

PHOENIX ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY and SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION MINUTES

May 8, 2025

Phoenix City Hall Online Using Webex

[illegible]

1. Call to Order/Roll Call and Announcements:

The meeting of the Environmental Quality and Sustainability Commission (EQSC) was called to order with a roll call at 3:03 p.m. There were 9 members present at roll call.

The following commissioners joined or left the meeting at the times below:

Kelly Barr joined the meeting at 3:06 p.m.
Kevin Groman joined the meeting at 3:08 p.m.
Orlando Cazarez left the meeting at 3:51 p.m.
Eric Goresegner left the meeting at 4:02 p.m.

Chair Lobo introduced Carla De La Chapa as the new Sustainability Officer for the Office of Sustainability. She just moved here from Texas and her background is in environmental science and was a sustainability professional for a utility company. Her focus is energy and decarbonization and is looking forward to being a collaborative partner with the commission.

Chair Lobo also introduced Trixie Anne Golberg who is joining the city as a part of the National FUSE Corp where she will be working with the City of Phoenix for the next year. She will be assisting with the Energy Access Plan with a focus on equity.

Commissioner Cazarez announced that he started a new job at ASU as the Director of Global Conservation and Sustainability Learning Initiatives.

Commissioner Knoop announced that Arizona joined 17 other states to sue the Federal Administration to release all National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure grant funding that were allocated before inauguration day. Commissioner Barr asked how much funding was attributed to Arizona. Commissioner Knoop stated that Arizona was allocated about 58 million dollars. Arizona has stopped all work related to the grants since the grant funding was paused.

2. Review and approval of April 10, 2025 Minutes

Commissioner Tetreault made a motion to approve the April 10, 2025 minutes. Commissioner Cazarez seconded the motion, and it carried 11-0.

3. Public Comment

No members of the public requested to speak.

4. American Institute of Architects – Infrastructure Presentation

Chair Lobo introduced Slade Sheaffer as presenter. He received a Robert Saemisch Prize scholarship to research a topic related to how global infrastructure ideas can be applied in Phoenix. He gave a presentation on his experience in graduate school and the Prize and examples of what he calls infrastructure. He made suggestions about how Phoenix could implement these ideas, including the CityScape rooftop, Fire Station 9, and metro area canal bike paths. The mockup of Fire Station #9 includes space for public access as modeled in European cities. He noted that canal bike paths lacked connectivity and end at a major road intersection and proposed adding connection points and ways to avoid crossing major intersections. These connection points included public activity space such as gardens, amphitheaters, viewing platforms, basketball

courts, and entertainment space. He concluded his presentation highlighting that there is a need for public spaces within infrastructure and encouraged Phoenix to adopt these practices.

Commissioner Sandweg thanked Mr. Sheaffer for his presentation and noted that the canal bike paths are appreciated by neighbors, but are an underutilized resource.

Trixie Ann Golberg, FUSE Executive Fellow in the Office of Sustainability, asked about public-private partnership and what was needed to make these projects happen. Mr. Sheaffer noted that the Copenhagen bike path project was a collection between five or six independent projects and the city created an authority that oversees the projects and works to make the projects cohesive despite multiple private developers.

Commissioner Knoop also thanked Mr. Sheaffer and wishes Phoenix would do more projects like the ones he showed. She also noted that the Deck Park Tunnel and Hance Park were examples of this idea of infra-structure and combines public park space along with required urban freeway infrastructure.

5. Update on Food Action Plan Public Engagement

Rosanne Albright, Environmental Programs Manager, and Maddie Mercer, Food Systems Program Manager, gave a presentation on the 2030 Food Action Plan Update and survey responses so far. They have received 370 responses through April 30th, but may have received over 500 responses by now. The survey will be open until the end of May. Survey responses informed city staff about resident desire to grow their own food, confidence of preparing healthy foods, eliminating food waste, access to food beyond traditional grocery stores, food insecurity and what food systems issues the city should prioritize. They also shared feedback from the Food Action Plan community workshops and the choices residents selected for food system solutions and potential investments. The top solutions selected include community gardens, food prescription programs, farmers markets, cooking classes, and community kitchens. City staff are finishing up their workshops and the next phase of community engagement will include working with local organizations. They requested that Commissioners provide suggestions for organizations they should interact with and potential for presentations to other audiences. They also asked Commissioners to review the draft once available in the fall and provide comments.

