

Minutes of the
Maricopa Association of Governments
Management Committee
October 8, 2025

This meeting was conducted in person and virtually via Zoom
[Video recording of the meeting](#)

MEMBERS	ATTENDANCE
Apache Junction: Rob Wisler, Proxy for Bryant Powell	Virtual
Arizona Department of Transportation: Zach Tretton, Proxy for Jennifer Toth	In Person
Avondale: Ron Corbin	Virtual
Buckeye: Doug Sandstrom	Not in Attendance
Carefree: Gary Neiss	Virtual
Cave Creek: Grady Miller	Virtual
Chandler: John Pombier	In Person
El Mirage: Crystal Dyches	In Person
Florence: Bruce Walls	In Person
Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation: Calvin Pilcher Jr.	Virtual
Fountain Hills: Rachael Goodwin	Not in Attendance
Gila Bend: Kathy Valenzuela	In Person
Gila River Indian Community: Suzanne Jones	Not in Attendance
Gilbert: Patrick Banger, Chair	In Person
Glendale: Kevin Phelps	In Person
Goodyear: Wynette Reed	In Person
Guadalupe: Jeff Kulaga	In Person
Litchfield Park: Paige Peterson, Proxy for Matthew Williams	Virtual
Maricopa County: Chris Reams, Proxy for Jen Pokorski	In Person
Maricopa: Ben Bitter	In Person
Mesa: Scott Butler	In Person
Paradise Valley: Andrew Ching	In Person
Peoria: Henry Darwin	Virtual
Phoenix: Eric Gudino, Proxy for Jeff Barton	In Person
Pinal County: Leo Lew	Virtual
Queen Creek: Bruce Gardner	In Person
Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community: Jennifer Jack, Proxy for Bryan Meyers	In Person
Scottsdale: Greg Caton	In Person
Surprise: Bob Wingenroth	In Person
Tempe: Rosa Inchausti	In Person
Tolleson: Reyes Medrano, Vice Chair	Not in Attendance
Valley Metro/RPTA: Alexis Tameron Kinsey, Proxy for Jessica Mefford-Miller	In Person
Wickenburg: Troy Smith	Virtual
Youngtown: Brian Stutsman	In Person

1. Call to Order

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

2. Pledge of Allegiance

Chair Banger led the Committee in the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Call to the Audience

Chair Banger indicated that there were no requests to speak received for the Call to the Audience.

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

4. Informational Items

Chair Banger indicated that items 4A through 4C were on the agenda for information only.

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

4A. 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 third quarter of 2025. This includes the current status of ongoing study efforts such as the Urban Heat Island, the MAG Freeway Noise Analysis (Phase II), and the long-term performance assessment program conducted in collaboration with ADOT.

4B. US 60 (Grand Avenue): Loop 303 to SR 74 Corridor Study Update

This item was on the agenda for information only.

Funding for the US 60 (Grand Avenue): Loop 303 to SR 74 Corridor was included in the MAG Fiscal Years 2024-2025 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) and Budget. The study is developing a plan that identifies the transportation needs in a part of the region

that is growing rapidly. The study has been underway for approximately one year and covers the area between Loop 303 on the south, SR 74 on the north, Vistancia Boulevard on the east and the Hassayampa River on the west. The study has several objectives, including finding a long-term solution for the interchange of Loop 303 and Grand Avenue and the intersection of 163rd Avenue and Grand Avenue; identifying and protecting key road crossings and intersections along Grand Avenue and sequencing the development of these key locations; and identifying and sequencing other transportation improvements to ensure acceptable levels of mobility are achieved and maintained throughout the entire study area. This agenda item represents an update on the study's progress.

4C. Point in Time and Youth Counts

This item was on the agenda for information only.

MAG has staffed the Maricopa Regional Continuum of Care since 1999. Each year, MAG conducts a census of people experiencing unsheltered homelessness. This Point in Time Count is a requirement of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development in order to receive Continuum of Care funding for local homeless assistance programs. Last year, MAG secured a record of \$52 million through the regional application. Preparations are underway to conduct the count on January 27, 2026. This will require close collaboration with MAG member agencies to ensure a comprehensive count that will enable the region to continue drawing down federal funds in support of local agencies.

