Recognizing the value and continuing potential of Green Infrastructure and Low Impact Development to foster economic vitality, to augment the water resource portfolio and to promote human and ecosystem health.

Whereas, green infrastructure (GI) utilizes stormwater flows to sustain and increase native vegetation and shade trees without increasing potable water use so that societal benefits of connecting people to natural and cultural heritage is realized in urban infill and other built environments, transportation, open space, and natural wash projects; thereby enabling sustainable stormflow irrigation that is resilient to peak drought conditions and outdoor water use restrictions; and

Whereas, low impact development (LID) and the generated vegetation adds shade and beautification resulting in locally and nationally measured economic benefits such as increased home property values, commercial business success, ecotourism, health and fitness, professional expertise, energy efficiency, flood safety, irrigation efficiency, erosion prevention, pavement preservation related to shade, and reduced need for expensive flood control structures; this builds a regional “sense of place” with Sonoran desert branding to enhance investment, business success, and job growth in the region; and

Whereas, trees and vegetation provide health benefits by reducing heat-related illnesses and deaths in vulnerable populations and removing particulates and other pollutants from air; these are strategies recognized by the EPA for cooling, encouraging fitness, improving job access through active and alternative modes of transportation usage, and providing environmental justice benefits to low income, elderly, isolated and minority communities; and

Whereas, GI designs using context-sensitive solutions for transportation projects provide life-cycle returns on investment and safety benefits when used for roadway calming, green buffers, and other safety elements for pedestrians, cyclists, and bus riders; and

Whereas, federal and state transportation funding and guidance, including the TIGER grants (Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery), Transportation Alternatives Program funds, ADOT’s Draft Smart Transportation Guidebook, and Federal Highway Administration objectives, increasingly identify green infrastructure and beneficial use of stormwater as valued project elements.

Now, therefore, be it recognized that Pima Association of Governments’ Regional Council (PAG) commends the region for exceeding recommendations put forth in PAG’s 2012 Green Infrastructure/Low Impact Development (GI/LID) Resolution for collaborations, guidance, case studies, incentives, return on investment modeling, policy inventories, and incorporating GI/LID principles into regional planning documents. These efforts helped member jurisdictions receive grants, gain federal technical assistance and achieve top national sustainability rankings.

And may it also be recognized that PAG continues to encourage GI/LID, when feasible and affordable, as a valuable element of context-sensitive roadway design for public and private development providing multimodal benefits for all ages and abilities. PAG strongly encourages a continued emphasis on regional coordination of GI/LID planning including active engagement among departments and partner jurisdictions for development of sample guidance and policy. PAG further recommends seeking new opportunities to implement green infrastructure measuring how these projects benefit our economic vitality, energy demand, long-term water reliability, heat and drought resilience, urban biodiversity and ecosystem connectivity.

This Resolution Made by Pima Association of Governments’ Regional Council on March 26, 2015.