



**SUMMARIZED MINUTES**

**CITY OF SCOTTSDALE  
TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION  
REGULAR MEETING**

**Thursday, November 18, 2021**

**Meeting Held Electronically and Remotely**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Iacovo called the regular meeting of the Scottsdale Transportation Commission to order at 5:16 p.m.

**ROLL CALL**

**PRESENT:** Pamela Iacovo, Chair  
Don Anderson, Vice Chair  
Karen Kowal  
B. Kent Lall  
Mary Ann Miller  
Kerry Wilcoxon

**ABSENT:** Andy Yates

**STAFF:** Ratna Korepella, Transit Manager  
Dave Meinhart, Transportation Planning Manager  
Mark Melnychenko, Transportation & Streets Director  
Kyle Lofgren, Staff Coordinator  
Pete Peralta, Transit Coordinator

Mark Melnychenko, Transportation & Streets Director, spoke words of condolence and appreciation for the fallen law enforcement officer, Lieutenant Breckman and the Commission observed a moment of silence. Commissioners shared their condolences.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

No public comments were submitted.

## **1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

COMMISSIONER WILCOXON MOVED TO APPROVE THE REGULAR MEETING MINUTES OF THE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION ON OCTOBER 21, 2021 AS PRESENTED. COMMISSIONER KOWAL SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH CARRIED 6-0 WITH CHAIR IACOVO, VICE CHAIR ANDERSON, COMMISSIONERS KOWAL, LALL, MILLER AND WILCOXON VOTING IN THE AFFIRMATIVE WITH NO DISSENTING VOTES.

## **2. APPOINTMENT OF PATHS AND TRAILS SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS**

Chair Iacovo recommended that Vice Chair Anderson and Commissioner Lall continue in their roles unless a conflict exists. Vice Chair Anderson and Commissioner Lall expressed their willingness to serve.

CHAIR IACOVO NOMINATED VICE CHAIR ANDERSON AND COMMISSIONER LALL TO SERVE ON THE PATHS & TRAILS SUBCOMMITTEE. CARRIED 6-0 WITH CHAIR IACOVO, VICE CHAIR ANDERSON, COMMISSIONERS KOWAL, LALL, MILLER AND WILCOXON VOTING IN THE AFFIRMATIVE WITH NO DISSENTING VOTES.

## **3. CLEVER DEVICES APPLICATION ON BUSES**

Ratna Korepella, Transit Manager, introduced Pete Peralta, Transit Coordinator, who gave the presentation. Mr. Peralta explained that Clever Devices are an intelligent transportation system for public transit and provided a brief background of the City's history with Clever Devices. In 2018, there was a regional decision to upgrade from the orbital ACS system to the Clever Device system that is now installed. The trolley vehicles employ an intelligent vehicle network, which includes an input of modems, computer sensors and onboard Cleverware. A touchscreen provides information to the driver. All the collected information is sent to a Clever Devices server and fed into a workstation. All information needed by the onboard computer is downloaded before and after vehicles are put into service and while in the yard. Trolley routes are now connected with other bus routes in real time. Route highlights were reviewed.

Mr. Peralta provided an overview of Clever Device benefits, including onboard annunciators, which call out each stop on an automated basis; announcement of other important messages; dispatches of communications, incidents and detours to the bus driver; pre-population of detour route; viewing of buses in real time through the website or mobile app. In terms of transit planning, Clever Devices have helped the City to run scenarios during public planning for public input. It helps understand average vehicle speeds, mileage covered and to estimate fleet requirement needs. The information is used to generate timetables, rosters and schedules for operators. Inefficiencies in the route can be adjusted via software. The software assists in planning connectivity with other regional routes. The automatic passenger counters provide board alighting data at each stop, which helps with decisions to direct funds to the busiest route locations. It assists with on-time performance reports. It integrates videos on the bus interior and exterior, utilizing eight high definition cameras and DVR. This assists with investigations, incidents and vandalism. For the National Transit Database (NTB) reporting, Clever Devices assist with validating trolley service, reports for annual revenue miles and missed miles. The automatic passenger counters assist in computing trips for passenger miles traveled. Demonstrations of the software use were provided.