In 2026, the first census of youth experiencing homelessness in Arizona will be conducted. MAG is leading this effort in partnership with the other Continuums of Care in Arizona as part of the Youth Homelessness System Improvement grant awarded in 2024. The Youth Count will record the number of unsheltered, unaccompanied homeless youth.

5. Approval of Consent Agenda

Chair Banger stated that agenda items 5A through 5J were on the Consent Agenda.

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

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

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

Chair Banger requested a motion to approve the agenda item. Ms. Reed moved to approve the Consent Agenda for items 5A through 5J, and Mr. Caton seconded the motion.

The motion passed with the following members voting in favor: Chair Banger, Mr. Bitter, Mr. Butler, Mr. Caton, Mr. Ching, Mr. Corbin, Mr. Darwin, Ms. Dyches, Mr. Gardner, Mr. Gudino, Ms. Inchausti, Ms. Jack, Mr. Kulaga, Mr. Lew, Mr. Miller, Mr. Neiss, Ms. Peterson, Mr. Phelps, Mr. Pilcher, Mr. Pombier, Mr. Reams, Ms. Reed, Mr. Smith, Mr. Stutsman, Ms. Tameron Kinsey, Mr. Tretton, Ms. Valenzuela, Mr. Walls, Mr. Wingenroth, and Mr. Wisler.

***5A. Approval of the September 10, 2025, Meeting Minutes**

The Management Committee, by consent, approved the September 10, 2025, meeting minutes.

***5B. 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 Fiscal Year (FY) 2025-2030 MAG Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and MOMENTUM 2050 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). The amendment and administrative modification involve changes to several projects, including Freeway Life Cycle Program (FLCP) projects, General Roadway projects, and Arterial Life Cycle Program (ALCP) 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.

***5C. Transportation Improvement Program Project Changes**

The Management Committee, by consent, recommended approval of amendments and administrative modifications to the FY 2025-2030 MAG TIP, Regional Strategic Transportation Infrastructure Investment Plan (RSTIIP), MOMENTUM 2050 MAG RTP and as appropriate the draft FY 2026-2030 TIP.

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.

***5D. Amendment to the MAG FYs 2026-2027 Biennial Unified Planning Work Program and Budget for Mobility Data**

The Management Committee, by consent, recommended approval to amend the MAG FYs 2026-2027 Biennial UPWP and Budget to add \$190,275.76 from the Vehicle Trajectory Data Acquisition On-Call to a new Mobility Data project.

The MAG FYs 2026-2027 Biennial UPWP and Budget was approved by the MAG Regional Council on May 28, 2025. Additionally, the MAG FYs 2024-2025 UPWP and Budget included \$400,000 allocated to FY 2022-2023 Vehicle Trajectory Data Acquisition On-Call. Utilizing these resources in FYs 2024-2025, MAG mobility data and related software solution were obtained which provided regionwide coverage based on connected vehicle data technologies for MAG and its member agencies. This agenda item represents a request to amend the MAG FYs 2026-2027 UPWP and Budget to transfer the remaining funding of \$190,275.76 from the Vehicle Trajectory Data Acquisition On-Call to a new Mobility Data Project. The transfer of these unused funds to a new project will allow MAG to purchase mobility data directly from the vendor to ensure timely and cost-effective acquisition.

***5E. Amendment to the MAG FYs 2026-2027 Biennial Unified Planning Work Program and Budget for the Regional Transportation Planning On-Call**

The Management Committee, by consent, recommended approval to amend the MAG FYs 2026-2027 Biennial UPWP and Budget to add \$215,000 to the Regional Transportation Planning On-Call.

