

MINUTES OF THE AVONDALE CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF AVONDALE, ARIZONA
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBER
June 22, 2026

A **Work Session** of the City Council of the City of Avondale, Arizona was convened at 11465 West Civic Center Drive in open and public session at 5:30 p.m.

Members Present: Mayor Mike Pineda; Vice Mayor Curtis Nielson; Councilmembers Tina Conde, Jeannette Garcia, Gloria Solorio, Shari Weise, and Max White.

Members Absent: None.

Other Municipal Officials Present: Ron Corbin, City Manager; Jennifer Stein, Assistant City Manager; Dale Nannenga, Assistant City Manager; Andrew Mesquita, Assistant City Manager; Nicholle Harris, City Attorney; Marcella Sarmiento, City Clerk; Liz Barker Alvarez, Intergovernmental Affairs Administrator; Kirk Beaty, Public Works Director; Barbara Coppage, City Auditor; Liana Bell, Memo Espinoza, Police Chief; Joel Evans, Facilities Director; Craig Jennings, Judge; Corey Larriva, Parks and Recreation Director; Chris Lopez, Neighborhood and Family Services Director; Kimberly Moon, Engineering Director; Jodie Novak, Development Services Director; Abril Ruiz-Ortega, Court Administrator; Larry Rooney, Fire Chief; Jeffrey Scheetz, Chief Information Officer; Pier Simeri, Marketing and Public Relations Director; Cheryl Covert, Interim Economic Development Director; and Renee Weatherless, Finance and Budget Director.

Audience: Approximately five members of the public were present.

1. ROLL CALL BY THE CITY CLERK

2. UPDATE ON WEBSITE REDESIGN

Marketing and Public Relations Director Pier Simeri presented an overview of the City's newly redesigned website, www.AvondalAZ.gov, noting that the previous site had been in place for approximately ten years and contained more than 1,000 pages and 45 online forms. She explained that the redesign was necessary to modernize the platform and ensure compliance with updated Department of Justice ADA requirements. Staff conducted extensive research, including feedback from residents, website users, and City staff, resulting in a streamlined site with just under 300 pages.

Ms. Simeri highlighted improvements such as enhanced ADA accessibility, mobile-friendly design, and a centralized calendar featuring all City programs, including Neighborhood and Family Services.

DeAnn Franklin, Digital Media Program Manager, provided an overview of the site's navigation and features, describing it as Avondale's "digital front door." She noted that the updated design improves user experience, increases accessibility, enhances transparency, strengthens community engagement, and provides 24/7 access to City information and services.

Ms. Franklin noted that the website will remain a continuous improvement effort, with ongoing staff training and updates to keep pace with modern digital standards and requirements.

Mayor Pineda and Councilmembers were provided an opportunity to offer comments and ask questions. In response to inquiries, Ms. Franklin clarified that audio translation referred to as a screen reader, is enabled through the user's own digital device to read on-screen content. She added that one of the park search filters is believed to address ADA accessibility, and if not, staff will ensure it is added. Ms. Simeri explained that the City uses a third-party platform, Civic Clerk, to store meeting agendas and related materials, and noted that legal requirements mandate notifying users when they are leaving the City's website to access an external site.

Council members expressed appreciation to the Marketing team and Ms. Franklin for their extensive work on the redesign. Councilmember White acknowledged the shift toward mobile internet use and suggested adding British English as an additional language option. Mayor Pineda encouraged staff not to view public feedback negatively, noting that residents often become accustomed to familiar processes and may need time to adjust to new systems.

City Manager Ron Corbin provided clarification regarding the intent of the new work-session structure is to give Council an opportunity to review proposed ordinances in advance, identify any missing elements, and provide input on what they would like to see added, removed, or revised. Mr. Corbin noted that staff will return at a future meeting with a finalized version for formal consideration, incorporating Council's feedback. He emphasized that ordinances may still be adjusted during the approval process, but the added work sessions are designed to increase Council's involvement and improve the quality and completeness of ordinance development.

3. PROPOSED ELECTRIC DRIVEN CYCLE CITY OF AVONDALE ORDINANCE

Police Chief Memo Espinoza introduced the agenda item regarding the proposed implementation of a City ordinance regulating the use of electric-driven cycles on public property within the City of Avondale, noting that the effort has been under development since January 2026. He then introduced Police Lieutenant Thomas Alt, the presenter for the item.

