

FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT ERRATA SHEET

FOR

El Mirage Rd. SR 303 – Jomax Road

PEO-0(231)T

0000 MA PEO T0428 01D

December 2025

The environmental review, consultation, and other actions required by applicable Federal environmental laws for this project are being, or have been, carried out by ADOT pursuant to 23 U.S.C. 327 and a Memorandum of Understanding dated June 25, 2024, and executed by FHWA and ADOT.

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Arizona Department of Transportation
FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
FOR
El Mirage Rd. SR 303 – Jomax Road

Federal-aid No.
PEO-0(231)T

ADOT Project No.
0000 MA PEO T0428 01D

The Arizona Department of Transportation has determined that this project will not have any significant impact on the human or natural environment. This finding of no significant impact is based on the attached environmental assessment, which has been evaluated and determined to adequately discuss the environmental issues and impacts of the proposed project. The environmental assessment provides sufficient evidence and analysis for the Arizona Department of Transportation to determine that an environmental impact statement is not required. The Arizona Department of Transportation takes full responsibility for the accuracy, scope, and content of the attached environmental assessment.

Approved by: _____
Signed by:
Paul O'Brien
69D3A817999345F...
Date: 12/31/2025

Paul O'Brien, P.E.
Environmental Planning Administrator

The environmental review, consultation, and other actions required by applicable Federal environmental laws for this project are being, or have been, carried out by ADOT pursuant to 23 U.S.C. 327 and a Memorandum of Understanding dated June 25, 2024, and executed by FHWA and ADOT.

The Arizona Department of Transportation ensures full compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, a federal law that protects individuals and groups from discrimination on the basis of their race, color, and national origin in programs and activities that receive federal financial assistance. For language interpretation services or information about the Department's Title VI Program, please contact the Civil Rights Office, ADOT, 206 S. 17th Avenue, MD 154A, Phoenix, AZ 85007; phone 602.712.7761.

El Departamento de Transporte de Arizona (ADOT) garantiza el pleno cumplimiento del Título VI de la Ley de Derechos Civiles de 1964, una ley federal que protege a las personas y grupos de la discriminación por motivos de raza, color y origen nacional en programas y actividades que reciben asistencia financiera federal, al prohibir la discriminación por motivos de raza, color, origen nacional y sexo en la prestación de beneficios y servicios. Para obtener servicios de interpretación o información sobre el Programa del Título VI del Departamento, comuníquese con la Oficina de Derechos Civiles del ADOT, ubicada en 206 S. 17th Avenue, MD 154A, Phoenix, AZ 85007; teléfono: 602.712.7761.

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

ADOT	Arizona Department of Transportation
ADWR	Arizona Department of Water Resources
ASLD	Arizona State Land Department
CEQ	Council on Environmental Quality
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
DCR	design concept report
EA	environmental assessment
EPA	US Environmental Protection Agency
FCDMC	Flood Control District of Maricopa County
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
MAG	Maricopa Association of Governments
MCDOT	Maricopa County Department of Transportation
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
ROW	right-of-way
SR303L	State Route Loop 303
STIP	State Transportation Improvement Program
TCE	temporary construction easements
TI	Traffic Interchange
TIP	Transportation Improvement Program
US	United States
US 60	US Highway 60
USC	United States Code

1. Introduction

This environmental assessment (EA) for El Mirage Road, State Route 303 (SR303L) to Jomax Road was prepared in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), as amended (42 United States Code [USC] 4321 et seq). The Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) is the lead agency in the planning, preparation, and review of all technical and environmental documents associated with this EA.

This Final EA provides ADOT's responses to public and agency comments made during the comment period and during the public hearing. It also provides additional information, data, or revisions to the Draft EA, where necessary, and is intended to be used in conjunction with the Draft EA. This Final EA includes a list of agencies and persons consulted and serves as a tool for ADOT to identify potentially significant impacts on social, economic, natural, and cultural resources and measures to avoid, minimize, and mitigate such impacts. With the completion of this Final EA and the issuance of a Finding of No Significant Impacts by ADOT, the NEPA requirements for this project have been met.

The environmental review, consultation, and other actions required by applicable federal environmental and State of Arizona laws for this project have been conducted by the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) pursuant to 23 U.S.C. 327 and a Memorandum of Understanding (date June 25, 2024) executed by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and ADOT

Following detailed environmental and engineering studies for the extension and widening of El Mirage Road, this final EA has been prepared to document and present the results of the studies to the public and agency representatives.

