



# City of Maricopa

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## Meeting Minutes - Draft City Council Regular Meeting

**Mayor Nancy Smith**  
**Vice-Mayor Vincent Manfredi**  
**Councilmember Eric Goettl**  
**Councilmember AnnaMarie Knorr**  
**Councilmember Amber Liermann**  
**Councilmember Bob Marsh**  
**Councilmember Henry Wade**

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Tuesday, May 19, 2026

6:00 PM

Council Chambers

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**1. Call to Order**

*The meeting was called to order at 6:02 p.m. An invocation was given by Pastor Luke Panter from Grace Fellowship Church, which was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance led by Councilmember Wade.*

**2. Roll Call**

**Present:** 7 - Mayor Nancy Smith, Councilmember Eric Goettl, Councilmember AnnaMarie Knorr, Councilmember Amber Liermann, Councilmember Bob Marsh, Councilmember Henry Wade and Vice Mayor Vincent Manfredi

**3. Proclamations, Acknowledgements, Awards and Presentations**

*No Proclamations, Acknowledgements, Awards, and Presentations given.*

**4. Report from the Mayor**

*Councilmember Marsh reported attending a U.S. Department of Transportation rural road safety seminar on May 7. On May 12th, he reported attending a Pinal County Water Augmentation Authority Board Meeting, noting that the agency now holds authority to raise bonds to purchase water. Next, on May 19, Councilmember Marsh reported attending a Pinal Partnership Government Relations Committee Meeting, where it was noted that 9-1-1 phone service funding is approximately \$4 million short for the year. Next, he shared his appreciation for Senator TJ Shope, Representative Teresa Martinez, and Representative Chris Lopez for their work on behalf of Maricopa regarding State Route 347. Lastly, Councilmember Marsh shared an upcoming Pinal Partnership breakfast on June 6 featuring six town managers, including City Manager Ben Bitter.*

*Councilmember Goettl reported on attending the most recent Community Emergency Response Team graduation on May 16 and encouraged residents to register for upcoming sessions in August and November. Next, he congratulated the city's graduating high school seniors and called attention to the Memorial Day Veterans memorial event at Copper Sky Plaza on May 25 at 9:00 a.m.*

*Councilmember Knorr reported attending the Zonta Scholarship Breakfast at the Maricopa Library and Culture Center, where three Maricopa high school students*

received scholarships. Next, she reported on judging the fifth-grade parks project at Pima Butte Elementary. Additionally, Councilmember Knorr also reported participating in Santa Rosa Elementary Career Day, speaking to fourth graders about the role of a city council member and presenting awards to the Be Awesome Space Camp graduates at Santa Rosa. Councilmember Knorr recognized Emergency Medical Services Week and Mental Health Awareness Month and announced that the Cultural Affairs and Arts Committee had new artwork from over 25 local artists, with the new gallery display going up at the Maricopa Library and Cultural Center.

Councilmember Liermann thanked Chief Goodman and the Maricopa Police Department for their education efforts surrounding the new safe scooter and e-bike ordinance taking effect May 21, including a poster contest with 150 entries and a bike safety rodeo at the library. Next, she reported that an educational video on scooter safety would soon be posted to the MPD website. Additionally, Councilmember Liermann provided an update on Pinal County youth internships, noting 238 applications were received, 52 youth were hired for a 7-week paid program and that she and county staff were discussing establishing a program location in Maricopa. Next, she shared about a recently concluded robotics program at the library for ages 10–13, with the next session opening for sign-ups soon and noted the library's summer reading program. Lastly, Councilmember Liermann shared the following upcoming events: Maricopa High School graduation, the arts grant application deadline of May 28, Desert Sun Performing Arts' 20th anniversary celebration at the Performing Arts Center on May 30, and a logo contest for Maricopa First Fridays closing June 1.