The MAG FYs 2026-2027 Biennial UPWP and Budget was approved by the MAG Regional Council on May 28, 2025. As part of the UPWP and Budget, \$3,000,000 was identified for the Regional Transportation Planning On-Call. Since then, an amendment is needed to add \$215,000 to conduct a scoping project for a new interchange on Loop 303 at 96th Avenue and a technical assessment of interchanges along the Loop 101 (Agua Fria Freeway) with specific focus at Peoria Avenue and Thunderbird Road. Funding is available through the annual allocation for design change orders in the FLCP.

5F. Amendment to the MAG FYs 2026-2027 Biennial Unified Planning Work Program and Budget to Accept Funding in Support of Rio Reimagined

The Management Committee, by consent, recommended approval to amend the MAG FYs 2026-2027 Biennial UPWP and Budget to add \$20,000 from the U.S. Forest Service to support regional coordination of Rio Reimagined.

On May 28, 2025, the MAG Regional Council approved the MAG FYs 2026-2027 Biennial UPWP and Budget. Included in the UPWP and Budget is support for Rio Reimagined, a collaboration among public and private partners to revitalize the 55-mile corridor of the Salt and Gila rivers. On September 19, 2025, MAG was notified of an additional \$20,000 grant award from the U.S. Forest Service. The funds will be used to support coordination activities associated with Rio Reimagined.

***5G. Update to the FY 2026 Proposition 479 Arterial Life Cycle Program**

The Management Committee, by consent, recommended approval of the project changes to the FY 2026 Proposition 479 ALCP, contingent on a finding of air quality conformity.

On June 23, 2021, the MAG Regional Council approved the RSTIIP. The ALCP serves as the financial management tool for the arterial street component of the RSTIIP. On March 26, 2025, the MAG Regional Council approved the Proposition 479 ALCP Policies and Procedures and on June 25, 2025, approved the FY 2026 ALCP.

The approval of the FY 2026 Proposition 479 ALCP included a provision for a midyear update. This midyear update is an acknowledgement that the original listing of projects included in the ALCP were identified in 2019, and regional mobility needs may have shifted since that time. In accordance with the approved policies, specific proposed changes must be recommended by the MAG Street Committee before they may be considered for inclusion in the ALCP. The MAG Street Committee heard proposed project changes to the FY 2026 ALCP on September 9, 2025.

***5H. Fiscal Year 2025 Public Transportation Agency Safety Plans Regional Targets**

The Management Committee, by consent, recommended approval of the FY 2025 Public Transportation Agency Safety Plans (PTASP) Regional Targets.

The Federal Transit Administration requires recipients and subrecipients of Section 5307 funds develop PTASP and set annual safety performance targets. For FY 2025, MAG coordinated with the City of Phoenix, Valley Metro RPTA, and Valley Metro Rail to set the regional PTASP targets. These measures include fatalities, injuries, safety events, assaults on transit workers, and system reliability, and are reported both as totals and as rates per 100,000 revenue miles. The proposed regional targets are recommended for approval.

5I. Approval of On-Call Consultant Selections for the FY 2026 On-Call Homeless Technical Assistance Project

The Management Committee, by consent, recommended approval of the proposed list of qualified consultants for the FY 2026 On-Call Homeless Technical Assistance Project.

On May 28, 2025, the MAG Regional Council Executive Committee approved an amendment to MAG FYs 2026-2027 Biennial UPWP and Budget to include \$500,000 for the FY 2026 On-Call Homeless Technical Assistance Project. The intent of the on-call is to provide a variety of technical assistance to the Maricopa Regional Continuum of Care and the Youth Action Board. A request for qualifications was advertised with a total of 17 responses received by the September 24, 2025, deadline. On September 30, 2025, an evaluation team met recommended approval of a list of qualified consultants.

5J. Amendment to the Community Initiative Coordinating Committee to Add One Academic Seat

The Management Committee, by consent, recommended approval to amend the Community Initiatives Coordinating Committee Operational Plan to add one academic

seat, and upon approval from the MAG Regional Council, direct staff to open recruitment and form an evaluation team accordingly.