Commissioner inquired as to user experience with the system. Mr. Peralta said he can reach out to Valley Metro to obtain information on how many people have downloaded the mobile app.

Commissioner asked if information received has been used to improve efficiency. Commissioner also asked if data could be fed into intelligent infrastructure, such as extending green or preferred access through intersections. Mr. Peralta stated that in terms of efficiency, the information is new. Some routes have improved layover times. Signal timing is a separate project in terms of the Loop 101 connectivity pilot project. Ms. Korepella added that the Department makes changes to transit services every six months. They are constantly looking at Clever Device operations data as a guide for changes to the run times and schedules. They will be prepared to share some of this data to the Commission in the coming months.

Commissioner inquired whether the COVID 50 percent capacity restrictions on the trolleys are still in effect. Mr. Peralta said they are no longer under capacity restrictions, however, they continue to enforce the TSA mandate for masks. This is set to expire in January and has not yet expired.

Chair suggested a future agenda item on Clever Device reports and how they are used to update the transit system. Another item could address the percentage of riders who have downloaded the app.

#### **4. TRANSPORTATION ACTION PLAN REVIEW**

Dave Meinhart, Transportation Planning Manager, provide an overview of public input received. Phase I included an online questionnaire and link to the draft TAP for comments with 222 responses. An overview of responses was provided. High concerns included traffic congestion, safety and driver behavior. Categories of suggested improvements were in the bike/pedestrian system and high capacity traffic. Respondents stated that 70 cents of each dollar should go to transportation improvements that are not related to adding more capacity to roadways. The second phase of outreach was a virtual public open house. There were 156 webpage views with 11 written comments.

Highlights of written comments from both phases include:

- Revise plan for 128th Street
- Improve bike and pedestrian access
- Crosswalk design concerns
- Light rail extension
- Widen Chaparral road for access to Fashion Square
- Development density concerns
- Do not install roundabouts
- Future Rio Verde widening must include wildlife crossing near 124th Street
- Do not widen Mountain View Road between 92nd and 96th
- Need mass transit
- Support reducing number of travel lanes

Mr. Meinhart reviewed changes to the TAP since the last review. Discussion ensued regarding microtransit definition, details and options. Mark Melnychenko, Transportation & Streets Director, reviewed benefits, including access to areas of the City that would usually not offer transit options,

minimizing need for high cost infrastructure and maintenance. The discussion will continue with the Commission going forward.

Commissioner asked whether any elements of the TAP will be affected by the recently passed transportation bill in terms of funding or prioritization. Mr. Meinhart stated that it is quite early in the process. There may be more funding for some of the nonmotorized active transportation uses and safety improvements.

Mr. Meinhart stated that the Transportation Commission will be asked to recommend approval of the TAP at its December 16, 2021 meeting. It is hoped to receive City Council adoption in the first half of calendar year 2022.

Commissioner asked how the recent passage of the Master Plan affects TAP process and approval. Mr. Meinhart stated that the intent is to develop a plan that is consistent with the newly adopted and voter-approved General Plan. The transportation sections did not change dramatically from the prior General Plan. However, there was a higher emphasis on nonmotorized use of the system. This has led to proposals for potential reductions in the number of lanes on roadways and similar changes.

In response to a question from Chair, Mr. Meinhart stated that the TAP includes a list of likely CIP projects. The CIP list is developed each year and is reviewed with the public through the City Council process. Timing is affected by available funding. There was discussion regarding concerns with some of the projects contained in the CIP plan.

There was discussion regarding placing a note on three of the more controversial projects as being future topics for discussion. Mr. Meinhart commented that it is challenging to predict which projects should receive extra emphasis, as most of the City has already been built and most neighborhoods already have roadways. Mr. Melnychenko stated that the list that has been developed is a roadmap for the future. It still must go through a process with City Council. Each must also go through a citizen process in various phases. What has been provided is staff's best snapshot of what is expected.

Commissioner commented that providing a statement in the TAP regarding these processes for CIP projects would provide adequate clarification. Mr. Meinhart stated his understanding that that language is included. He quoted from the document: "The projects included in the CIP list all remain subject to the City's annual budget development and prioritization process. Projects with authorized funding will continue to follow the public review process that occurs during design and prior to construction."