Project Description

The existing El Mirage Road is discontinuous within the study area with no existing road between SR303L and Happy Valley Road (Figure 1). El Mirage Road is functionally classified as a Maricopa County Department of Transportation (MCDOT) principal arterial south of SR303L, a MCDOT minor collector between Happy Valley Road and Desert Sun Lane, and a City of Peoria arterial north of Jomax Road.

ADOT, in cooperation with the City of Peoria, the Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG) and Maricopa County, is studying improvements to complete El Mirage Road to meet current and projected traffic needs and improve regional connectivity to Loop 303. This study included the preparation of a Design Concept Report (DCR), 15% design plans, an EA, and related studies and reports in order to define a set of recommendations and a recommended improvement alternative.

The primary objectives of this study are to:

- Improve regional and local transportation connectivity between new and planned developments and the regional transportation system.
- Increase transportation access and capacity for planned growth in the region.
- Address existing and future congestion on local roadways in the area by facilitating access to the regional freeway system.

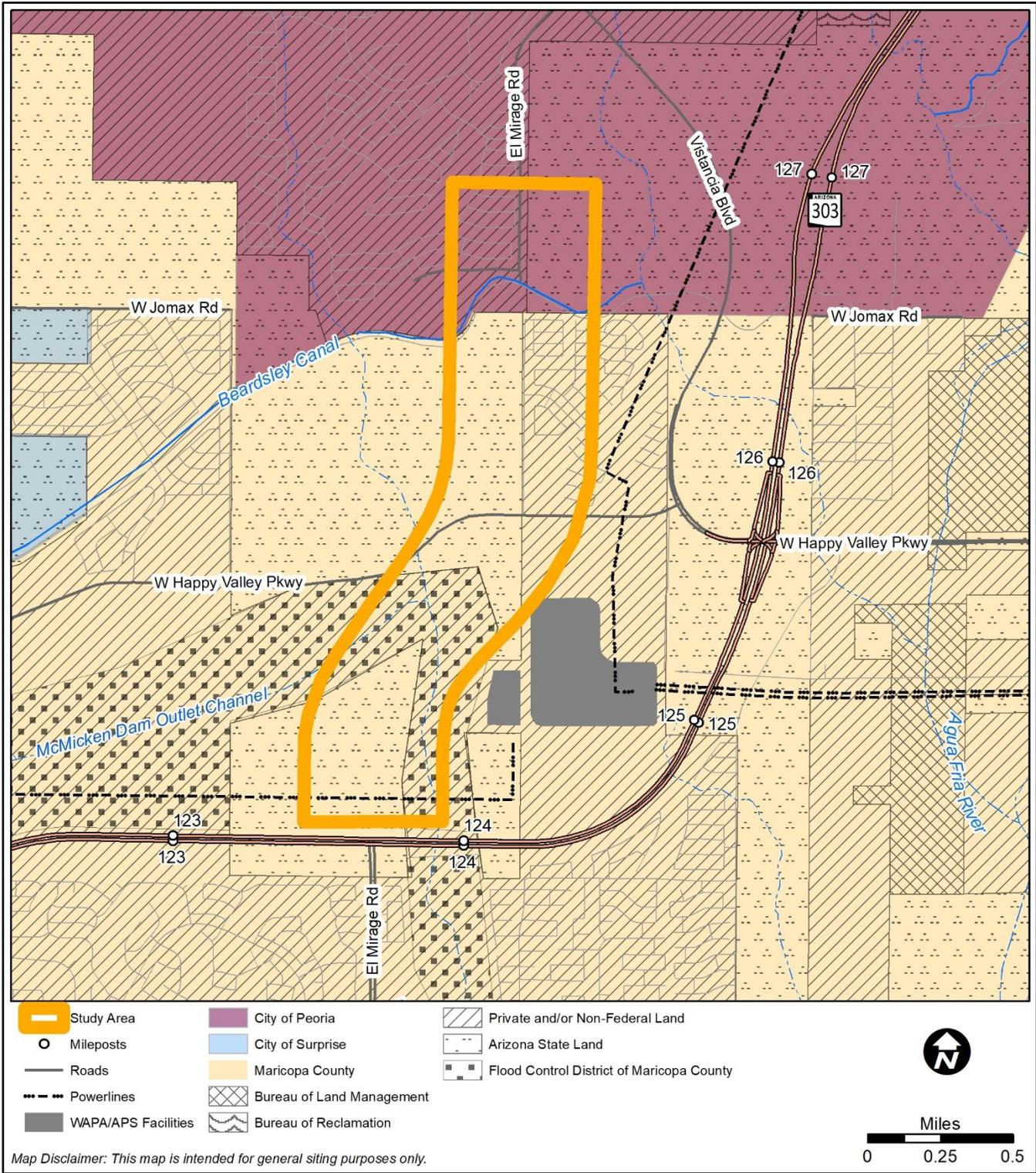


Figure 1 - Study Area Map

Summary of the Environmental Assessment

The Draft EA was completed and approved by ADOT on September 19, 2025, with a public review and comment period from September 24, 2025 to October 24, 2025. A virtual public hearing was conducted from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. on October 9, 2025 and included a formal presentation to advise all individuals and agency representatives about the preferred alternative and its potential impacts. The Draft EA and appendices were available online on the project website (<https://www.elmirageroadextension.com/>), and hard copies of the document were available for public review at the Sunrise Mountain Library, 21109 N. 98th Avenue, Peoria, AZ 85352.

Project team members were available to address questions and concerns during the hearing. The public review period and the public hearing were advertised through various media outlets to reach different sectors of the public. These included:

- **Project Website:** The study website and online public hearing tool provided information on the date, time, and location of the public hearing and how the public can provide comments.
- **Email Alerts:** The study team created and maintains a database of key stakeholders and members of the public who subscribe to receive project updates by email. As of Oct. 9, 2025, the database included email addresses for 1,119 subscribers as well as 70 stakeholders, the latter of which represent homeowners' associations, first-responders, clubs/organizations/community groups, schools, places of worship, senior centers, businesses and development groups in and adjacent to the study area; the cities of Peoria and Surprise; the Maricopa County Department of Transportation; the Flood Control District of Maricopa County; and ADOT. Three email alerts about the public hearing were sent from the project email address to all email addresses in the database on Sept. 24, Oct. 2 and Oct. 7, 2025. A follow-up email from the project email address was sent on Oct. 17 to remind subscribers about the close of the comment period on Oct. 24, 2025. On Oct. 17, the subscriber database had emails for 1,131 subscribers, as well as 70 stakeholders.
- **Press Release:** The City of Peoria sent a press release about the public hearing to its statewide news media database on Oct. 2, 2025, and included the press release in the Newsroom section of its website with links to the project website.
