

Minutes of the  
 Maricopa Association of Governments  
 Regional Council Executive Committee  
 August 18, 2025

This meeting was conducted virtually via Zoom

[Video recording of the meeting](#)

<b>MEMBERS</b>	<b>ATTENDANCE</b>
Buckeye: Mayor Eric Orsborn, Vice Chair	Virtual
Chandler: Mayor Kevin Hartke, Past Chair	Virtual
El Mirage: Mayor Alexis Hermosillo, Chair	Virtual
Glendale: Mayor Jerry Weiers	Virtual
Mesa: Mayor Mark Freeman	Virtual
Phoenix: Mayor Kate Gallego	Virtual
Queen Creek: Mayor Julia Wheatley, Treasurer	Virtual

**1. Call to Order**

The meeting of the Regional Council Executive Committee was called to order by Chair Hermosillo at 12:00 p.m. Roll call was taken to confirm a quorum of members was present.

**2. Call to the Audience**

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

**3. Informational Items**

Chair Hermosillo indicated that items 3A through 3C were on the agenda for information only.

She asked if any member had questions or comments regarding these items. None was noted.

**3A. Proposition 400 Arterial Life Cycle Program Status Report: January – June 2025**

This item was on the agenda for information only.

The Arterial Life Cycle Program (ALCP) is the financial management tool for the arterial street component of the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). To provide frequent, updated information on all project requirements and financial information, the ALCP Policies and Procedures require a Status Report be provided to MAG committee members semiannually. The January–June 2025 Status Report is the second and final report for fiscal

year (FY) 2025 and provides information on projects programmed to receive reimbursements in FY 2025.

### **3B. Diamond Grind Pilot Program Expansion: Quarterly Update**

This item was on the agenda for information only.

In November 2023, the MAG Regional Council approved the expansion of the Diamond Grind Pilot Program. A major component of the program expansion consisted of providing regular updates on relevant study work and regional freeway pavement activities. This agenda item represents the next quarterly installment of these updates and provides an overview of the work conducted during the second quarter of 2025. This includes the current status of ongoing study efforts such as the Urban Heat Island, MAG Freeway Noise Analysis (Phase II), and long-term performance assessment program conducted in collaboration with the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT).

### **3C. MAG Biannual Public Input and Community Outreach Report, January – July 2025**

This item was on the agenda for information only.

The MAG Biannual Public Input and Community Outreach Report details MAG's efforts to engage residents and gather feedback during the second half of FY 2025. Community input, collected through meetings, surveys, interactive tools, and social media, revealed key concerns regarding transportation safety, access to active transportation options and quality of life. The report demonstrates how this feedback informs MAG initiatives, including transportation planning, air quality, and homelessness response, while highlighting the agency's commitment to inclusive, multi-channel outreach.

## **4. Approval of Consent Agenda**

Chair Hermosillo stated that agenda items 4A through 4G were on the Consent Agenda.

She asked if any members had questions or would like a presentation on any of the Consent Agenda items. None was noted.

MAG staff indicated that there were no online written public comments received for the Consent Agenda.

Chair Hermosillo requested a motion to approve the agenda item. Mayor Wheatley moved to approve the Consent Agenda for items 4A through 4G, and Vice Chair Orsborn seconded the motion.

The motion passed with the following members voting in favor: Mayor Freeman, Mayor Gallego, Mayor Hartke, Chair Hermosillo, Vice Chair Orsborn, Mayor Weiers, and Mayor Wheatley.

#### **4A. Approval of the June 16, 2025, Meeting Minutes**

The Regional Council Executive Committee, by consent, approved the June 16, 2025, meeting minutes.

#### **4B. Conformity Consultation**

This item was on the agenda for consultation.

MAG is conducting consultation on a conformity assessment for an amendment and administrative modification to the FY 2025-2030 MAG Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and MOMENTUM 2050 RTP. The amendment and administrative modification involve changes to several projects, including Freeway Life Cycle Program (FLCP) projects, General Roadway projects, ALCP projects, and Transit projects. The amendment includes projects that may be categorized as exempt from conformity determinations. The administrative modification includes minor project revisions that do not require a conformity determination.

