

Minutes of the
Maricopa Association of Governments
Regional Council Executive Committee
October 15, 2024

This meeting was conducted virtually via Zoom

[Video recording of the meeting](#)

MEMBERS	ATTENDANCE
Buckeye: Mayor Eric Orsborn, Treasurer	Virtual
Chandler: Mayor Kevin Hartke, Chair	Virtual
El Mirage: Mayor Alexis Hermosillo, Vice Chair	Not in Attendance
Gilbert: Mayor Brigette Peterson	Virtual
Glendale: Mayor Jerry Weiers	Virtual
Mesa: Mayor John Giles	Not in Attendance
Phoenix: Mayor Kate Gallego, Past Chair	Not in Attendance

1. Call to Order

The meeting of the Regional Council Executive Committee was called to order by Chair Hartke at 12:08 p.m. following adjournment of the Regional Community Partners Board of Directors meeting. Roll call was taken to confirm a quorum of members was present.

2. Call to the Audience

MAG staff indicated that there were no online written public comments received for the Call to the Audience.

3. Informational Items

Chair Hartke indicated that there were no items on the agenda for information only.

4. Approval of Consent Agenda

Chair Hartke stated that agenda items 4A through 4I were on the Consent Agenda.

He asked if any members had questions or would like a presentation on any of the Consent Agenda items.

Mayor Orsborn commented on Consent Agenda item 4I, amendment to increase the contract agreement with Matrix Design Group, Inc. for the FY 2024 Housing Opportunities in Mentorship and Education Technical Assistance Program On-Call. He stated that the Matrix Design Group has done work for the city of Buckeye and he praised their performance. Chair Hartke thanked him for his comment.

Chair Hartke indicated that there were no requests to speak received for the Consent Agenda.

Chair Hartke requested a motion to approve the agenda item. Mayor Orsborn moved to approve the Consent Agenda for items 4A through 4I, and Mayor Peterson seconded the motion.

The motion passed with the following members voting in favor: Chair Hartke, Mayor Orsborn, Mayor Peterson, and Mayor Weiers.

4A. Approval of the August 12, 2024, Meeting Minutes

The Regional Council Executive Committee, by consent, approved the August 12, 2024, meeting minutes.

4B. Amendment to the MAG FY 2024-2025 Biennial Unified Planning Work Program and Budget for the Title VI Program Update

The Regional Council Executive Committee, by consent, approved an amendment to the MAG FY 2024-2025 Biennial Unified Planning Work Program and Budget to add the Title VI Program Update and transfer \$200,000 from the FY 2022-23 Regional Continuous Traffic Count Data Collection project.

The MAG Fiscal Year (FY) 2024-2025 Biennial Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) and Budget was approved by the MAG Regional Council on May 24, 2023. Since that time, an amendment is needed to add a new project to assess and update MAG's Title VI program, including establishment of an updated annual report framework. Funding is available through savings in federal transportation monies allocated to MAG transferred from the FY 2022-23 Regional Continuous Traffic Count Data Collection project.

4C. Amendment to the MAG FY 2024-2025 Biennial Unified Planning Work Program and Budget for the Loop 101 (Price Freeway), Loop 202 (Red Mountain Freeway) to US 60 Bottleneck Study and Corridor Plan

The Regional Council Executive Committee, by consent, approved an amendment to the MAG FY 2024-2025 Biennial Unified Planning Work Program and Budget to add \$325,000 for the Loop 101 (Price Freeway), Loop 202 (Red Mountain Freeway) to US 60 Bottleneck Study and Corridor Plan.

The MAG Fiscal Year (FY) 2024-2025 Biennial MAG Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) and Budget was approved by the MAG Regional Council on May 24, 2023, and included \$600,000, for the Loop 101 (Price Freeway), Loop 202 (Red Mountain Freeway) to US 60 Bottleneck Study and Corridor Plan. Since that time, the need to also study the Loop 202 (Red Mountain Freeway) between Priest Drive and Loop 101 (Price Freeway) has

been identified. As a result, the scope of the of the study has been expanded and additional funding is needed. This agenda item represents a request to amend the FY 2024-2025 Biennial UPWP and Budget and increase the project budget by \$325,000. Funding is available from the Freeway Life Cycle Program.

4D. Amendment to the MAG FY 2024-2025 Biennial Unified Planning Work Program and Budget for the Northeast Valley Subregional Transportation Study

The Regional Council Executive Committee, by consent, approved an amendment to the MAG FY 2024-2025 Biennial Unified Planning Work Program and Budget to add the Northeast Valley Subregional Transportation Study and transfer \$500,000 from the FY 2022-23 Regional Continuous Traffic Count Data Collection project.

