. It is a very worthy effort; however, after 30 months this 18 month project is yet to be completed. It may be completed in the summer of 2008.

Many of the SAMP project objectives are identical or similar to those of the RAMP project. The following are some of the work tasks from an early SAMP project PowerPoint presentation:

- Develop statewide access management policies.
- Define a process to develop and implement access management on state highways.
- Establish guidelines to incorporate access management into roadway design projects.
- Identify necessary revisions or additions to the ARS and/or Administrative Rules.
- Define a process to coordinate with agencies regarding developments and access needs.
- Establish Intergovernmental Agreement templates for use in regulating access management with local jurisdictions and other state agencies.
- Identify strategies that may be used as guidelines for future access management plans.
- Develop an education strategy for jurisdictions and developers to improve their understanding of the benefits of access management.
- Develop procedures for continuing coordination with stakeholders on access management.

At the end of the PowerPoint presentation, the following conclusions were made:

- Access management is critical to the continued operation of the State Highway System.
- A Statewide Access Management Plan will be developed.
- Coordination with local, state, and federal agencies is key.

Based on this information, ADOT also recognizes the benefits of improved access management standards and practices. One of the objectives of RAMP is to dovetail the RAMP effort with the SAMP effort. At the outset of the RAMP effort, it was envisioned that the SAMP effort would be completed shortly after the RAMP effort started. This did not happen. As a result, the RAMP consultant will need to be extremely cautious about

incorporating draft documentation from the SAMP effort into the RAMP effort.

### ***Building a Quality Arizona (bqAZ) / Regional Framework Studies and Statewide Transportation Planning Framework***

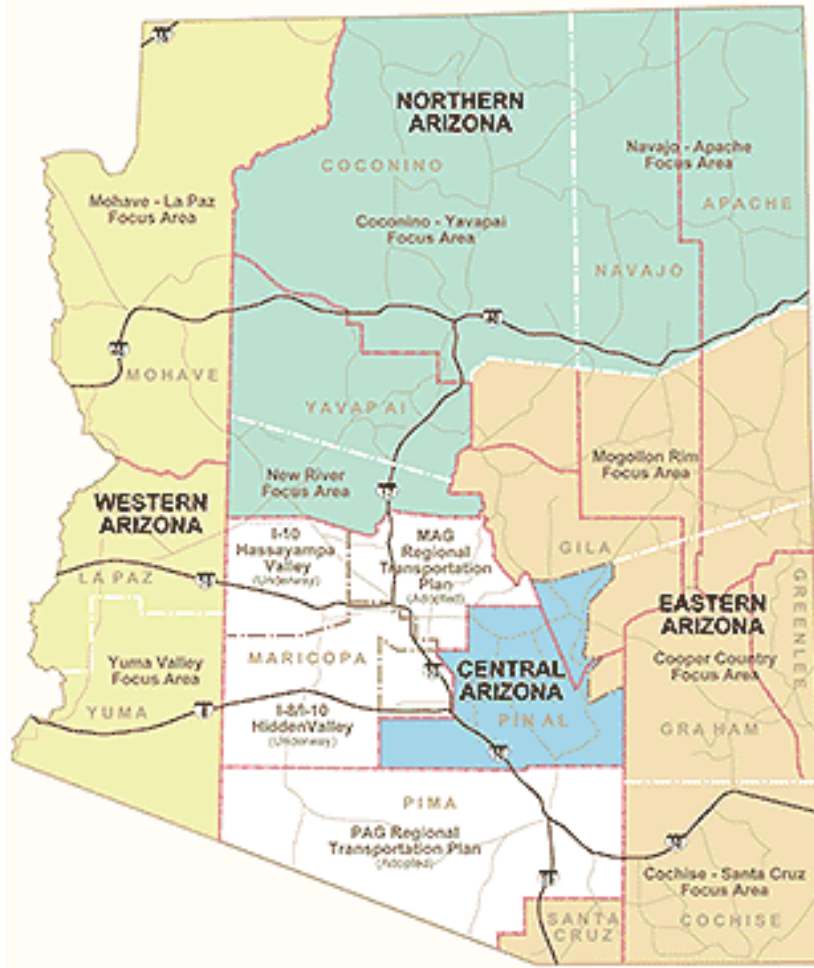
This is a statewide, comprehensive, long range planning process that will quantify transportation needs and identify various alternatives to address those needs. Governor Napolitano issued Executive Order 2008-02 in early 2008 to support this process; the Arizona State Transportation Board is committed to funding it.