#### **4C. Transportation Improvement Program Project Changes**

The Regional Council Executive Committee, by consent, approved of amendments and administrative modifications to the FY 2025-2030 MAG TIP, Regional Strategic Transportation Infrastructure Investment Plan (RSTIIP), and MOMENTUM 2050 MAG RTP.

The MAG Regional Council approved the FY 2025-2030 MAG TIP on January 22, 2025, the MOMENTUM 2050 MAG RTP on December 1, 2021, and the RSTIIP on September 27, 2023.

Since approval of the last amendment, additional changes and modifications are needed.

#### **4D. Amendment to the MAG FYs 2026-2027 Biennial Unified Planning Work Program and Budget for the Homelessness Technical Assistance and Support On-Call**

The Regional Council Executive Committee, by consent, approved to amend the MAG FYs 2026-2027 Biennial Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) and Budget to add a \$500,000 for the Homelessness Technical Assistance and Support On-Call.

The MAG FYs 2026-2027 Biennial UPWP and Budget was approved by the MAG Regional Council on May 28, 2025. Consultant support is needed to support the Maricopa Regional Continuum of Care (CoC) and the Youth Homelessness System Improvement program including training development for youth and homeless service providers, data analysis, report writing, grant application support, and project management. Funding is available through the Maricopa Regional CoC and the Youth Homelessness System Improvement program grant funds.

#### **4E. Consultant Selection for FY 2026 Multimedia and Creative Services**

The Regional Council Executive Committee, by consent, approved of Davidson Belluso for FY 2026 Multimedia and Creative Services for two years at an amount not to exceed \$200,000 annually, and if negotiations are not successful, that MAG pursues negotiations with its second choice, Gordley Group.

The MAG FYs 2026-2027 Biennial UPWP and Budget includes \$400,000 for consulting services for Multimedia and Creative Services. The purpose of this contract is to develop creative and engaging multimedia products to assist in informing residents of MAG's roles and responsibilities in the region, communicating technical information to broad audiences, and encouraging public participation in the development of MAG plans and programs. A request for qualifications was advertised with a total of 14 responses received by the July 9, 2025, deadline. On July 23, 2025, an evaluation team met and recommended the selection of Davidson Belluso. Additionally, the evaluation team recommended that if negotiations with Davidson Belluso are not successful, MAG pursues negotiations with the second highest scoring consultant, Gordley Group.

#### **4F. Officer Appointments for the MAG Building Codes, Elderly and Persons with Disabilities Transportation, and Transportation Safety Committees**

The Regional Council Executive Committee, by consent, appointed the MAG Building Codes Committee, Elderly and Persons with Disabilities Transportation Committee, and Transportation Safety Committee vice chairs through December 31, 2025.

According to the MAG Committee Operating Policies and Procedures, officer appointments for technical and other policy committees are made by the MAG Regional Council Executive Committee for two-year terms with succession of positions occurring through the ascending order of officers. Appointments to fill vice chair vacancies of the MAG Building Codes, Elderly and Persons with Disabilities Transportation, and Transportation Safety committees is requested.

#### **4G. Officer Appointment of MAG Community Initiatives Coordinating Committee Member**

The Regional Council Executive Committee, by consent, appointed Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation President Sandra Pattea to the MAG Community Initiatives Coordinating Committee serving a one-year term.

According to the MAG Committee Operating Policies and Procedures, member appointments for the Community Initiatives Coordinating Committee are made by the MAG Regional Council Executive Committee. Notice was received requesting President Sandra Pattea of the Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation as a member representing Native nations.

## **5. Shifts in Federal Homeless Funding and Policies**

Chair Hermosillo requested Amy St. Peter, director of community initiatives, and Natalie Davenport, senior planner, present this item. This item was on the agenda for information and discussion.

Executive Director Ed Zuercher explained that the committee would receive two informational updates, first on federal homelessness policy changes and their local implications and second on air quality issues.