On April 23, 2025, the MAG Regional Council approved the formation of the Community Initiatives Coordinating Committee and a corresponding operational plan. On June 25, 2025, the MAG Regional Council made inaugural membership and leadership appointments to the committee. The committee has 21 seats with 14 seats designated for geographically balanced local and tribal governments and 7 seats designated for community leaders. The community leaders represent the following sectors: business, domestic violence response system, faith, healthcare, housing/homelessness, nonprofit, and philanthropy. On September 17, 2025, the Community Initiatives Coordinating Committee met for the first time and discussed the strong connection between human services and education, resulting in a recommendation to approve the addition of one education seat on the committee.

6. Update on Development of the Proposition 479 Transit Life Cycle Program

Chair Banger requested Arminta Syed, policy and initiatives manager, to present this item. This item was on the agenda for information and discussion.

Ms. Syed began by explaining that this was the third update to date, with the last one provided in June. The purpose of the item was to inform committee members about progress in developing the Transit Life Cycle Program (TLCP), which manages transit investments in the Regional Strategic Transportation Infrastructure Investment Plan (RSTIIP), funded through Proposition (Prop) 479.

Ms. Syed explained that Prop 479 marks a major policy transition from the Prop 400 funding structure. Under Prop 400, Valley Metro managed the TLCP; however, under Prop 479, management will shift to MAG. She noted that this change is significant because both propositions will temporarily overlap as Prop 400-funded projects will continue after the Prop 400 term sunsets in December 2025 and Prop 479 collections begin in January 2026.

Ms. Syed outlined the program's four primary components: (1) bus operating assistance for local fixed route operations, (2) regional services funding for express and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) services, (3) bus capital, and (4) high-capacity transit. MAG staff have worked closely with Valley Metro and the TLCP working group throughout the summer to update operational funding estimates. She emphasized that this was essential information for cities and towns preparing FY 2027 budgets. Ms. Syed stated that the half-cent sales tax is the only regional funding source available for transit operations. As such, the sales tax funded cost commitments must first be updated, after which the remaining balance will be allocated to the formula funding pool under the bus operating assistance component. She noted that to date, cost commitments have been updated for the base allocation, express service, and regional operations support, with the final commitment of the regionally funded ADA service cost estimate expected to be finalized by the end of the month.

Ms. Syed next focused on the assumptions that went into updating the funds set aside for regionally funded express service and how it aligned with the new performance-based funding model under Prop 479. She highlighted that the funding will be allocated through a regional decision-making process, rather than drawn from local allocations, reflecting its multi-jurisdictional importance.

Ms. Syed then went on to explain the importance of the express bus network in the overall regional transportation system. She first displayed traffic projections for 2050 showing major congestion on I-17, US 60, Loop 202, and I-10 West. These conditions underscore the need to expand express bus service as a cost-effective alternative to adding road capacity, with the added benefit of improved travel times during peak periods. She noted that while ridership declined following the COVID-19 pandemic, due largely to the rise in hybrid work, the region must optimize the system to meet current and future travel demand. MAG conducted a market assessment that identified high-demand corridors overlapping with heavily congested freeways and tested new route concepts, including express bus corridors providing freeway-to-freeway connections that avoid downtown deviations. These analyses demonstrated strong performance potential.

Ms. Syed clarified that no network changes are being recommended at this stage; rather, the study provides a framework to inform Valley Metro's Comprehensive Operations Analysis, which will recommend specific route changes and an implementation plan. In the near term, funding has been set aside to maintain existing express service levels, with opportunities for adjustments such as consolidating or eliminating underperforming routes to reinvest savings into higher-performing corridors. Major service changes will follow the Valley Metro study and return to the committee for review and approval.

Ms. Syed concluded by outlining the next steps for the FY 2027 TLCP, including completing remaining cost estimates by the end of the month, meeting with the TLCP working group next month to finalize details, and bringing an updated program for committee review early next year.

Executive Director Ed Zuercher emphasized the importance of addressing declining ridership while acknowledging the difficulty of revising routes where expectations and infrastructure already exist. He noted that every funding decision within the program involves trade-offs between transit priorities and underscores the need for thoughtful, data-driven adjustments.