The regional transportation planning agencies within Arizona will be implementing four Regional Framework Studies: Central Arizona, Eastern Arizona, Northern Arizona, and Western Arizona. (Refer to Exhibit 3.) These regional studies will provide the input for the Statewide Transportation Planning Framework. The focus of this long range planning process will be for the period from 2030 to 2050. The Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG) and Pima Association of Governments (PAG) regional transportation plans and related studies will be updated, as needed, and incorporated into the Statewide Transportation Planning Framework as well.

According to the January 2008 bqAZ Fact Sheet, the “four Regional Framework Studies will look at ways to plan for growth by strengthening the link between land use, community development and economic patterns of each region, and their interrelated transportation needs for future sustainable mobility and continuing enhancement of Arizona’s quality of life.” Also included in the January 2008 bqAZ Fact Sheet are four questions that the Regional Framework Studies will attempt to answer. They are:

- “What part can transportation investments play in encouraging quality economic growth?”
- “How can we improve the links and relationship between land use and transportation to achieve responsible urban growth patterns following the principles of smart growth and sustainability?”
- “How can we improve the links between population centers, which will strengthen the base for economic growth?”
- “How can transportation decisions enhance our quality of life and improve our natural environment in a way that is fair and equitable for Arizonans?”

### Exhibit 3 – Building a Quality Arizona Regional Framework Studies Map



Source: *Building a Quality Arizona Home Page* ([www.bqaz.org](http://www.bqaz.org))

This effort will require the cooperation of regional transportation planning agencies, transit organizations, tribal governments, land management agencies, conservation groups, business and community leaders, local government officials, the Governor’s office, and the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT). A primary goal of this effort is the development of a Statewide Transportation Planning Framework that connects multimodal transportation alternatives with land use and economic development.

The RAMP project supports the bqAZ effort because it, too, is trying to improve the link between land development and the multimodal transportation system. It is a very worthy goal to provide transportation

facilities that allow motorists to conveniently, efficiently, and safely go to/from their shopping, recreation, and employment destinations with a minimum of disruption. The provision of reasonable access points along the roadway network is a mechanism for achieving this. As has been said many times in the recent past throughout the United States, we, as a society, cannot build our way out of our transportation problems by continually widening roadways. Our roadways must be designed and the adjacent development must be planned to work efficiently. The RAMP project will help to answer the second bulleted question included in the January 2008 bqAZ Fact Sheet.

### ***Proposition 207: Private Property Rights Protection Act***

In November 2006, Arizona voters approved Proposition 207. At the commencement of the RAMP project, it was questioned whether the amended state statutes would have an adverse impact on the outcome of the RAMP project. The following is a summary of the approved amendment and what the impact, if any, is on the RAMP project.

Proposition 207 amended Title 12, Chapter 8, Arizona Revised Statutes (ARS), by adding Article 2.1 (Private Property Rights Protection Act). This amendment addresses several issues related to the public taking of private property that would not affect access management policies and standards. However, there is language in Article 2.1 allowing a property owner to seek compensation if the value of his/her property is diminished by a land use law. This may lead one to believe that this amendment could have an adverse impact on the enactment of more restrictive access management policies and standards than currently exist. The most relevant section of Article 2.1 appears to be ARS 12-1134. The text of ARS 12-1134 follows.

ARS 12-1134. Diminution in Value; Just Compensation states:

- A. If the existing rights to use, divide, sell or possess private real property are reduced by the enactment or applicability of any land use law enacted after the date the property is transferred to the owner and such action reduces the fair market value of the property the owner is entitled to just compensation from this state or the political subdivision of this state that enacted the land use law.
- B. This section does not apply to land use laws that:
  - 1. Limit or prohibit a use or division of real property for the protection of the public's health and safety, including rules and regulations relating to fire and building codes, health and sanitation, transportation or traffic control, solid or hazardous waste, and pollution control;
  - 2. Limit or prohibit the use or division of real property commonly and historically recognized as a public nuisance under common law;
  - 3. Are required by federal law;