Vice Mayor Manfredi reported that he spoke before the pre-K graduation class at Molly's House of Little Feet and attending the Hispanic Cultural Night at the Maricopa High School Performing Arts Center, co-hosted by Santa Rosa Elementary to celebrate students enrolled in the dual-language program. He expressed admiration for the students' performances and encouraged attendance in future years.

Mayor Smith also reported attending the Hispanic Cultural Night, expressing admiration for the progression in fluency displayed by students from pre-K through fourth grade. Next, she reported on attending the Desert Sunrise Senior Awards, noting that MUSD students had earned approximately \$34 million in scholarships and grants. Additionally, she also reported attending the Zonta Club Award ceremony and endorsed the organization as a valuable opportunity for women seeking to serve the community. Next, she provided a detailed update on State Route 347, reporting that the Arizona State Transportation Board had approved Phase 1, where the repaving of the shoulder and travel lanes will commence. Mayor Smith added that construction anticipated to begin in late June or early July and that the right-of-way for the Riggs Road overpass had been purchased and approved. Next, she concluded by announcing the receipt of the Certificate of Necessity for the city's ambulance services, noting that a 30-day review period would follow before the approval was finalized.

## 5. Report from the City Manager

City Manager Ben Bitter reported on a communications video released that day featuring Fire Chief Pitassi explaining the Certificate of Necessity and its meaning for the community, and encouraged residents to view it on the city's social media channels. Next, he shared that the city had received positive indications from both U.S. senators regarding the inclusion of a hazmat vehicle in upcoming federal appropriations legislation, with the remaining funding portion to be discussed as part of the budget agenda item. City Manager Bitter wished Chief Pitassi a happy birthday.

## 6. Call to the Public

*Mayor Smith provided notice that, given the active 2026 election period, city resources and facilities shall not be used for electioneering, including discussion of candidacies, solicitation of votes, or campaign events, and indicated that additional language would be added to the standard Call to the Public introduction at the next meeting.*

*Greg Williams of Living Word Arizona, which recently became the first Foursquare Church, announced a community prayer walk at Copper Sky on Saturday, May 23, from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m., which will be open to all residents.*

*Kent O'Jon, announced that the Maricopa Rotary Club would be sponsoring a meet-and-greet at the Maricopa Community Center on May 28 from 5:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.*

*Lashanda Brown, President of the Eta Epsilon Chapter of Iota Phi Lambda Sorority, Inc., chartered in Maricopa in May 2025. She shared the chapter's first year of community service activities. She also announced an upcoming free community event on June 13 featuring resume writing and interview workshops, health screenings, and a kidpreneur showcase.*

## 7. Consent Agenda

### Approval of the Consent Agenda

**A motion was made by Councilmember Knorr, seconded by Councilmember Marsh to Approve the Consent Agenda, while pulling Item 7.2. The motion carried unanimously.**

- 7.2 [MIN 26-34](#) Approval of Minutes from the May 5, 2026 City Council Regular meeting. Discussion and Action.

**These Minutes were Approved.**

## 8. Regular Agenda and/or Public Hearings

- 7.1 [RES 26-12](#) A Resolution of the Mayor and City Council of the City of Maricopa, Arizona, authorizing and directing the acquisition of all property necessary for the completion of roadway improvements to the southwest corner of Smith-Enke Rd and Porter Rd within the city limits of Maricopa by dedication, donation, purchase, exchange or under the power of eminent domain as a matter of public necessity and authorizing the City Manager to execute all agreements related to such acquisitions. Discussion and Action.

*Councilmember Knorr confirmed with staff that the resolution would facilitate the creation of a dedicated right-turn lane from Smith Enke Road onto Porter Road and expressed her desire to ensure the community was aware of the project and the multi-step process required to secure the necessary right-of-way.*

*City Manager Bitter added that the resolution also contemplated the possible use of a scallop lien, noting that a recently adopted city ordinance enabled this approach and that the project could proceed at no cost to taxpayers.*

**A motion was made by Councilmember Knorr, seconded by Councilmember Liermann, that this Resolution be Approved. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.**

8.1 [RES 26-09](#)

PUBLIC HEARING: A Resolution of the Mayor and City Council of the City of Maricopa, Arizona, approving the renaming of W. Cesar Chavez Lane, which is located within the Mixed-Use Heritage Redevelopment District. Discussion and Action.