Mr. Phelps noted that transit serves two distinct markets—commuters who choose to drive and individuals without access to vehicles—and asked how different strategies were being considered to serve both types of ridership. Ms. Syed agreed and clarified that most of the express service ridership decline since the COVID-19 pandemic stems from changing work environments rather than reduced access to vehicles. She confirmed that MAG intends to pursue separate strategies for each market to advance mobility.

Mr. Zuercher asked Ms. Syed to elaborate on how destination patterns have shifted. Ms. Syed explained that while the network historically served downtown Phoenix, emerging employment centers such as downtown Tempe and North Phoenix now show strong potential for express service.

With no further questions, Chair Banger thanked Ms. Syed for her presentation.

7. Using Data to Identify Freeway Minor Improvement Opportunities

Chair Banger requested Velvet Mathew, freeway engineering manager, and Wang Zhang, transportation data manager, to present this item. This item was on the agenda for information and discussion.

Ms. Mathew began by explaining that minor improvement projects differ from those in the Freeway Life Cycle Program (FLCP), which are typically large-scale, high-cost projects requiring extensive scoping, environmental review, and two to three years of design before construction can begin. Minor improvement projects, by contrast, are smaller, lower-cost efforts addressing specific issues that can be implemented quickly.

Ms. Mathew reviewed funding history, noting that in 2019, the Regional Council approved \$5 million annually for minor improvements beginning in FY 2020 and continuing through 2024. The annual amount was later increased to \$10 million in FY 2025. She then displayed a map showing the range of completed and ongoing projects, which vary in both location and type of improvement. Examples include adding lanes through restriping to increase capacity, addressing bottlenecks at ramps, improving intersections, and implementing upgrades to the I-10 Deck Park Tunnel.

Ms. Mathew detailed how these projects have been identified through several means, including through ongoing studies where short-term improvements can provide immediate relief; operational observations of mainline freeway congestion and bottlenecks; member agency feedback based on constituent reports; and internal MAG analysis revealing opportunities for simple engineering fixes that require no new right of way and can be implemented quickly.

Ms. Mathew then posed a key question: how can data be leveraged to proactively identify minor improvements before they become systemic problems? She then introduced Mr. Zhang to illustrate how the region can answer this question.

Mr. Zhang began by describing the emergence of crowdsourced connected vehicle data, which provides high-resolution, high-frequency insights into real-time traffic movement, which helps identify congestion issues down to specific points on a roadway. Over the last decade, this technology has advanced to deliver precise, continuous data—24 hours a day—without requiring MAG to conduct its own traffic data collection for travel time and speed. He compared traditional navigation app data, which aggregates traffic speeds into color-coded segments, to the new connected vehicle data that provides point-based

details such as slowdown locations, harsh braking, and lane-changing events. The data is acquired anonymously from third-party vendors and allows MAG to pinpoint the exact cause and location of traffic issues and better target cost-effective engineering responses.

Mr. Zhang explained that MAG's congestion-scanning tools now operate in three modules. Module 1 uses aggregated speed data to identify general areas where traffic has worsened. Module 2, the congestion heat map, visualizes traffic speed variations by time and direction, with red areas showing greater congestion. Module 3, the new component, integrates point-based data to precisely locate the source of congestion. He illustrated this with several examples. First, on Loop 101 (Price Freeway) northbound, worsening congestion during morning hours was identified between March and November 2024. Initially, it was thought that traffic traveling from Loop 101 northbound to Loop 202 westbound caused the slowdown. However, analysis of connected vehicle data revealed the congestion stemmed from two ramps merging onto Loop 101 from both directions of Loop 202. This insight allowed MAG to adjust the scope of its ongoing Loop 101 study to address both directions. The second example involved the interchange between I-10 and Loop 202 (South Mountain Freeway). A previously free-flowing ramp from I-10 westbound to Loop 202 westbound began showing congestion during afternoon hours. The connected vehicle data showed that the issue occurred during merging, as vehicles from both directions attempted to enter Loop 202 simultaneously. Once merging was complete, vehicles quickly regained speed, indicating that potential solutions like lane restriping or adding a lane could effectively resolve the bottleneck without major investment. The third example focused on Loop 303 at Waddell Road, where vehicles queuing to exit caused backups that extended to the mainline lanes. The data visualization showed the queue's development and duration, and Mr. Zhang noted this example, along with the previous ones, were still being evaluated for potential solutions.