4. Limit or prohibit the use or division of a property for the purpose of housing sex offenders, selling illegal drugs, liquor control, or pornography, obscenity, nude or topless dancing, and other adult oriented businesses if the land use laws are consistent with the constitutions of this state and the United States;
  5. Establish locations for utility facilities;
  6. Do not directly regulate an owner's land; or
  7. Were enacted before the effective date of this section.
- C. This state or the political subdivision of this state that enacted the land use law has the burden of demonstrating that the land use law is exempt pursuant to subsection B.
- D. The owner shall not be required to first submit a land use application to remove, modify, vary or otherwise alter the application of the land use law to the owner's property as a prerequisite to demanding or receiving just compensation pursuant to this section.
- E. If a land use law continues to apply to private real property more than ninety days after the owner of the property makes a written demand in a specific amount for just compensation to this state or the political subdivision of this state that enacted the land use law, the owner has a cause of action for just compensation in a court in the county in which the property is located, unless this state or political subdivision of this state and the owner reach an agreement on the amount of just compensation to be paid, or unless this state or political subdivision of this state amends, repeals, or issues to the landowner a binding waiver of enforcement of the land use law on the owner's specific parcel.
- F. Any demand for landowner relief or any waiver that is granted in lieu of compensation runs with the land.
- G. An action for just compensation based on diminution in value must be made or forever barred within three years of the effective date of the land use law, or of the first date the reduction of the existing rights to use, divide, sell or possess property applies to the owner's parcel, whichever is later.
- H. The remedy created by this section is in addition to any other remedy that is provided by the laws and constitution of this state or the United States and is not intended to modify or replace any other remedy.
- I. Nothing in this section prohibits this state or any political subdivision of this state from reaching an agreement with a private property owner to waive a claim for diminution in value regarding any proposed action by this state or a political subdivision of this state or action requested by the property owner.

ARS 12-1134.A states “If the existing rights to use ... private real property are reduced by the enactment or applicability of any land use law ... and such action reduces the fair market value of the property the owner is entitled to just compensation from this state or the political subdivision of this state that enacted the land use law.” This statement could suggest that if new, more restrictive access management policies and standards reduce access to private property, the owner might seek compensation for damages.

ARS 12-1134.B.1, however, states that this section does not apply to land use laws that “limit or prohibit a use or division of real property for the protection of the public's health and safety, including rules and regulations relating to fire and building codes, health and sanitation, transportation or

traffic control, solid or hazardous waste, and pollution control”. This statement appears to allow units of government to control access on roadways for the protection of the public’s safety. Since the enactment of new, more restrictive access management policies and standards are partially due to a need to improve traffic safety, it appears that, in general, this section of the statute is satisfied.

ARS 12-1134.C, stipulates that “this state or the political subdivision of this state that enacted the land use law has the burden of demonstrating that the land use law is exempt pursuant to subsection B.” This statement does require the unit of government that is enforcing access management policies and standards to show that it is in compliance with ARS 12-1134.B

Finally, ARS 12-1134.I states that “nothing in this section prohibits this state or any political subdivision of this state from reaching an agreement with a private property owner to waive a claim for diminution in value regarding any proposed action by this state or a political subdivision of this state or action requested by the property owner.” This statement creates a situation where the unit of government and the property owner can negotiate a set of access management conditions.

In general, Proposition 207 should not present any new obstacles for the local units of government to enact more restrictive access management policies and standards. However, these more restrictive access management standards must still remain reasonable for the individual conditions of the site and the roadway. This will be determined by a number of factors.

### ***Sustainable Infrastructure and Development***

Although not a statewide program or legislation, there is a public works concept that is advancing in the United States called “sustainable infrastructure” or “sustainable development”. The RAMP project does support this concept. The following paragraph is a brief summary of the concept.

Over the past ten years, several professional organizations and government agencies at all levels have taken an interest in the concept of sustainable infrastructure and development. On April 24, 2007, the American Society of Civil Engineers adopted Policy Statement No. 418. It reads: “The American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) believes that sustainable development has been defined as the challenge of meeting human needs for natural resources, industrial products, energy, food, transportation, shelter, and waste management while conserving and

protecting environmental quality and the natural resource base essential for future development.” It is believed that the outcome of the RAMP project could advance the objectives of sustainable infrastructure and development by maintaining the mobility and safety of regional roadways for longer durations than would otherwise occur without it.

## Local Access Management Opportunities

Based on the information contained in the previous sections of this document, there appear to be numerous opportunities for the improvement of how access management is addressed in the PAG Region. Many of the government officials interviewed in 2008 believe that improvements to the policies, standards, and practices can and should be made. The State of Arizona has spent and is spending significant amounts of money to address population growth and the associated development through programs such as Arizona Growing Smarter, Building a Quality Arizona, and the Statewide Access Management Plan.

This report section attempts to identify some of the access management opportunities that should be explored as part of the RAMP effort. As the RAMP effort progresses through the various work tasks of the project, additional opportunities may present themselves. Therefore, this section should not be considered all inclusive of the possible opportunities.