The MAG Fiscal Year (FY) 2024-2025 MAG Biennial Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) and Budget was approved by the MAG Regional Council on May 24, 2023. Since that time, the need to conduct a Northeast Valley subregional transportation study has been identified. Specifically, a study was requested at the September 25, 2024, MAG Regional Council meeting in response to the planned development in the Northeast Valley, particularly along the Loop 101 (Pima Freeway) corridor. Funding is available through savings in federal transportation monies allocated to MAG transferred from the FY 2022-23 Regional Continuous Traffic Count Data Collection project.

4E. Amendment to the MAG FY 2024-2025 Biennial Unified Planning Work Program and Budget for the Regional Transportation Planning On-Call

The Regional Council Executive Committee, by consent, approved an amendment to the MAG FY 2024-2025 Biennial Unified Planning Work Program and Budget to add \$150,000 to the Regional Transportation Planning On-Call.

The MAG Fiscal Year (FY) 2024-2025 Biennial Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) and Budget was approved by the MAG Regional Council on May 24, 2023, and included \$750,000 for the FY 2020 Regional Transportation Planning (RTP) On-Call. On June 26, 2024, the MAG Regional Council approved funding for Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Program (EVCIP) Siting Plans; 12 different agencies were awarded funding. Since that time, two of the agencies, the City of Apache Junction and Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community, have asked MAG to assist with their siting plans. As a result, an amendment to the UPWP and Budget is needed to add the funding that was awarded to the two agencies so that MAG can contract with qualified consultants on their behalf. This agenda item represents a request to amend the FY 2024-2025 Biennial UPWP and Budget to increase the RTP On-Call contract by \$150,000 to develop Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Program (EVCIP) Siting Plans for the City of Apache Junction and the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community. Funding is available from the portion of Highway User Revenue Funds (HURF) allocated to the MAG region that was set aside for the EVCIP Siting Plans. Please refer to the enclosed material.

4F. Amendment to the MAG FY 2024-2025 Biennial Unified Planning Work Program and Budget to add \$150,000 from the Nina Mason Pulliam Charitable Trust for the Housing Opportunities in Mentorship and Education Technical Assistance (HOME TA) Program

The Regional Council Executive Committee, by consent, approved an amendment to the MAG FY 2024-2025 Biennial Unified Planning Work Program and Budget to add \$150,000 from the Nina Mason Pulliam Charitable Trust for the Housing Opportunities in Mentorship and Education Technical Assistance (HOME TA) Program.

The MAG Fiscal Year 2024-2025 Biennial Unified Planning Work Program and Budget was approved by the MAG Regional Council on May 24, 2023. On September 9, 2024, the Nina Mason Pulliam Charitable Trust notified MAG of a \$150,000 grant award to Regional Community Partners (RCP) in support of the Housing Opportunities in Mentorship and Education Technical Assistance (HOME TA) Program. The purpose of HOME TA is to provide customized training for local and tribal governments that focuses on how to build and preserve affordable housing. The topics for the training have been identified and prioritized by local and tribal governments. Expert consultants have been identified through a competitive solicitation.

The HOME TA initiative aligns with Pathways Home, the Regional Homelessness Action Plan for Local and Tribal Governments. One of the three main goals in the plan is to increase safe housing options. The MAG Human Services Community Initiatives Committee and the MAG Human Services Technical Committee are providing guidance and input to the program.

4G. Amendment to the MAG FY 2024-2025 Biennial Unified Planning Work Program and Budget to add \$15,187 from the Arizona Department of Economic Security in support of Addressing Late Life Domestic Violence

The Regional Council Executive Committee, by consent, approved an amendment to the MAG FY 2024-2025 Biennial Unified Planning Work Program and Budget to add \$15,187 from the Arizona Department of Economic Security in support of addressing late life domestic violence.

The MAG Fiscal Year 2024-2025 Biennial Unified Planning Work Program and Budget was approved by the MAG Regional Council on May 24, 2023. On September 26, 2024, the Arizona Department of Economic Security (DES) notified MAG of a \$15,187 grant award to support the Abuse in Later Life Program. DES has received a federal grant from the U.S. Office on Violence Against Women to continue this program in Arizona. The purpose of the program is to conduct a comprehensive needs assessment to identify service gaps and challenges, offer training and technical assistance to address the gaps and challenges, and assess and update protocols used to address late life domestic violence.

The role of MAG in this work is to continue providing support, outreach, and training; facilitating the MAG Regional Domestic Violence Council meetings; and conducting outreach activities and awareness campaigns to ensure that victims of late life abuse receive appropriate assistance. The funds to MAG will be used to support an intern who will undertake these activities with oversight from staff.