Mr. Zhang concluded that these congestion-scanning methodologies enhance the ability to proactively identify emerging bottlenecks and implement targeted, high-impact, and low-cost solutions before problems worsen. He noted collaboration with stakeholders to understand underlying issues and develop data-driven, efficient improvement solutions. Pursuing targeted, high-impact investments delivers maximum benefit and maximizes the effectiveness of regional investments. He also highlighted that this effort exemplifies the value of the region's half-cent transportation sales tax, which enables swift responses to emerging challenges.

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

Mr. Zuercher encouraged committee members to contact MAG staff if they wanted data analysis for specific freeway segments in their jurisdictions.

Chair Banger then asked Mr. Zhang whether similar data was used in the recent decision to disallow single-occupant electric vehicles from high occupancy vehicle (HOV) lane use.

Mr. Zhang explained that MAG had previously briefed the committee on the expiration of this federal policy for alternative fuel vehicles effective October 1, 2025. MAG is closely monitoring changes in traffic conditions on both HOV and general-purpose lanes to evaluate the effects of the policy. He stated that once sufficient data is collected over the next three to six months, MAG can provide an update detailing how travel behavior and congestion patterns have changed.

With no further questions, Chair Banger thanked Ms. Mathew and Mr. Zhang for their presentation.

8. State Route 85 Pima Street Study Update

Chair Banger reintroduced Ms. Mathew to present this item. This item was on the agenda for information and discussion.

Ms. Mathew began by explaining the study location, which is in the southwest portion of the MAG region, specifically within the Town of Gila Bend. She noted that this corridor serves as the town's main east-west roadway, connecting I-8 and State Route (SR) 85. The study limits extend from Gila Boulevard to the west and Dodson Street to the east. The roadway parallels the Union Pacific Railroad and serves a significant number of travelers whose destinations are beyond the town itself, many of whom are enroute from Phoenix to San Diego or Rocky Point. She described the traffic patterns along this corridor, highlighting the loop ramp required to continue along SR 85 and the stop-controlled intersection that creates congestion and safety concerns for returning travelers. She also described the surrounding land uses, noting that the north side of the roadway is home to fast-food restaurants and gas stations, while the south side is mostly undeveloped with a gas station and auto parts stores. She explained that SR 85 and Pima Street are primarily one or two lanes in each direction, divided by a median that accommodates turning movements. A lane drop and right-turn-only lane occur in the western portion of the corridor.

Ms. Mathew detailed the SR 85 Pima Street characteristics, noting that it functions as both a state route and a key connector for the Town of Gila Bend. Operated and maintained by the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT), it serves as a vital truck route for freight movement in the southwest portion of the state. She explained that the corridor connects I-8, SR 85, and Maricopa Road to the east, noting most travelers were those passing through the area, with high traffic during the holiday weekends and winter months. Additionally, she pointed out that the posted speed limit drops drastically from 75 miles per hour (mph) on Interstate 8 and 65 mph on State Route 85 to 35 mph within the town limits, making it challenging for drivers, especially those making left turns from the north side of the roadway. The problem is expected to worsen with future development planned north of the corridor.

Ms. Mathew stated that the study aims to improve traffic operations and safety while developing both near-term and full buildout alternatives. The study began in January

2025, with data collection completed in the spring. She described two design concepts included in all alternatives. The first is the left-in/left-out configuration, which introduces channelizing islands in the median to restrict movements to specific left-turn openings. This configuration includes deceleration lanes for vehicles turning left into side streets and acceleration lanes for vehicles merging into traffic after turning left out. The second concept is the right-in/right-out configuration, which prohibits left-turn movements entirely, allowing only right turns into and out of driveways.