Lt. Alt explained that the purpose of the presentation was to review the proposed ordinance with an emphasis on promoting the safe, orderly, and efficient operation of e-bicycles and e-scooters throughout the community. He stated that an ordinance is necessary to establish clear standards for the operation of electric-driven cycles on both roadways and sidewalks.

Lt. Alt presented the current definitions within state law.

E-Bike is defined as a two- or three-wheeled vehicle equipped with fully operable pedals and an electric motor of less than 750 watts. They are classified into three categories (I, II, III): Class 1: Motor provides assistance only when the rider is pedaling

and ceases to assist when the e-bike reaches the speed of 20 mph; Class 2: Motor used exclusively to propel the bicycle but not able to exceed 20 mph; and Class 3: Motor used to exclusively propel the bicycle but not able to exceed 28 mph.

E-Scooter is defined as a device that weighs under 75 pounds, features handlebars and a floorboard for standing, has two or three wheels, and travels at a maximum speed of no more than 20 mph.

Staff are recommending the following definition be added within the Avondale City Code:

- Electric Driven Cycles: Personal transportation device designed to carry one or more persons and propelled, in whole or in part, by an electric motor. An Electric Driven Cycle may have one or more wheels and may include, but is not limited to, electric standup scooters, electric skateboards, self-balancing single-wheel devices, self-balancing multi-wheel devices, and similar electrically powered personal mobility devices.

Lt. Alt compared various west valley city code requirements. Staff are recommending the following e-bike sidewalk restrictions be added within the Avondale City Code:

- Must yield to vehicles;
- Follow speed restrictions;
- No speed greater than reasonable and prudent;
- May not ride where no posted riding signs present or conditions prevent;
- ride with direction of traffic flow;
- Shall not suddenly leave a curb or place of safety and move into the path of a vehicle; and
- Ride with the flow of traffic.

Lt. Alt compared various west valley city code requirements. Staff are recommending the following e-bike roadway use restrictions be added within the Avondale City Code:

- Must follow the bike laws of the state;
- Must use bike lane if present;
- Ride with the direction of traffic flow; and
- Follow posted speed limits and not operate at a speed greater than prudent.

Lt. Alt compared various west valley city code requirements. Staff are recommending the following e-scooter sidewalk use restrictions be added within the Avondale City Code:

- Must yield to vehicles;
- Follow speed restrictions;
- May not ride where no posted riding signs are present, or conditions prevent;
- Must yield to pedestrians;

- Must give an audible warning when approaching pedestrians; and
- Ride with the flow of traffic.

Lt. Alt compared various west valley city code requirements. Staff are recommending the following e-scooter roadway use restrictions be added within the Avondale City Code:

- May not be on roadway if speed limit exceeds 25mph; and
- Must ride with the flow of traffic.

Lt. Alt compared various west valley city code requirements. Staff are recommending the following electric driven cycle speed restrictions be added within the Avondale City Code:

- Travel reasonable and prudent speed and no more than 10mph on the sidewalk;
- If hazard is present, operator must dismount and walk to safe area prior to resuming; and
- Ride with the flow of traffic.

Lt. Alt compared various west valley city code requirements. Staff are recommending the following electric-driven cycle equipment requirements be added within the Avondale City Code:

- Helmet required for riders under 16;
- Brakes and lights required with line of site distances; and
- Audible warnings such as bell or human voice.

Lt. Alt compared various west valley city code requirements. Staff are recommending the following electric driven cycle age requirement be added within the Avondale City Code:

- No person can operate class 3 under 16;
- No person can operate class 1 or 2 under 14; and
- No person can operate an e-scooter under 12.

Lt. Alt presented the following current bicycle ordinance.

- City Code 23-77 - Obedience to traffic-control devices: Any person operating a bicycle shall obey the instructions of official traffic-control signals, signs, and other control devices applicable to vehicles, unless otherwise directed by a police officer.
- City Code 23-78 – Speed: No person shall operate a bicycle at a speed greater than is reasonable and prudent under the conditions then existing.
- City Code 23-79 - Riding on sidewalks: No person shall ride a bicycle upon a sidewalk within a business district.

Lt. Alt compared various west valley city code requirements. Staff are recommending the following:

- Follow current Arizona Law regarding contributing to the delinquency of a minor (A.R.S. § 13-3613).
- Allowed on City Parks sidewalks unless the use is prohibited or restricted by park rules or posted signage.
- Not allowed on park grass, plazas, sports courts, splash pads, amphitheaters, or vendor corridor areas.
- Civil penalties to include:
 - 1st violation: \$50,
 - 2nd violation: \$250,
 - 3rd violation: \$500, and
 - \$20 payment plan request.