Ms. St. Peter explained that the team has been tracking federal policy changes due to their significant impact on local and tribal governments as well as the Maricopa Regional Continuum of Care (CoC). She noted MAG's long history of involvement in human services, having supported related efforts for nearly 50 years and staffed the CoC for 25 years. Since 1999, MAG has drawn down more than \$500 million in federal funding to support homeless assistance programs. Historically, this funding has been stable, but conditions are changing, creating uncertainty. Last year alone, the region received a record \$52 million, serving nearly 3,500 individuals. Ms. St. Peter emphasized that this funding and the people it supports are now at risk. She turned the presentation over to Davenport.

Davenport outlined three guiding questions for the update: (1) what changes are currently being proposed at the federal level, (2) the potential impacts of these changes on the region, and (3) what MAG is doing in response. They reported that over the past eight months, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has moved away from proven evidence-based approaches that focus on housing-first solutions, instead leaning toward enforcement-based and treatment-centered models. Second, HUD unexpectedly announced a new funding application for FY 2025 on July 3, 2025, despite previously committing to a two-year award. This announcement came without clear criteria or timelines, creating major uncertainty for the region's largest homelessness funding source. Davenport also noted that new executive orders had introduced service restrictions and that congressional budget proposals included potential cuts to Medicaid and other key supports for individuals experiencing homelessness.

Davenport emphasized that these shifts create uncertainty and put local systems under pressure. These federal changes could jeopardize funding for existing housing programs. They explained that 81 percent of the region's CoC funding supports permanent housing for more than 2,000 of the most vulnerable individuals. They stated that if HUD moves away from permanent supportive housing toward treatment and recovery housing, many of these individuals could lose their housing and return to unsheltered homelessness. Additional federal eligibility restrictions could create barriers that force people to remain homeless for longer. Moreover, prioritizing criminal justice and law enforcement responses over housing solutions would place increased strain on emergency services and result in higher system costs.

Davenport explained that the local response system is already under significant stress. In the past year, Maricopa County lost more than 1,000 shelter beds, and unsheltered homelessness rose by 28 percent. Federal shifts could compound these issues, creating steep increases in homelessness. They explained that Maricopa County is more vulnerable to federal funding shifts than peer regions because it relies almost entirely on federal dollars. Unlike King County, Washington, which serves a smaller population but has diverse funding sources, Maricopa County's system lacks equivalent state and local contributions. She clarified that the funding discussed only reflects dollars administered through the CoC and does not account for direct investments by local jurisdictions or the \$16.5 million recently approved by the state for coordinated homelessness response.

Mr. Zuercher noted that the funding figures presented referred specifically to CoC resources and not to the money spent by cities and towns individually on homelessness and human services.

Davenport concluded by describing MAG's proactive response efforts. These include monitoring federal policy and funding daily, sharing weekly policy updates with more than 2,000 recipients, and coordinating responses with partners. They emphasized the importance of two-way communication with jurisdictions to share emerging challenges, resource needs, and strategies. MAG is also preparing for multiple FY25 application scenarios to safeguard the \$52 million in CoC funding received last year. Davenport reiterated MAG's commitment to being a strong regional partner during this period of federal change.

Chair Hermosillo asked if any members had questions or comments regarding the agenda item. None was noted.

## **6. Air Quality Update**

Chair Hermosillo requested Matt Poppen, director of environmental planning, present this item. This item was on the agenda for information and discussion.

Mr. Poppen began by noting that staff has been preparing a demonstration required under the Clean Air Act Section 179B(b) to show the impact of international emissions on regional ozone levels. The results, which will be submitted to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), are intended to demonstrate that without international contributions, the region would have attained the federal ozone standard.

Mr. Poppen reported that preliminary modeling across the nonattainment area's 25 ozone monitors showed that manmade international emissions contributed an average of 16 parts per billion (ppb) to local ozone levels in 2023. This figure was significantly higher than previously anticipated. Since the EPA ozone standard is 70 ppb, excluding international emissions would demonstrate that the region would have met the standard in 2023. He explained that MAG will present the final demonstration to its policy

committees next month for acceptance and submittal to the EPA administrator. A more technical review of the modeling will be given to the Air Quality Technical Advisory Committee in August. If approved, the demonstration will allow the region to remain classified as a Moderate nonattainment area, avoiding sanctions and stricter requirements. Informal feedback from EPA suggested proposed approval could come in November 2025, with final approval expected in January 2026.