Chair Lobo asked if they were tracking answers by district. Ms. Albright responded that they are. Chair Lobo asked for more information about the desire for community kitchens and what residents wanted from that solution. Chair Lobo also asked about incentives for developers to provide these resources to residents. She suggested community coffee shops at city parks. Ms. Albright responded that community kitchens are currently seen in residential developments. These kitchens serve as a community kitchen, food pantry, and education resource. The city is installing community kitchen in partnership with Local First Arizona in the Choice Neighborhoods Project at 16th Street. She stated that conversations are in progress with Planning and Development about

community agriculture amendments and the need to add these items to support the city's goal of making residential development a better place to live, work, and play.

Commissioner Sandweg committed to attend a city workshop in the next 3-6 months. Ms. Albright thanked him.

Commissioner Knoop asked about if the workshop information is on Instagram. Ms. Albright confirmed that all workshop information is posted on the city website and on social media.

Nancy Allen, Environmental Programs Administrator, reminded commissioners that the city's Food Action Plan, Energy Access Plan, and Climate Action Plan will be available for public comments in the summer and fall. There will be future requests for comments from the commission and for their help in supporting these plans at council meetings.

Chair Lobo thanked Ms. Albright and Ms. Mercer for their presentation.

6. EQSC Engagement for 2025 Climate Action Plan Update

Commissioner Barr shared her review and feedback on the Stationary Energy Chapter of the 2021 Climate Action Plan. She also shared that a group of graduate students from ASU will be working on a summary of utility sustainability plans and carbon reduction goals from businesses in the community over the summer to help inform the city's Climate Action Plan. Her feedback includes the need for clear goals, baselines, and midterm goals, the importance of reliability, affordability, and sustainability related to energy access, the need to incorporate community goals, and review the number of goals to determine if achieving each goal is feasible or if some should transition to action items instead. She also reviewed the nine goals, provided specific feedback, and requested updates on progress since 2021. Many 2030 city operations goals are ambitious and she questioned if the city was on track for each goal. She suggested that the city communicate with the utilities about demand response programs for city operations and promote and educate residents on available rebate programs.

Chair Lobo asked about utility demand response programs and if large businesses are already participating in these programs. Commissioner Barr confirmed businesses are enrolled in these programs and there is already a focus on data centers to reduce energy during peak hours and days.

Ms. De La Chapa mentioned that her office is already starting conversations with utilities about underutilized rebate programs. Commissioner Barr stated that sometimes you need to walk residents through the application process and show them how to apply.

Commissioner Barr also encouraged working with GPEC and AZ Commerce Authority to attract and retain sustainability-focused business. She suggested the new Sustainability Officer review the microgrid goal as these are expensive and might not be as useful at the community level as robust battery storage.

Ms. De La Chapa asked about a Phoenix chapter of District 2030 and if this was of interest in voluntary reporting for emission reductions. Chair Lobo said that American Institute of Architects is committed to the 2030 Challenge and it is up to individuals firms to do national reporting.

Commissioner Barr stated that utilities are committed to their goals and are eager to work with city staff to support shared goals. Chair Lobo asked about how often utilities provide progress reports. Commissioner Barr stated that SRP does annual sustainability reporting and assumes APS does the same.

Ms. De La Chapa asked if the priority should be sharing the utility goals and calling attention so residents are aware of and support their programs. The city has limited control in the progress of these goals and this might be a better use of city influence. Commissioner Barr stated that sharing and supporting these goals is fine. The current goal is already written to support utility goals. A possible improvement would be to recognize and highlight the work the utilities are doing. This could be a motivator for utilities.

Chair Lobo asked if the city is working with utilities to help craft the language in the plan. This would allow them to review and provide a version that they approve of. Joshua stated that the utilities participated in workshops and are drafting narratives about how they are transitioning to cleaner energy. He stated that residents may not know about their work and supports sharing this information to a wider audience.

Commissioner Knoop seconded everything Commissioner Barr stated and thanked her for the detailed review.

Chair Lobo asked Commissioners to email her and OEP if anyone would like to provide their review of a chapter from the 2021 Climate Action Plan.

7. Announcements and Review of Future Agenda Items

Chair Lobo welcomed Ms. De La Chapa to the city again and offered the support of the EQSC for anything she needs.

8. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 4:44 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Katrina Gerster, Environmental Quality Specialist