*Assistant Planner James Kamstra presented the city-initiated street name change for West Cesar Chavez Lane, a segment of approximately 554 feet of right-of-way located within the Heritage Mixed-Use District between North Plainview Street and North Main Street. He shared that the public notification process completed in compliance with the city's Street Naming and Addressing Procedure (SNAP) guidelines, including signage posted April 13, mailed notices to property owners on April 22, a newspaper notice published in the Casa Grande Dispatch on April 30, and neighborhood canvassing on April 20 across 28 properties in the Maricopa Station overlay area. Mr. Kamstra presented four options for council consideration: take no action; adopt one of three publicly submitted names: Herencia Lane, Veterans Way, Paradise Lane, revert the street to West Arizona Avenue, or select a different name.*

*Mayor Smith opened the public hearing at 6:50 p.m. Chad Chadderton, a board member of the Maricopa Historical Society, presented a community petition recommending that the street be renamed Paul Shirk Avenue in honor of the late Paul Shirk, past president of the Maricopa Historical Society, whose efforts he credited with establishing the Maricopa Museum, the Silver Horizon train car, and the Heritage Center. Mr. Chadderton indicated the petition had gathered approximately 100 signatures gathered in a short time frame after he learned of the agenda item only that afternoon. Mayor Smith closed the public hearing at 6:53 p.m.*

*Councilmember Knorr inquired about resident preferences gathered during canvassing. Mr. Kamstra reported that responses were mixed, with some residents opposed to any name change, others indifferent, and a subset offering specific name suggestions. He added that several submitted names were disqualified under SNAP criteria.*

*Councilmember Wade asked about the background of the three presented names and whether Paul Shirk was a veteran. Councilmember Marsh expressed support for reverting to the historical name West Arizona Avenue. Councilmember Liermann suggested delaying the vote to allow more community input, and Councilmember Knorr agreed, noting that residents may have expected a longer review period based on prior public communications.*

*Mayor Smith asked Mr. Kamstra to clarify the canvassing area and SNAP criteria that excluded names such as Paul Shirk. Mr. Kamstra explained that SNAP guidelines, among other restrictions, generally prohibit naming streets after individuals to avoid the same issues that prompted the current renaming.*

*City Manager Bitter clarified the established timeline, noting that council had set a schedule at its April 7 meeting for returning on May 19 with a decision, with written notification to follow and the new name taking effect June 19.*

*Councilmember Wade then made a motion to name the street Paul Shirk Avenue.*

**A motion was made by Councilmember Wade, seconded by Councilmember Knorr, that this Resolution be Approved. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.**

**8.2**      **MISC 26-12**

The Mayor and City Council shall hear a presentation on the Advancing Maricopa, 2026 General Plan Update. Discussion only.

*Planning and Zoning Manager Rick Williams introduced the item, framing the discussion as a final opportunity for council and the public to review the status of the Advancing Maricopa 2026 General Plan Update before it returns as an action item in June.*

*Matthew of the Michael Baker International Consultant Group provided the presentation. He summarized the process to date, noting that the Planning and Zoning Commission had adopted the plan at its April 27 meeting with a recommendation that certain resident comments from the public hearing be incorporated into the final version presented to council.*

*Mayor Smith asked the question of how the plan addresses the community's vision of not being a bedroom community and how industrial, commercial, and employment uses along corridors such as the Sonoran Desert Parkway and the future I-11 alignment are reflected. The consultant responded that while the land use map may not show large swaths of commercial or industrial designations, the plan's economic development section, thematic goals, and a user-friendly summary table in the executive summary collectively articulate a vision well beyond rooftop growth. He emphasized that the general plan serves as a policy launch pad from which more detailed complementary documents.*