- **Newspaper Advertisements:** Two newspaper ads ran in the Sun City Independent and Peoria Times.
- **Direct Mailers:** A direct mailer was sent by mail to 8,000 addresses within two miles of the study area during the week of September 22-26, 2025.
- **Social Media:** ADOT and the City of Peoria promoted the virtual public hearing using their social media platforms. ADOT posted information to Facebook on Oct. 7 and the City of Peoria posted information on Facebook and X on Oct. 8, 2025.
- **GovDelivery:** Information on the public hearing and comment period was distributed via a GovDelivery email alert on October 2, 2025.
- **News Release:** ADOT Public Information staff distributed a news release about the public hearing to media outlets.

ADOT's responses to public and agency comments made during the comment period and during the public hearing are included in the Public Hearing Summary Report available at:
<https://www.elmirageroadextension.com/resources>.

This Final EA includes a list of environmental commitments and mitigation measures to be undertaken by ADOT and the designated construction contractor as well as revisions to the Draft EA. Supporting technical reports are available at <https://www.elmirageroadextension.com/resources>.

Selected Alternative

The Preferred Alternative has been selected because it will complete El Mirage Road within the study area consistent with City of Peoria roadway design standards and typical roadway sections. The selection is based on other reviews, such as public and agency input and other environmental/engineering technical studies. The Selected Alternative consists of:

- Constructing a new segment of El Mirage Road between SR303L and Jomax Road. The roadway configuration includes three vehicular lanes in each direction with a center median, bicycle lanes in each direction, and sidewalk in each direction. The project may be developed as a four-lane roadway as an interim configuration. This interim configuration would construct the outside two travel lanes, with the inside lanes to be constructed as a future stage.
- Constructing two proposed structural crossings, one over McMicken Outlet Channel Wash and one over the Beardsley Canal south of Jomax Road.
- Constructing curb and gutter, on site drainage improvements, and off-site drainage improvements.
- Installing traffic signals at Happy Valley Road
- Relocating utilities as needed
- Installing signage and lighting
- Installing irrigation and landscaping

2. Environmental Commitments and Mitigation Measures

ADOT and the contractor shall follow the federal laws, regulations, guidelines, as well as ADOT standards and specifications listed below to avoid, minimize, and mitigate impacts for all relevant environmental resources:

- Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970
- Uniform Relocation Act Amendment of 1987
- Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964
- *ADOT's Right of Way Procedure Manual*
- *ADOT's Public Involvement Plan*
- *ADOT's Erosion and Pollution Control Manual*
- *ADOT's Standard Specification for Road and Bridge Construction*
- *ADOT's Temporary Traffic Control Design Guidelines*
- *ADOT's Roadside Vegetation Management Guidelines*
- *ADOT's NEPA EA and EIS Guidance*

Environmental mitigation measures are intended to avoid, minimize, or mitigate impacts on environmental resources. All of the following mitigation measures apply and will be implemented during design and construction. The mitigation measures listed below are not subject to change without prior written approval from ADOT.