Mr. Poppen then reviewed recent ozone monitoring results, emphasizing that the region is experiencing an unprecedented summer season. Since June 18, 2025, there have been no exceedances of the standard, marking the best ozone season since the EPA's 2015 standard was implemented. In July 2025, the average concentration across monitors was 52 ppb, compared to 64 ppb in July 2024, with zero exceedances recorded. He attributed this improvement largely to favorable weather conditions, which increased vertical and horizontal air movement and prevented ozone from accumulating.

Mr. Poppen also highlighted Regional Council's investment of \$750,000 in the Ground Level Ozone Research project, supported in partnership with the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality, Maricopa County, and private industries, to understand how ozone exceedances are caused in the region. One key piece of equipment, the ozone Light Detection and Ranging (LIDAR) system, provided valuable data during the last exceedance on June 18, 2025. It confirmed that the spike was not caused by local emissions but by an ozone intrusion event, where upper-atmosphere ozone was pushed down to the surface by a weather system. Mr. Poppen noted this data provided evidence of phenomena that previously may have been assumed but not verified.

Chair Hermosillo asked if any members had questions or comments regarding the agenda item.

Vice Chair Orsborn asked for clarification on the EPA standard and whether international contributions could be excluded from compliance determinations. Mr. Poppen explained that the EPA 2015 ozone standard is an eight-hour average standard, set at 70 ppb. Compliance with that standard is based on the ozone concentration recorded on the fourth highest exceedance day, averaged over a three-year period. He clarified that Section 179B(b) allows areas to remain at their current status by excluding international impacts but does not allow them to move to a lower classification. He noted that there is ability to request redesignation from a nonattainment area to an attainment area.

Mr. Zuercher clarified that the modeling shows that of a typical 78 ppb exceedance level, 16 ppb originates from international sources, leaving 62 ppb attributable to local emissions, which is below the EPA standard.

Vice Chair Orsborn emphasized the value of the LIDAR evidence and further inquired about how the region compares nationally. Mr. Poppen explained that ozone in the higher atmosphere is beneficial, but becomes harmful at the ground level. Ozone intrusions are most common in the Intermountain West, particularly in higher-altitude states such as

Colorado and Utah, but recent findings surprisingly show they can also occur at lower altitudes, including Phoenix. He noted that ozone intrusions can occur across the entire U.S. if the weather system has the conditions to push the ozone down to the ground level. Vice Chair Orsborn emphasized the value of the equipment and study in helping make science-backed decisions to move the region forward.

Mayor Gallego asked how monsoon events affect ozone levels. Mr. Poppen explained that monsoons can either help by dispersing ozone through wind or worsen conditions by pulling down upper-atmosphere ozone. Lightning during storms also produces nitrogen oxides, which contribute to ozone formation.

With no further questions, Chair Hermosillo thanked Mr. Poppen for his presentation.

**7. Executive Director's Report**

Chair Hermosillo indicated there was no report for this meeting.

**8. Legislative Update**

Chair Hermosillo indicated there was no legislative update for this meeting.

**9. Request for Future Agenda Items**

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

**10. Comments from the Committee**

Chair Hermosillo asked the members if there were any comments.

Mayor Hartke congratulated Chair Hermosillo on chairing her first meeting of the Executive Committee.

**Adjournment**

Chair Hermosillo indicated that the next meeting of the Regional Council Executive Committee will take place on September 15, 2025. There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 12:29 p.m.

## **Report Parameters**

*Date Generated:* 8/18/2025 10:01:06 AM  
*Committee:* Regional Council Executive Committee  
*Meeting Date:* 8/18/2025 12:00 PM  
*Excluded Before:* 6/16/2025 10:00 AM