*He also noted that many properties shown as master plan communities on the land use map incorporate a mixture of land uses including commercial and employment. Regarding the I-11 corridor, the consultant clarified that lands south of the Ak-Chin Indian Community are currently in Pinal County and not within city limits; development in that area would therefore proceed through the county's process. Were those lands annexed in the future, major land use changes would require a formal general plan amendment process, including a 60-day review period, public hearings, and a two-thirds council vote.*

**The Presentation was heard.**

**8.3**      **MISC 26-11**

The Mayor and City Council shall discuss and take action on adopting a tentative budget for fiscal year 2026-2027 (FY26-27, or FY27) and the 10-Year Capital Improvement Plan. Discussion and Action.

*Chief Financial Officer Matt Kozlowski presented the proposed tentative budget for fiscal year 2026-2027. He explained that the tentative budget, once approved, sets a maximum ceiling that cannot be increased, with final adoption scheduled for June 16.*

*Mr. Kozlowski outlined the city's revenue plateau, describing a new fiscal reality in which state shared revenues have flattened significantly due to legislative changes and the incorporation of San Tan Valley, representing an annual reduction of approximately \$10 million from previously anticipated levels. He added that general fund revenues were projected at approximately \$105 million for FY27, with general fund expenditures budgeted at approximately \$86 million, which is a figure that includes contingencies and capacities not expected to be fully expended. He noted that in FY26, actual expenditures were on track to be approximately 83 percent of the budgeted amount, consistent with historical trends.*

*Next, Mr. Kozlowski shared that property taxes, which the council is recommending a 20-basis point overall reduction, which is 15 basis points on the primary rate and 5 basis points on the secondary rate tied to Copper Sky GO bonds. He added that over*

a six-year window, the primary property tax rate had been reduced from 4.37 percent to 3.32 percent. Mr. Kozlowski confirmed that the sole growth in property tax levy revenue comes from new construction, not assessment increases, with assessed value growth being returned to residents.

He shared that the general fund balance as a percentage of expenditures stood at 39 percent, the lowest in the city's recent budget history, prompting discussion of adjusting the policy reserve floor from 30 percent to 25 percent. Mr. Kozlowski added that personnel costs represent 71 percent of general fund operating expenditures, a ratio Mr. Kozlowski characterized as healthy.

Next, he reported that approximately 47 percent of the operating budget is dedicated to public safety, and 76.4 percent of all new operating requests approved are for public safety. Mr. Kozlowski added that the 10-year Capital Improvement Plan totals slightly over \$1 billion across 176 projects, with FY27 Capital Improvement Plan appropriations set at approximately \$181 million. Next, he reported that of the 10-year Capital Improvement Plan, 55 percent is dedicated to streets infrastructure. Lastly, Mr. Kozlowski noted that the city had secured a \$30 million revenue bond rated AA+ by Standard & Poor's, and that a combined \$50 million payment, which included the \$20 million already received from Pinal County, which would be sent to ADOT the following week in fulfillment of the city's Intragovernmental agreement obligation for the State Route 347 project.

Leon Potter, a local resident, raised three questions for the record: the interest rate differential between the revenue bond and a general obligation bond, the city's stress-test results for a 15 percent decline in sales tax revenues, and the impact of such a decline on general fund reserves relative to bond debt service coverage requirements. He requested a formal written response before the final budget vote if staff could not answer that evening.

Ron Angerame, also a local resident, addressed the council regarding the absence of a grade separation at the Casablanca intersection on State Route 347. He shared that 80 percent of accidents occur in the northbound direction and 25 percent result in injuries. He added that planned development south of Maricopa would worsen conditions at that intersection and urged the council to include a plan and budget for its resolution.

Mr. Kozlowski responded to Mr. Potter's questions, noting that the revenue bond carried an effective rate of approximately 3.2 to 3.4 percent and that a general obligation bond was not a viable alternative given the Intragovernmental agreement payment deadline. He further outlined that a 15 percent reduction in sales tax would represent approximately \$6 million, reducing the projected revenue-over-expenditure surplus from \$27 million to \$21 million, which is an amount manageable within the city's reserve strategy.

