



**SUMMARIZED MINUTES**

**CITY OF SCOTTSDALE  
TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION  
REGULAR MEETING**

**THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2015**

**KIVA – CITY HALL  
3939 N. DRINKWATER BOULEVARD  
SCOTTSDALE, ARIZONA 85251**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Olmsted called the regular meeting of the Scottsdale Transportation Commission to order at 6:07 p.m.

**1. ROLL CALL**

**PRESENT:** Steven Olmsted, Chair  
Gary Bretz, Commissioner  
Barry Graham, Commissioner  
Steven Rosenberg, Commissioner  
Robert Stickles, Commissioner  
Matthew Wright, Commissioner

**ABSENT:** Paul Holley, Vice Chair

**STAFF:** Rose Arballo, Transportation Commission Coordinator  
Paul Basha, Transportation Director  
Walt Brodzinski, Right-of-Way Supervisor  
Madeline Clemann, Transportation Planning and Transit Operations  
Manager  
Greg Davies, Senior Transportation Planner  
Phillip Kercher, Traffic Engineering and Operations Manager  
Monica Staats, Public Works  
Todd Taylor, Principal Traffic Engineer  
George Williams, Principal Traffic Engineer  
Dan Worth, Director of Public Works

## **2. PUBLIC COMMENT**

Chair Olmsted noted that members of the Transportation Commission takes seriously the distractions of digital technology and are committed to using such devices for Commission business only. He encouraged other City boards and commissions to consider this question.

No members of the public wished to address the Commission.

## **3. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES**

- Study Session of the Transportation Commission – January 22, 2015
- Regular Meeting of the Transportation Commission – January 22, 2015

**COMMISSIONER ROSENBERG MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING AND STUDY SESSION OF JANUARY 22, 2015 AS PRESENTED. COMMISSIONER STICKLES SECONDED. THE MOTION CARRIED BY A VOTE OF SIX (6) TO ZERO (0). VICE CHAIR HOLLEY WAS ABSENT.**

## **4. APPOINTMENT OF PATHS & TRAILS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIR**

Chair Olmsted stated that the Commission is to appoint two Commissioners to serve on the Paths & Trails Subcommittee, one of whom will be chair. It was the consensus of the Commission to maintain Commissioner Stickles as Chair of the Paths & Trails Subcommittee and Vice Chair Holley as subcommittee member.

Chair Olmsted expressed appreciation for the Commissioners' efforts and encouraged others to attend the subcommittee meetings.

## **5. SUPER BOWL 2015 REVIEW**

Right-of-Way Supervisor Mr. Walt Brodzinski presented a synopsis of this past event.

Highlights of the presentation included:

- It was a pleasure to experience the event and everyone who worked it appreciates that.
- It is estimated that approximately 500,000 people visited downtown Scottsdale events during the nine-day period. This does not include others shopping or working in the area. The ESPN Fan Fest at Fashion Square was the focus of daytime events and the entertainment district drew crowds in the evening, both from Fan Fest and the Phoenix Open.
- Three of the variable message sign trailers were deployed as needed for special traffic direction.
- The planned outlying parking areas were not needed.
- The Traffic Management Center worked 24-hours a day throughout the event period.

- Employees from Transportation, Police, Fire, Parks, and other departments worked collaboratively. Mr. Brodzinski and three other traffic engineering staff worked approximately 120 hours total on the streets.
- Trolley ridership was up 20% over January 2014.
- January visits to the City website were up significantly over 2014. Mobile devices accounted for 44% of the web traffic. The top downloads were 1,500 for the trolley map and 2,600 for the Preserve and Pinnacle Peak Trail map.
- Airport traffic over the Super Bowl weekend hit a record of 561 arrivals and 628 departures; no delays were reported. The Scottsdale Airport was the busiest in the Valley, including Sky Harbor.
- On short notice, staff created a limousine route for VIPs attending one of the events close to the block party.
- The Waste Management Open attracted 564,000 visitors, setting an attendance record on the Thursday before the Super Bowl.
- Staff observed a high volume of taxi and paid-ride traffic at the end of each evening. It was encouraging that people were choosing not to drink and drive; however, the volume led to gridlock on Camelback between Scottsdale Road and Miller Road from 1:30 a.m. to 4:00 a.m. each morning.
- Coordination and communication went extremely well. Staff was able to respond promptly to address safety and circulation issues.