### ***1. An excellent opportunity now exists for addressing access management in a regional way.***

Access management is a subject that all of the government entities within the PAG Region are addressing on a regular basis. Addressing it as a regional problem is appropriate. Fortunately, the number of government entities is small. Currently, there are only nine entities, i.e., five municipalities, two Native American entities, one county, and one state. As a result of the relatively small number of government entities, there is an opportunity to arrive at consensus for addressing this important subject.

There are a number of government officials working for the local jurisdictions within the PAG Region who have many years of good “hands on” access management experience. Consideration should be given to combining all of the local skills, knowledge, and talent on a regional effort. Working together as a team, there is an opportunity to develop a first class, practical set of policies/guiding principles and standards. As previously stated, other benefits of a regional approach would include: 1) creating standards and practices that do not change when one crosses an invisible municipal boundary; 2) providing architectural/civil engineering consulting firms with one set of standards and practices for the entire PAG

Region; and 3) knowing that access management approvals for developments in unincorporated Pima County will be satisfactory for municipalities that annex these developments at a later date.

**2. *Based on the anticipated population growth of the PAG Region, coupled with the associated development of land and roadway reconstruction, there will be many opportunities in the future for the local jurisdictions to implement meaningful access management improvements, particularly on the arterial roadways and major streets.***

Over the next 20 years, it is anticipated that the population of the PAG Region will increase by 50 percent. This population growth will increase the demand for all types of development, e.g., residential, commercial, and industrial. The issue of access will need to be addressed regularly as this development occurs. The local government officials need a reasonable set of access management policies, standards, and practices to use when reviewing submittals for development. Some local jurisdictions already have very good standards and practices, while others do not.

In addition to the future development activities, the RTA will be guiding to completion the projects included in the \$2.1 billion Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). Combining the RTA corridor projects with improved access management standards will provide these reconstructed roadways with enhanced traffic safety, superior mobility/capacity, and a longer functional life. This is an opportunity that should not be missed.

Although there is currently a downturn in the national and local economies, the slower rate of development may provide an opportunity to develop the necessary access management tools for those jurisdictions that do not have them and to improve the existing tools for the other jurisdictions. When the local economic conditions improve, all of the local jurisdictions will be better prepared to address development and the associated access management issues.

**3. *Several of the jurisdictions within the PAG Region have few access management tools, e.g., policies, guiding principles, regulations, guidelines or standards. The RAMP project is an excellent opportunity to address this condition in a cost effective way.***

Within the PAG Region, only Sahuarita and Tucson have separate documents addressing access management. Most of the other local jurisdictions have access management policies, regulations, guidelines or standards within other public documents, e.g., zoning codes, subdivision street standards, and other development related documents. The RAMP project is an excellent opportunity to provide all of the local jurisdictions

with a basic set of policies, standards, and practices in a cost effective way. Cost savings will be achieved by using a regional approach to develop the necessary access management tools.

**4. *An opportunity now exists to create a permanent regional access management clearinghouse and forum for discussion and dissemination of information.***

As previously stated, there are a number of local government officials within the PAG Region who have many years of good “hands on” access management experience. In addition, there are many engineers and planners in the local private sector with similar experience. The government officials could create a regional access management clearinghouse and forum for discussion. These government officials could meet on a regular basis to discuss access management issues. Periodically, they could invite private sector engineers and planners to share concerns and develop meaningful solutions. In this fashion, the outcomes of the RAMP effort could be regularly updated to better fit the conditions of the time.

A second feature of the regional clearinghouse and forum for discussion is the ability to create brochures, PowerPoint presentations, and other educational tools to showcase the benefits of good access management policies, standards, and practices. These educational tools will be used to teach developers, business owners, and elected county/municipal officials the importance of proper access management.

**5. *An opportunity now exists to improve the level of cooperation between ADOT and the local jurisdictions.***

Based on the interviews conducted in 2005 (as part of the PAG Access and Mobility Study Report effort) and in 2008, all of the officials (from ADOT and the local governments) want a good level of cooperation between ADOT and the local jurisdictions. ADOT will soon be implementing the Statewide Access Management Plan (SAMP). Several of the work tasks of SAMP are supportive of greater cooperation between ADOT and the local jurisdictions. These work tasks include: 1) define a process to coordinate with agencies regarding developments and access needs; 2) establish Intergovernmental Agreement templates for use in regulating access management with local jurisdictions and other state agencies; 3) identify strategies that may be used as guidelines for future access management plans; and 4) develop procedures for continuing coordination with stakeholders on access management. In addition, one of the conclusions of an ADOT SAMP PowerPoint presentation states that “coordination with local, state, and federal agencies is key” to the success of SAMP. In order for it to be effective, the ADOT staff will need to work closely with the officials of the local jurisdictions. Similarly, the local

officials support improved access management standards and practices for the state highways because what happens on the state highways ultimately affects the local roadways in some fashion.