Arizona Department of Transportation Design Responsibilities

- The Arizona Department of Transportation will coordinate the final design affecting the Maricopa Trail with the Maricopa County Parks and Recreation Department.
- During final design, the Arizona Department of Transportation and the City of Peoria will reevaluate the project area for the presence of potential waters of the United States and determine the need for a US Army Corps of Engineers Clean Water Act Section 404 permit.
- During final design, the Arizona Department of Transportation will complete additional drainage studies and submit a Conditional Letter of Map Revision to the local floodplain administrator.
- During final design, the design engineer will coordinate with the ADOT Environmental Planning Biologist (928.304.0487) and reevaluate potential impacts to special status species.

Arizona Department of Transportation Roadside Development Responsibilities

- The Arizona Department of Transportation Roadside Development Section will provide special provisions for the control of noxious and invasive plant species during construction that may require treatment and control within the project limits.
- Protected native plants within the project limits will be impacted by this project; therefore, the Arizona Department of Transportation Roadside Development Section will determine if Arizona Department of Agriculture notification is needed. If notification is needed, the Arizona Department of Transportation Roadside Development Section will send the notification at least 60 (sixty) calendar days prior to the start of construction.

Arizona Department of Transportation District Responsibilities

- The Engineer shall contact the ADOT Environmental Planning Historic Preservation Team (660.730.0414) or the Environmental Commitments Coordinator (520.449.1985) at least 14 (fourteen) business days prior to the start of ground-disturbing activities to arrange for qualified personnel to monitor and be present during construction. ADOT's Environmental Planning - Historic Preservation Team will provide contact information on the qualified archaeological consultant to the Contractor for their records.

ADOT's Environmental Planning - Historic Preservation Team will contact the qualified archaeological consultant regarding the project start date and provide Contractor information.

- The Engineer shall coordinate via email or phone with the qualified archaeological consultant and communicate the construction schedule for the duration of ground disturbing work in those areas where monitoring is needed.
- If active bird nests are identified within the project limits, construction activities will avoid disturbing any active nest. Avoidance areas, if necessary, will be marked in the field with temporary fencing or t-posts with flagging by the approved biologist. The engineer will confer with the approved biologist to determine the appropriate avoidance strategies until the nestlings have fledged from the nest and the nest is no longer active.
- If any active bird nests cannot be avoided by vegetation clearing or construction activities, the Engineer will contact the Environmental Planning Biologist (928.304.0487) to evaluate the situation.

Contractor Responsibilities

- The contractor shall avoid all flagged and/or otherwise designated sensitive cultural resource areas within or adjacent to the project area, unless a qualified archaeological consultant is present.
- Prior to construction activity the contractor's field personnel including the Project Manager, Assistant Project Manager, General Superintendent, and Project Superintendent shall review the attached Arizona Department of Transportation Environmental Planning "Sonoran Desert Tortoise Awareness Program Handout" flier, become familiar with the identification and avoidance of the Sonoran Desert tortoise, and follow the notification request, as applicable.
- If any Sonoran Desert tortoises are encountered during construction, the contractor shall adhere to the attached Arizona Game and Fish Department "Guidelines for Handling Sonoran Desert Tortoises Encountered on Development Projects". If any tortoise is encountered during construction the contractor shall notify the Engineer to report the encounter.
- The contractor shall report encounters with any Sonoran Desert tortoise tortoises (live, injured, or dead) during construction to the Engineer using the attached Arizona Department of Transportation Sonoran Desert Tortoise Observation Form. The final form shall be sent to Arizona Department of Transportation Environmental Planning (email: bioteam@azdot.gov) within 24 hours of the encounter. Photographs should be taken of tortoises encountered and included in the report if possible.
- Prior to construction, all personnel who will be on-site, including, but not limited to, contractors, Contractor's employees, supervisors, inspectors, and subcontractors shall review the attached Arizona Department of Transportation Environmental Planning "Western Burrowing Owl Awareness" flyer.
- If any burrowing owls or active burrows are identified the contractor shall notify the Engineer immediately. No construction activities shall take place within 100 feet of any active burrow.
- If the Engineer in cooperation with the Environmental Planning Biologist determines that burrowing owls cannot be avoided, the contractor shall employ a qualified biologist holding a permit from the US Fish & Wildlife Service to relocate burrowing owls from the project area, as appropriate.
- If clearing, grubbing, or tree/limb removal will occur between March 1 and August 31, the contractor shall employ a qualified biologist to conduct a migratory bird nest search of all vegetation within the 10 (ten) days prior to removal. Vegetation may be removed if it has been surveyed and no active bird nests are present. If active nests cannot be avoided, the contractor shall notify the Engineer to evaluate the situation. During the non-breeding season (September 1 – February 28) vegetation removal is not subject to this restriction.
- The contractor shall develop a Noxious and Invasive Species Treatment and Control Plan in accordance with the requirements in the contract documents. Plants to be controlled shall include those listed in the state and federal noxious weed and the state invasive species lists in accordance with state and federal laws and executive orders. The plan and associated treatments shall include all areas within the