Mayor Smith added that the city's 23-year history of fiscal conservatism, including navigating the 2008–2010 downturn, provided further context for its resilience. City Manager Bitter responded to Mr. Angerame's comments, acknowledging that while Casablanca is not yet in the current Capital Improvement Plan, a broader transportation study is underway, and that future phases of State Route 347 improvements would be informed by that study and updated annually.

Councilmember Knorr requested additional details before the final budget vote on the breakdown of capital expenditures attributed to city parks relative to public safety,

*noting the disparity between those two percentages in the Capital Improvement Plan donut chart. City Manager Bitter explained that the cyclical nature of public safety capital spending, noting that large expenditures such as a police station in a prior year would have been reflected differently. General conversation ensued regarding the budget allocations in the Capital Improvement Plan.*

**A motion was made by Vice Mayor Manfredi, seconded by Councilmember Wade, that this Miscellaneous Item be Approved. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.**

**8.4**      **[RES 26-13](#)**

A Resolution of the Mayor and City Council of the City of Maricopa, Arizona, adopting a Bed Tax Policy related to the allocation and expenditure of the hotel/motel additional tax revenue in compliance with A.R.S. §9-500.06 and pursuant to the strategic priorities of the city. Discussion and Action.

*Mr. Kozlowski noted that the Bed Tax Policy had been addressed during the budget presentation and was before the council for adoption. Councilmember Knorr raised concern that the policy, as presented, specifically listed the Wild West Music Festival as a current authorized expenditure.*

*She stated she was not in favor of designating future bed tax funds to the festival without first receiving an accounting of the results of the most recent event, and that the city was in a contract renewal year with the event producer. She expressed preference for language referring broadly to event tourism rather than naming the festival specifically, so as not to prejudice contract negotiations. She indicated she would be comfortable approving a bed tax policy that removed the Wild West Music Festival line while retaining the arts grant program reference.*

*Councilmember Goettl supported Councilmember Knorr's concerns and noted that the policy language naming the festival as an authorized expenditure had been adopted before the council had the data it had requested. He indicated he might vote against the motion and instead move to table the item pending receipt of the festival's financial results, which the event producer had 90 days from the event's close to submit. City Manager Bitter confirmed that while the hard numbers were not yet available, Placer AI data indicated approximately 12 percent growth in attendance compared to the prior year.*

*City Manager Bitter further clarified that the city's internal accounting string for the bed tax does not reference the Wild West Music Festival by name, and that removing the reference from the policy would not defund the program since the budget appropriation already existed. He also noted that removing both named expenditures would create an evergreen policy not requiring annual revision, while retaining the named items provides clarity for audit purposes.*

*Mayor Smith proposed an amendment to remove both named expenditures, which would be the Wild West Music Festival and the arts grant program from the policy. She added that leaving only the percentage allocations, to preserve maximum flexibility and avoid the need to return annually to adjust specific line items. Councilmember Knorr accepted the mayor's amendment.*

**A motion was made by Councilmember Knorr, seconded by Councilmember Marsh, that this Resolution be Approved as Amended. The motion carried by the following vote:**

**Aye:** 5 - Mayor Nancy Smith, Councilmember AnnaMarie Knorr, Councilmember Amber Liermann, Councilmember Bob Marsh and Councilmember Henry Wade

**Nay:** 2 - Councilmember Eric Goettl and Vice Mayor Vincent Manfredi

**9. Executive Session**

*No executive session was held.*

**10. Adjournment**

**This meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m.**

**Certification of Minutes**

**I hereby certify that the foregoing minutes are a true and correct copy of the minutes of the regular meeting of the City Council of Maricopa, Arizona, held on the 19th day of May, 2026. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held and that a quorum was present.**

**Dated this 2nd day of June 2026.**

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**Vanessa Bueras**  
**City Clerk**