**6. *An opportunity now exists for access management to be considered on a planned, long range, regional network-wide or corridor approach.***

For many years, the typical approach for addressing access management has been to deal with it at a parcel by parcel or development by development level. In a very limited number of situations, various local jurisdictions have attempted to address access management on a corridor basis. An opportunity now exists to go beyond the status quo. One option would be to designate more corridors for enhanced treatments of access management. Candidate arterial roadways for these enhanced treatments could be La Cholla Boulevard, Silverbell Road, and Valencia Road (on both the east and the west sides of the Tucson Metropolitan Area). A second option would be to develop a network of regionally significant roadways and utilize enhanced access management treatments on those roadways. This regionally significant roadway network should include the state highways.

**7. *An opportunity now exists to create a financial incentive (“bonus” funds) for implementing superior access management standards and practices on RTA RTP corridor projects.***

Based on the interviews conducted as part of this project, there is unanimous dislike for any concept of withholding regional funding for poor compliance or noncompliance with regional standards and practices on arterial roadways and major streets. Instead of withholding funds for poor compliance or noncompliance of regional access management standards and practices on regionally significant roadways, perhaps there should be consideration of rewarding those government entities that practice good access management standards and practices on regionally significant roadways. The reward would be “bonus” funds that could be used for access management improvements on other regionally significant roadways within the jurisdiction. Some of the individuals interviewed believed that there is a regular need for funds in their operating budgets to finance access improvements. These “bonus” funds could be added to the jurisdictions operating budget for this purpose. Currently, no regional funding source exists for this purpose. Perhaps, a source of the “bonus” could be created in one of the existing statewide growth-related programs, e.g., bqAZ, or a new ADOT statewide funding mechanism could be created.

**8. An opportunity now exists to better support several statewide programs related to growth in Arizona.**

In addition to the Statewide Access Management Plan (SAMP), the state government has two other programs created to address growth and development in Arizona, i.e., Arizona Growing Smarter and Building a Quality Arizona (bqAZ). Now is the time for PAG and the local jurisdictions to unite on this issue. Access management is the subject of SAMP; however, it is very important to the other two programs. One of the questions that the state wants answered by the bqAZ effort is “How can we improve the links and relationship between land use and transportation to achieve responsible urban growth patterns following the principles of smart growth and sustainability?” Access management is one of the links between land use and transportation. Once the bqAZ planning effort has been completed, perhaps the state will offer financial incentives to further the bqAZ and Arizona Growth Smarter goals and objectives. By having a regional set of policies, standards and practices, the local government entities would have one critical tool ready to use. The creation by the state of an access management funding source to finance access management improvements would be very helpful to the local jurisdictions. Perhaps state funds could be given to PAG. PAG could be given the responsibility for distributing them using a state approved simple application and distribution methodology. The application process would need to be both easily implemented and short in duration.

**9. An opportunity now exists to better support the concept of sustainable infrastructure and development.**

Over the past 10 years, the terms “sustainable infrastructure” and “sustainable development” have been seen more frequently in the public works and development arenas. One means of sustaining the life of an arterial roadway or major street is to prevent functional obsolescence. Nonexistent or poor access management standards and practices lead to a proliferation of access points. Additionally, the access points, median openings, and traffic signals are typically poorly spaced. These features accelerate functional obsolescence because they adversely affect both safety and mobility. Once arterial roadways and major streets have been developed with these less than desirable features, it is nearly impossible to correct them. Within the PAG Region, a classic example of this less than desirable condition exists on Oracle Road between River Road and the point where it ends north of Speedway Boulevard. The RAMP project is an excellent opportunity for the local jurisdictions to commit or recommit to addressing access management using the best standards and practices available in their support of sustainable infrastructure.

***10. An opportunity now exists to better support the concept of adding a budget line item to the operating budgets of the local jurisdictions for access management enhancements and improvements.***

If the elected and appointed local officials are truly supportive of good access management policies, standards, and practices, then a sign of good faith would be to support a budget line item for enhancements and improvements as the opportunities arise. At first, the amount may be small. As these funds are used and successful improvements and enhancements are made, the local decision-makers will become more willing to increase the funds committed to this purpose.