4H. Consultant Selection for the Fiscal Year 2025 MAG Regional Active Transportation Plan Update

The Regional Council Executive Committee, by consent, approved the selection of Alta Planning + Design for the FY 2025 Regional Active Transportation Plan Update and if negotiations are not successful, that MAG pursue negotiations with its second choice, CR Associates.

On May 13, 2024, the MAG Regional Council Executive Committee approved an amendment to the MAG Fiscal Year (FY) 2024-2025 Biennial Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) and Budget to include \$500,000 for the FY 2025 Regional Active Transportation Plan. This plan is an update to the 2020 Regional Active Transportation Plan and will help determine current active transportation needs and inform the investments under the new nonmotorized transportation program identified in the Regional Strategic Transportation Infrastructure Investment Plan (RSTIIP).

A request for proposals was advertised on July 17, 2024, with a total of six proposals received by the August 28, 2024, deadline. The proposals were reviewed by a multijurisdictional evaluation team that recommended the selection of Alta Planning + Design. Additionally, the evaluation team recommended that if negotiations with Alta Planning + Design are not successful, MAG pursue negotiations with the second highest scoring consultant, CR Associates.

4I. Amendment to increase the contract agreement with Matrix Design Group, Inc. by \$150,000 for the FY 2024 Housing Opportunities in Mentorship and Education Technical Assistance Program On-Call

The Regional Council Executive Committee, by consent, approved an amendment to the contract agreement with Matrix Design Group, Inc. for the FY 2024 Housing Opportunities in Mentorship and Education Technical Assistance Program On-Call (HOME TA On-Call) to increase the HOME TA On-Call contract amount by \$150,000 to a total of \$510,000.

On January 22, 2024, the MAG Regional Council Executive Committee approved an amendment to the MAG Fiscal Year (FY) 2024-2025 Biennial Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) and Budget to include \$500,000 in support of affordable housing technical assistance. Of that, \$360,000 has been identified for the FY 2024 Housing Opportunities in Mentorship and Education Technical Assistance Program On-Call (HOME TA On-Call). The intent of the HOME TA On-Call is for consultants to provide technical assistance on preserving and developing housing that is attainable to local and tribal

governments to increase the supply of housing that is affordable throughout the region. On June 17, 2024, the MAG Regional Council Executive Committee approved the selection of Matrix Design Group, Inc. for the FY 2024 Housing Opportunities in Mentorship and Education Technical Assistance Program On-Call. On September 9, 2024, the Nina Mason Pulliam Charitable Trust notified MAG of a \$150,000 grant award to Regional Community Partners (RCP) in support of the HOME TA On-Call, increasing the amount available for Matrix Design Group, Inc. to provide technical assistance from \$360,000 to \$510,000.

5. Air Quality Update

Chair Hartke requested Ed Zuercher, Executive Director, to present this item. This item was on the agenda for information and discussion.

Mr. Zuercher briefed members on a recent discussion with the West Valley mayor and manager about the region's strategy for addressing nonattainment of EPA's standards for ozone as requested by Mayor Shoaf of Litchfield Park. Mr. Zuercher indicated that while there is less ozone in the region's air now than there was 25 years ago, there is more ozone in the air today than seven years ago. He reported there have been over 60 ozone exceedance days in the region in 2024, including an exceedance in the month of October. The ozone levels in the region are at 80 parts per billion (ppb), 10 ppb over the 70 ppb standard. With the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) issuing a finding of a failure to submit a plan demonstrating attainment earlier in 2023, it has triggered sanctions clocks on federal transportation funding and emission offset requirements for major industries.

Mr. Zuercher indicated 80 percent of the ozone in the region is from natural sources or transported by the wind from other regions and countries, and that these sources cannot be regulated nor controlled in the region. The region's economic footprint is growing with the opening of high-tech manufacturing facilities, including semiconductor and battery manufacturers, along with investments in infrastructure. He indicated that Senators Kelly and Sinema along with Congressmen Stanton and Gallego have worked with MAG to communicate the difficulty in achieving ozone attainment in the region to the EPA. Mr. Zuercher indicated that the MAG region is not alone and that metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) throughout the Intermountain West are facing the same challenges with ozone nonattainment and have sent a joint letter to the EPA to further investigate the science of why decreasing levels of emissions are no longer resulting in decreasing levels of ozone. He also noted that MAG has retained a legal advisor in Washington, D.C.

Mr. Zuercher presented MAG's three-pronged approach to addressing compliance with the ozone standard, including: 1) decreasing ozone through transportation investments and appropriate and feasible control measures; 2) demonstrating the impact of transported ozone to the region from foreign sources; 3) and pursuing regulatory relief with federal partners.