Lt. Alt outlined the proposed next steps, including a six-month warning period and a comprehensive public education campaign utilizing social media, school outreach to parents and students, HOA and community events, and additional City communication platforms such as media releases, RAVE alerts, and billboards. He noted that staff were seeking Council direction on adoption of the proposed e-Bike and e-Scooter Ordinance.

Mayor Pineda and Councilmembers were provided an opportunity to comment and ask questions. In response to Council inquiries, Lt. Alt explained that, based on consultation with the City Attorney, the parents of a minor could be penalized for the minors' actions if it violates State Statutes that can be articulated. He clarified that the proposed ordinance applies specifically to electric-driven cycles and scooters, while dirt bikes are already regulated under an existing ordinance. The draft ordinance also limits riders to the number for which the device is designed.

Regarding footwear, Lt. Alt stated that Council may direct staff to include an open-toe shoe restriction if desired. He also sought feedback on whether to lower the minimum operating age for e-scooters from 12 to 11 years old, prompting discussion among Councilmembers. Mayor Pineda and Council emphasized the importance of educating residents on safe operation of e-bikes and e-scooters. Councilmember White suggested incorporating an innovative educational component and referenced the "Safety Town" model from Cleveland, Ohio, which introduces safety concepts beginning in pre-K.

Lt. Alt shared next steps to include a 6-month warning period, ongoing public education efforts through social media, education in schools to parents and students, education through HOA/community events, and other city platforms to include media release, rave, and billboards. He noted staff is seeking direction from City Council on adopting the e-Bike and e-Scooter Ordinance in the City of Avondale.

Mayor Pineda and Councilmembers were provided an opportunity to offer comments and ask questions. In response to Council's inquiries, Lt. Alt explained upon consulting with the City Attorney the parents of a minor would be penalized based on the number of incidents, but if the minors' actions violated State Statutes that could be articulated. This proposed Ordinance is focused on electric driven cycles and scooters. Dirt bikes are currently part of an Ordinance. The proposed ordinance does address the number of riders to be only what it is designed for.

Regarding open toe shoes, the City Council can direct us to amend the proposed ordinance to include such restriction. Lt. Alt sought feedback from City Council regarding the request to decrease the age to operate an e-Scooter from 12 to 11 years old. A discussion ensued among the Councilmembers.

Mayor Pineda and Councilmembers discussed the importance of educating residents of the City of Avondale in safety when using an e-bike or e-scooter. Mr. Corbin noted Peoria including parental accountability in their ordinance for immediate responsibility that defers to state law and provides officers with discretion based on what occurred.

Councilmember White proposed the ordinance include an innovative education piece and shared information related to the "safety town" from Cleveland, Ohio that started with pre-K children.

4. CITY CHARTER AMENDMENT PROCESS

City Clerk Marcella Sarmiento provided a summary of the City Charter amendment process and distributed a historical list of all charter elections since 1959. She explained that Avondale adopted its charter in 1959 and is one of 21 charter cities in Arizona, with amendments permitted either by ordinance or voter initiative. The charter has been amended 12 times, most recently in 2010, with past updates addressing outdated information, procedural changes, and local-control measures.

Ms. Sarmiento outlined two options for reviewing potential amendments, an internal staff committee or a citizen Charter Review Committee, and reviewed timelines for placing measures on the ballot. She noted that elections may only occur on four designated dates and that the July and November 2028 elections would be the most cost-effective. She requested Council directions on next steps.

City Manager Corbin added that the discussion was prompted by recent questions about possible charter changes and emphasized the need to begin community engagement early due to the extensive preparation required.

Mayor Pineda and Councilmembers were provided an opportunity to offer comments and ask questions. In response Mr. Corbin stated that no urgent amendments have been identified at this time.

5. INVOCATION AT CITY COUNCIL MEETINGS

Aneyssa Romo, Senior Management Analyst, provided an overview of how municipalities utilize invocations or moments of silence to begin council meetings. It

was noted that since 2007 the City of Avondale has opened its meetings with a moment of reflection, allowing attendees to pause, pray, or contemplate privately before the start of business. This practice replaced the City's prior use of spoken invocations and offers an inclusive approach that accommodates individuals of all faiths and beliefs while requiring no staff coordination of speakers.