Commissioner suggested a discussion regarding 128th Street and whether Commissioners agree that it should be included as a project. Chair suggested this discussion take place under Agenda Item 5.

## **5. REVIEW OF FISCAL YEAR 2023-2027 CIP PROJECTS**

Mr. Meinhart prefaced the discussion by noting there are no dramatic changes from what is currently in the plan. Every year, the City develops a new CIP plan. It covers five years, however only the first year is technically funded. The typical process schedule was reviewed.

Within the Public Works Division, the process is as follows:

- Re-budget ongoing projects with no significant cost or timing changes (not ranked)
- Update database and prioritize projects that require significant changes or projects that were in the five-year plan, but were not funded in the first year of the five-year plan
- Develop project scopes/cost estimates for unbudgeted projects and prioritize

The list of prioritized project recommendations was reviewed. Commissioner asked how many of the projects will typically be funded. Mr. Meinhart stated that it varies in terms of revenues. Historically the “Y” projects have been funded with the potential to add in two to three additional projects. It is likely that items 1 through 18 are in good shape to receive funding, with later numbered projects being more questionable. Items 8 through 11 are grant requests and each are excellent projects.

Next steps include:

- Input from the Transportation Commission will be provided to the City Manager’s Executive Team
- Final recommendations for the FY 23-27 CIP will be reviewed with the Transportation Commission in approximately March, 2022

Commissioner voiced concerns regarding construction of the roadway through the Preserve. Upon review, there was discussion in 2019 regarding removing 128th Street from the plan and then ultimately agreeing to leave it in until 118th Street was constructed. 118th Street is now constructed and Commissioner is not comfortable with leaving the plan to construct the road through the Preserve without a very convincing reason. Chair added that the Commission received a memorandum from the Chair of the McDowell Sonoran Preserve, who outlined comments from the January, 2019 meeting minutes, where the Commission recommended that the City remove the roadway as going through the Preserve. However, it was ultimately the City Council’s decision to leave it in.

Chair summarized that the classification is for 128th Street to be a minor collector, which includes going through the Preserve. The classification would have to be changed. In addition, the Commission would have to recommend that 128th Street not go through the Preserve and that access be restricted to emergency vehicles. Mr. Meinhart noted that this discussion is mixing agenda items and this item is not agendized for action. In looking at a recommendation on the TAP at the next meeting, if there is a preference to change the classification and eliminate the roadway from the street map, it would be most appropriate to have this discussion as part of the final recommendation of the TAP as opposed to the CIP list. Unless a member of the Commission is proposing to add 128th Street as a prioritized project in the upcoming five-year CIP, it would not be appropriate to be discussing this in detail tonight.

In response to a Commissioner comment, Mr. Meinhart clarified that 128th Street is currently designated as a minor collector. The TAP makes no recommended change in this regard. The last vote taken by the Transportation Commission regarding 128th Street occurred in February of 2019 and that recommendation was to retain the street as a minor collector. The Commission is free to discuss this and vote on the item as part of the TAP approval in December.

Chair suggested that the Commission be prepared in December to discuss the request to remove 128th Street from the classification map as a minor collector and to remove the roadway plan for

the CIP project to construct it to an 11-foot lane, based upon the Commission's original recommendation from 2019. Mr. Meinhart clarified that the Commission's final vote in 2019 regarding 128th Street occurred in February of 2019 and was a five to zero vote to retain 128th Street in the plan. The current Commission is free to make alternate recommendations.

## **6. COMMISSION IDENTIFICATION OF FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

Items were identified as follows:

- Update on Clever Devices, including data analysis and impact on decisions being made for the transit system
- What the passage of the new transportation bill means for Arizona
- Periodic updates on revenue projections in conjunction with transportation gas tax changes

## **7. ADJOURNMENT**

With no further business to discuss, being duly moved by Vice Chair Anderson and seconded by Commissioner Lall, the meeting adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

AYES: Chair Iacovo, Vice Chair Anderson, Commissioners Kowal, Lall, Miller and Wilcoxon

NAYS: None

SUBMITTED BY:

eScribers, LLC

**\*Note: These are summary action meeting minutes only. A complete copy of the audio/video recording is available at <http://www.scottsdaleaz.gov/boards/transp.asp>**