Ms. Mathew explained the near-term improvements, specifically that these configurations would be implemented through restriping and raised medians using the existing roadway. The full buildout alternatives, however, would involve roadway widening, bridge construction, and possible right of way acquisition. She illustrated a signalized full buildout alternative, which builds upon the near-term improvements by adding two signalized traffic intersections, one at Gila Boulevard and another at SR 85.

Ms. Mathew reported that all the alternatives were presented during a public open house on September 17, which provided residents and stakeholders with an opportunity to review the options, ask questions, and provide feedback. The next step, she said, is to finalize the study report and recommendations later in the fall.

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

Ms. Valenzuela, highlighted the safety challenges faced by the community due to high-speed freeway traffic entering the town, emphasizing that the transition from 75 mph to local streets presents significant safety risks. She stated that while Gila Bend has experienced limited development in recent years, growth is beginning to pick up, and the study's findings will guide future planning efforts. She noted that this study addresses only the western portion of the town and that a larger transportation study will be needed to evaluate the eastern side as development expands. She added that the open house was valuable in making planned improvements more tangible for residents. She also mentioned that construction of 19 new homes is now underway, and she thanked staff for their efforts on the study.

Mr. Zuercher added that this study illustrates MAG's capacity to assist local jurisdictions with specific traffic challenges.

With no further questions, Chair Banger thanked Ms. Mathew for her presentation.

9. Executive Director's Report

Chair Banger introduced Mr. Zuercher for this item.

Mr. Zuercher began by noting the success of the Meridian Road Corridor public meeting held on October 1, which brought together approximately 100 attendees and staff from

Apache Junction, Mesa, Maricopa and Pinal counties. Mr. Zuercher recognized the participation of Apache Junction City Manager Bryant Powell and Mayor Chip Wilson.

Mr. Zuercher reminded members that applications for federal FY 2026 closeout funds had been opened the previous day. He emphasized that federal funding operates on a “use it or lose it” basis, meaning any unprogrammed funds could be retracted and redistributed elsewhere. The region has \$25 million available for allocation this year, and applications are due November 13. He encouraged all member agencies to review the email notice distributed by MAG and ensure applications are submitted. For assistance, he directed members to Patrick Stone or Wendy Miller.

Mr. Zuercher announced that Ms. Syed was recognized as the sole recipient nationwide of the Rising Professional Award at the Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations (AMPO) conference. The award honors early-career professionals at metropolitan planning organizations for significant achievements and demonstrated commitment to AMPO’s core values of knowledge, impact, and collaboration.

Mr. Zuercher invited Ms. Reed to share some recent news. She announced her intent to retire effective March 6, 2026, expressing gratitude for her career and optimism for the recruitment of new leadership.

Mr. Zuercher then informed the committee that he would also be leaving MAG on November 3. He explained that the Regional Council Executive Committee had met on September 30 to begin the transition process for his replacement. The committee decided on several items at the meeting, including requesting John Bullen to serve as the Interim Executive Director while a formal recruitment process is conducted. The committee also directed that the recruitment process be expedited and limited to candidates within Arizona. Mr. Zuercher thanked Mr. Butler and the City of Mesa for their partnership, noting that the City of Mesa will serve as the point of contact for the recruitment process, with coordination through Mesa’s Human Resources Department. The position is anticipated to open as early as October 15, with the goal of identifying a new Executive Director by early 2026. Mr. Zuercher advised that individuals interested in applying should prepare promptly due to the short application window.

Chair Banger congratulated Ms. Syed on her national award. He also thanked Mr. Zuercher for his leadership and acknowledged his impact on MAG’s growth and quality of work. Lastly, he thanked Mr. Bullen for stepping into the interim role during the executive transition.

Chair Banger thanked Mr. Zuercher for his report.

10. Legislative Update

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

11. Request for Future Agenda Items

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

12. Comments from the Committee

Chair Banger asked the members if there were any comments. No comments were made.

Adjournment

The next meeting of the Management Committee will take place on November 12, 2025. There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 12:58 p.m.

* Matters for which the Arizona Department of Transportation and Valley Metro Regional Public Transportation Authority ex officio members may vote.