Mr. Zuercher indicated the next step for MAG is to turn off the pending sanctions by submitting outstanding pieces of a Moderate area plan to the EPA by May 17, 2025. With

reclassification to Serious nonattainment expected before February 3, 2025, MAG is also developing a Serious area plan that will be required by January 1, 2026, with partners at the Maricopa and Pinal County and ADEQ. MAG is continuing to engage EPA to address MAG's ozone challenges and is actively working with the leaders of the Intermountain West MPOs and Senator Kelly to engage EPA on the air quality challenges affecting the entire intermountain West. Mr. Zuercher reported that a senatorial candidate in Utah is a former mayor of Provo and was the chair of the MPO in that region and is attuned to the issues of climate change and air quality. Assuming he were to be elected to the senate, he could bolster MAG's work with Senator Kelly.

Chair Hartke thanked Mr. Zuercher for the overview and invited Mayor Orsborn and Mayor Weiers from the West Valley to comment. Mayor Orsborn stated that the process of the region being considered as a nonattainment region by the EPA is unfair, as the region has to show good-faith measures to control and reduce ozone, but that these measures may not have much of an effect, as was shown during COVID when having much fewer cars on the road did not lead to an appreciable reduction in ozone levels. He indicated Mayor Shoaf may be suggesting a joint effort by the cities to advocate on the region's behalf, perhaps with a lobbyist, similar to the West Valley effort to attract the training of F-35 fighter jets to Luke Air Force Base.

Chair Hartke invited Mayor Weiers to weigh in. Mayor Weiers indicated that hiring a lobbyist may be a good idea but that it would be worthwhile to wait until after the results of the presidential election, as who is elected will determine the direction of the EPA. Mr. Zuercher commented that the results of the election will also determine whether Senator Kelly will be in the majority or minority party, though between Arizona and Utah, there will be strong representation to make the case about the threshold levels for ozone nonattainment either way. He suggested waiting for the election results and continuing to engage with the Intermountain MPOs. Mr. Zuercher also suggested using the platform presented by the annual meetings of the National League of Cities and the U.S. Conference of Mayors as an opportunity for the region's mayors to make their case in Washington, D.C.

Chair Hartke requested Mr. Zuercher identify any mayors that would be attending these annual conferences. He also asked if ozone monitors could be installed in West Buckeye, Maricopa, Queen Creek and Case Grande to measure a baseline level of ozone native to the region, as they would not be affected by ozone levels in the valley. Mr. Zuercher invited Matt Poppen, Environmental Director, to weigh in. Mr. Poppen stated that there are ozone monitors outside the nonattainment area, including a monitor in La Paz County, which is generally considered the background monitors west of the Valley.

Mr. Poppen indicated the Alamo Lake monitor in La Paz County ozone monitors has recorded exceedances of the ozone standard and can be an indicator of ozone transport from California and Asia. He indicated that monitor is averaging around 68 ppb over the summer season, barely below the standard, which helps to confirm the ozone modeling that predicts 80 percent of ozone in the MAG region is coming from outside the region.

He also mentioned that there are other background monitors throughout the Arizona, including in areas such as the Grand Canyon and the Petrified Forest that all record ozone values of at least 63 ppb or higher. .

Mr. Zuercher indicated MAG would be talking more specifically about its strategy to address ozone nonattainment during air quality updates in the future. He agreed with the suggestion that the region needs to be unified and find as many allies and partners as possible. MAG staff will find out which mayors are going to which annual conference and work with those attending to meet with officials and elected leaders to present this issue. Chair Hartke indicated that the type of meetings that can be arranged may sway him and other mayors as to which annual conference to attend.

6. Executive Director's Report

There was no Executive Director's report.

7. Legislative Update

Chair Hartke requested Audra Koester Thomas, Assistant Executive Director, report on this item. This was on the agenda for information and discussion.

Mr. Zuercher indicated there was no legislative update. He stated that Avondale Vice Mayor Mike Pineda was appointed as the new mayor of Avondale on October 14. Mayor Pineda will serve the remainder of Mayor Weise's term and into his elected term starting next year, and could attend his first MAG Regional Council meeting as soon as October 23.

Chair Hartke asked if any members had questions or comments regarding the agenda item. There were none.

8. Request for Future Agenda Items

Chair Hartke asked members if there were any requests for future agenda items. None was noted.

9. Comments from the Committee

Chair Hartke asked the members if there were any comments. No comments were noted.

Adjournment

Chair Hartke indicated that the next meeting of the Regional Council Executive Committee would take place on November 18, 2024. There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 12:35 p.m.