Ms. Romo explained that cities using invocations follow varying models: some have the mayor, councilmembers, senior staff, or public safety chaplains rotate providing the invocation, while others allow members of the public to volunteer through a formal scheduling process. Cities that permit public participation typically adopt an invocation policy outlining speaker eligibility, content guidelines, time limits, and nondiscrimination requirements to ensure no preference is given to any faith or ideology and to prohibit proselytizing or disparaging remarks.

Policies may also limit how frequently individuals of the same faith tradition may participate in promoting equitable opportunities. A comparison of West Valley cities showed a mix of practices, with six utilizing spoken invocations and three using a moment of silence or reflection.

Mayor Pineda invited discussion on whether to incorporate an invocation or moment of silence at the start of Council meetings. He expressed support for continuing the current moment of reflection, noting it accommodates all beliefs without creating religious expectations. Several Councilmembers spoke in favor of adding an optional prayer. Some supported a flexible, Council-led approach in which members could rotate leading a moment of silence or offer a prayer, reflection, or invite a chaplain. Others preferred limiting participation to Council or designated chaplains to avoid unpredictability or additional staff burdens and to maintain decorum.

Concerns were raised about coordination demands, legal risks associated with selecting members of the public to give invocations, and the importance of ensuring any policy is inclusive, clear, and defensible. Staff and the City Attorney advised that an invocation policy must comply with legal standards and be structured in a way that would remain workable for future Councils with varying beliefs. While some members emphasized transparency, inclusivity, and avoiding legal exposure, others highlighted the value of grounding meetings in prayer or reflection.

The City Manager concluded by stating that staff would draft a policy with options for Council consideration at a future work session.

6. ADDING FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS TO THE CITY COUNCIL AGENDA

Aneyssa Romo, Senior Management Analyst, reviewed how future agenda items are added to the City Council agenda. In Avondale, the Mayor acting through the City Manager, Councilmembers acting through the Mayor or City Manager, or the City Manager alone may place items on a future agenda. Across the region, most cities and towns allow the Mayor, the City Manager, and a designated number of Councilmembers, usually between two and four, to request agenda items.

Many jurisdictions also include a standing “Future Agenda Items” section on regular Council agendas to give Councilmembers an additional opportunity to propose topics, sometimes requiring a second or approval by multiple Councilmembers before an item is scheduled. Some cities limit this process to work sessions through an “Item of Special Interest” section, where proposed items are forwarded to the City Manager to prepare a report for a later work session. After a topic is discussed in a work session, an 18-month waiting period is often required before the same issue can be brought forward again.

Mayor Pineda invited Council discussion regarding the process for placing items on future City Council agendas and the role of the City Manager in scheduling them. Several members expressed confusion about whether a request supported by three Councilmembers should automatically appear on a regular meeting agenda or could instead be directed to a work session. Staff explained that the City’s procedures require items to be submitted through the City Manager, who considers timing, workload, and preparation needs when determining whether a topic first appears at a work session.

Concerns were raised about the potential for violating open meeting laws when Councilmembers must seek support from multiple members to reach the required threshold, and some members described past challenges getting items scheduled. Others noted that work sessions create space for open dialogue and allow staff to gather needed information before items advance to a formal meeting. The group also discussed how other cities handle similar requests and the importance of clear processes for submitting agenda items, including the possible use of formal request forms.

By the end of the discussion, members agreed that clearer directions and refined procedures are needed, and staff will return after the summer break with proposed next steps based on the feedback provided.

7. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the Council, Councilmember Garcia moved to adjourn the Regular Meeting; Councilmember Conde seconded the motion.

Upon vote, the motion was carried unanimously 7 to 0.

Councilmember Conde	Aye
Councilmember Garcia	Aye
Councilmember Solorio	Aye
Councilmember Weise	Aye
Councilmember White	Aye

Vice Mayor Nielson	Aye
Mayor Pineda	Aye

The meeting was adjourned at 7:37 p.m.

Mike Pineda, Mayor

CERTIFICATION AND ATTESTATION

I hereby certify that the foregoing minutes are a true and correct copy of the minutes of the Work Session of the Council of the City of Avondale held on the 22nd day of June 2026. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held, and that the quorum was present.

Marcella Sarmiento, City Clerk

Date Approved by City Council