Commissioners expressed their appreciation to all city department staff working together to assure a very successful event week.

## **6. CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (CIP) BUDGET**

Principal Traffic Engineer Mr. Phillip Kercher presented the changes made to the capital improvement program for FY 2015/2016 through FY 2019/2020 since the presentation at the January meeting. He noted that Ms. Monica Staats and Mr. Dan Worth from Public Works, and Mr. Todd Taylor and Mr. George Williams from Transportation were in attendance to answer any questions.

Highlights of the presentation included:

- Five new projects have been added and the funding for the pavement overlay program has decreased slightly.
- Staff has reviewed projects with grant funding to ensure that the numbers are accurate.
- Projects have been prioritized based on the existing implementation plan, City Council priorities, and estimated project costs.
- Staff wants funding for the Miller Road underpass moved into the five-year CIP so they can begin design work, since this area is starting to develop.
- Five new projects to be funded through the transportation 0.2 cents sales tax include:
  - Highland Avenue from Scottsdale Road to Goldwater Boulevard – pedestrian improvements

- 98th Street south of Notre Dame High School – complete the existing half-street
- 56<sup>th</sup> Street and Pinnacle Vista Drive – add traffic control
- Alma School Road from Jomax to Pinnacle Vista, - complete this section to five full lanes to match Alma School north and south of this section
- Purchase four new transit vehicles
- Ongoing programs have not been changed since the January presentation.
- Staff recommends postponing the following projects which would not figure in the five-year CIP:
  - Pima Road from Chaparral Road to Thomas Road and Thomas Road to McDowell Road
  - Phase 2 of Scottsdale Road improvements from Thompson Peak Parkway to Pinnacle Peak Road
- Public Works has requested some changes and budget adjustments to the Pavement Overlay Program. This has been decreased to \$3.25 million for each year of the five-year CIP.
- ITS signal system upgrades and Traffic Management Program has also been modified at the request of Public Works.
- Two projects in the Airpark have been modified, but the overall budget amount has not changed.

Highlights of the discussion following the presentation included:

- Chair Olmsted expressed appreciation for the clear format of this presentation, and mentioned it was presented at two Commission meetings. It is hoped that this format can be followed in the future.
- A Commissioner recommended that staff keep in mind aspects of design, accessibility and sustainability.
- A Commissioner inquired about changing the prioritization of the projects that have been selected to go forward. Mr. Kercher explained that the current staff prioritization originates from previous rankings in the implementation plan; how the projects align with City Council directives; and estimated project costs. Chair Olmsted invited Commissioners to make suggestions for consideration later, given that staff is comfortable with the proposed funding.
- A Commissioner requested moving the Trail Improvement Program up moderately in the ranking. Mr. Kercher summarized that they have adequate funding for this program and it is programmed in the CIP for the next five years.
- A Commissioner inquired about connectivity with the valley-wide light rail system. Transportation Director Mr. Paul Basha said Council adopted the current Transportation Master Plan in 2008, which included some preliminary discussion of light rail in Scottsdale. No definitive planning of a location has taken place since that time; however the 2015 Transportation Master Plan will include discussion of potential light rail corridors and projects in the next 15 to 25 years at the direction of City Council. Mr. Basha added that an excellent bus system is one of the foundations of a good light rail system, and that the current bus system in Scottsdale is not yet at that level.