project right-of-way and easements as shown on the project plans. The treatment and control plan shall be submitted to the Engineer for the Arizona Department of Transportation Construction Professional Landscape Architect for review and approval prior to implementation by the contractor.

- Prior to the start of ground-disturbing activities and throughout the duration of construction and any landscape establishment period, the contractor shall arrange for and perform the control of noxious and invasive species in the project area.

3. Errata from Draft Environmental Assessment

This part of the Final EA contains additions or alterations to the Draft EA to clarify, further discuss, or make corrections to the text. These changes are the result of public and agency comments and are provided below with reference to the page numbers of the original text in the Draft EA. Deleted text is identified with strikethrough () and new or substituted text appears in red italics (*italics*). This document should be used in conjunction with the Draft EA, and the changes add to or supersede what was included in the published Draft EA.

The following global changes to the Draft EA text are not shown in these errata:

- “Proposed project” and “proposed action” have been changed to “project.”
- “Preferred Alternative” has been changed to “Selected Alternative.”
- References to “would” regarding the project and/or Selected Alternative are changed to “will.”
- No revisions, clarifications, or corrections were required for the following chapters and sections of the Draft EA, other than the global changes noted above:
 - Chapter 1 Introduction
 - Chapter 2 Project Purpose and Need
 - Chapter 3 Alternatives
 - Chapter 4 Affected Environment, Environmental Consequences, and Mitigation
 - Resources Eliminated from Further Evaluation
 - Land Ownership and Right-of-Way
 - Socioeconomics
 - Cultural Resources
 - Section 404 and 401 of the Clean Water Act and the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System
 - Biological Resources
 - Noise
 - Hazardous Materials
 - Visual Resources
 - Material Pits and Water Sources
 - Utilities
 - Chapter 6 Literature Cited

Section 4(f) Resources (DEA pages 28-29)

Environmental Impacts – *Selected* Alternative

ADOT, *in coordination* with the official with jurisdiction over the property, *have made the* determination that the project will not adversely affect the property and ~~are seeking to make~~ *meets the requirements of a use with a de minimis impact under 23 CFR 774.17. No comments were received from agencies or the public during the comment period regarding the trail realignment. The Maricopa County Parks and Recreation Department signed their concurrence with this finding on December 8, 2025.*

Conclusion

~~Comments obtained during the public comment period of the Draft EA will be compiled and provided to the officials with jurisdiction over the Section 4(f) resources for their consideration. No decisions will be made until the officials with jurisdiction have had the chance to review the public comments. As design advances, ADOT would~~ *will* coordinate with Section 4(f) resource owners, as needed. ~~Reference the Section 4(f) forms to be included in an appendix in the Final EA.~~

Air Quality (DEA pages 45-47)

Environmental Impacts – Preferred Alternative

Therefore, the project meets conformity requirements and no project emission reduction mitigation or control measures need to be considered by project sponsors. *FHWA determined regional and local project conformity on November 28, 2025. The Final Air Quality Report is available at: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1RfGwimEnrq_QbK4MGqhHcs0s_TSpx2Pe/view.*

4. Public and Agency Coordination Comments

Following the distribution of the Draft EA, a virtual public hearing was held on October 9, 2025 to present the findings of the environmental analysis presented in the Draft EA. Approximately 66 people attended the hearing, and 53 comments were received during the comment period. ADOT received comments via email, on-line comment forms, verbally, and letter. A public hearing summary report is included on the project website at <https://www.elmirageroadextension.com/resources> which includes the comments and associated responses in a comment resolution form.