



Phoenix Congestion to Worsen Despite \$70 Billion in Transportation Spending Plans

- The Maricopa Association of Governments—the multi-governmental agency that coordinates the federally mandated transportation planning process for the Phoenix metro region—has produced a draft 2050 Regional Transportation Plan (Momentum 2050) covering all major highway and transit project plans and spending for the next 25+ years.
- The projects designated in MAG’s draft 2050 Regional Transportation Plan would require investment of over \$70 billion, including:
 - Over \$33 billion in planned freeway/highway projects;
 - Over \$16 billion in light rail extensions and other high-capacity transit projects; and
 - Over \$24 billion for other arterial road improvements, bus transit capital/operations, safety improvements, air quality, and other regional projects.

Despite Planned Spending, Congestion is Likely to Worsen

- Despite over \$70 billion in planned spending, MAG expects traffic congestion to worsen by 2050.
- According to MAG, “even with the robust investment outlined in [the Momentum 2050 plan], anticipated commute times are expected to continue to increase across the region.”
 - MAG projects that under the Momentum 2050 plan:
 - The percent of congested lane miles in the Valley will increase from 34% to 41% by 2050.
 - Average afternoon peak commutes will increase from 26 minutes to 30 minutes by 2050.
 - Vehicle hours of delay will increase by at least 50% at all times of day by 2050.
 - Hours of delay on critical freight corridors will more than double.
 - The number of jobs in the region reachable within 30 minutes will decline by 15%, relative to a 25% decline if nothing new is built.

Policy Implications

- The current direction of MAG’s proposed 2050 regional transportation plan would see the Phoenix region spend over \$70 billion on transportation projects only to see today’s congestion worsen and a diminished ability to move freight and people throughout Arizona’s economy.
- The Momentum 2050 plan does not appear to reflect a massive change in travel patterns since the onset of the COVID pandemic, nor the current and projected national decline in transit use.
- The Momentum 2050 plan is silent on the role of emerging and disruptive deployment of automated vehicle technology.

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