- Chair Olmsted requested that Commissioners identify for the record any specific projects they feel are important.
- A Commissioner asked whether other corridors should be completed for connectivity, including the section of Alma School from Jomax to Pinnacle Vista. Mr. Kercher said the Happy Valley improvements are programmed. Mr. Basha added that Scottsdale is a maturing city. Much of the street system was built by private developers and now it is up to the City to construct the missing parts. Some of the improvements to the intersection of Happy Valley and Alma School Road and a portion of 118th Street have been stipulated by the developer of Cavalliere Ranch. Mr. Kercher cited Miller Road from Pinnacle Peak Road to Happy Valley Road is on the list of unfunded projects, as is Pinnacle Peak Road from Miller Road to Pima Road.
- A Commissioner requested a brief synopsis of the Pima Road project to Chaparral Road. Mr. Kercher mentioned this project is to be funded with MAG half cent sales tax funds. At one point, the project on Pima Road from Via Linda to McDowell Road was identified as a single project. With the current project, the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community is taking the lead. The SRPMIC has already improved the section from Indian Bend to Via Linda. This would be the next section to the south. The SRPMIC has indicated they would like to see this project included in the five-year CIP. The next two sections to the south have been pushed outside of the five-year CIP so that funding is not tied up. Mr. Taylor added that the SRPMIC will pay 60% of the cost and the City will pay the remaining 40%. Mr. Basha said the section under discussion is a high priority for SRPMIC.
- A Commissioner asked whether staff has considered extending Pima Road from McDowell Road to McKellips to increase connectivity to Mesa and the east Valley. Mr. Basha said that over the years, extensive discussion has taken place. The SRPMIC has been planning for the last several years; however nothing will be done for the next few years. Mr. Worth said the City had been talking about putting drainage conduits under that right-of-way; however the drainage project is now developing in a different direction.
- A Commissioner inquired about the funding for the pavement overlay project. Mr. Worth said the pavement has been deteriorating across the city for the past six or seven years. If the City continues to spend approximately \$3 million annually, the pavement will continue to deteriorate. An investment of an additional \$2.5 million would stop the decline. To bring the pavement back up to the level it was at six years ago would cost \$9 million a year for five years. The proposed CIP plan presented includes over \$6 million annually. This would fund a gradual upgrade, but would not return the system to where it had been before the recession. Staff is planning to bring potential bond projects to City Council, including \$12 million for pavement replacement over five years. This would return the system to where it had been. Mr. Basha noted that at the next meeting there will be a presentation on the Pavement Overlay Program.
- Chair Olmsted opined that a presentation on potential bond projects would be timely.
- A Commissioner suggested augmenting the summary with diagrams and maps, including a map of the whole city which would be helpful.
- A Commissioner asked whether the project on Highland between Scottsdale Road and Goldwater Boulevard will resolve all issues in that neighborhood. Mr. Kercher said the project is designed to make it easier for vehicles to access Goldwater and to provide a controlled pedestrian crossing on Goldwater.

- A Commissioner said the Miller Road underpass at the Loop 101 is important because the Commission must address the needs of the entire city.
- Transit Manager Ms. Madeline Clemann said the proposed bus purchase would consist of replacing the eight older trolleys in the fleet over the next two fiscal years. This would be funded from Proposition 400 funds and federal grants.
- Ms. Clemann said the \$200,000 set aside for transit shelter improvements is adequate, given that some funds will carry over from the current fiscal year. Next year, staff would like to replace old bus shelter furniture and correct structural problems with the shelters on McDowell Road.
- Mr. Kercher confirmed that the \$1.25 million for traffic signals is an adequate amount.
- A Commissioner inquired about the placeholder amounts for Raintree. Principal Traffic Engineer Mr. George Williams said the Raintree projects are in good shape.
- A Commissioner commented that the budget increase is about three percent and asked if that tracks the increases in the two major funding sources, i.e. the transportation sales tax and the half cent sales tax. Mr. Basha replied that the department has been cautious in spending money only when needed and, therefore, has several million dollars available from previous years. Ms. Monica Staats, Senior Management Analyst, confirmed that the City projects a three percent increase in revenue.
- Chair Olmsted suggested a review of funding and budgeting at a future meeting would be beneficial.

**CHAIR OLMSTED MADE A MOTION TO RECOMMEND THAT CITY COUNCIL ADOPT THE FY 2015/2016 TRANSPORTATION CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM AS PRESENTED BY STAFF. COMMISSIONER STICKLES SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH CARRIED BY A VOTE OF SIX (6) TO ZERO (0). VICE CHAIR HOLLEY WAS ABSENT.**

## **7. POTENTIAL CITYWIDE BUS AND TROLLEY IMPROVEMENTS**

Ms. Clemann noted that this is continued discussion from the January meeting, focusing on what transit does for Scottsdale.

Highlights of the presentation included:

- Scottsdale riders primarily use transit for employment and school trips, unlike in other parts of the Valley.
- Transit does not start early enough for many employment trips and does not run late enough to accommodate Scottsdale Community College (SCC).
- Services vary greatly in frequency although trolley route service is more consistent.
- Ridership is promoted through employment centers, schools and educational facilities, housing density, location of other activity centers, and access to rail connections or other transit routes.
- Ms. Clemann displayed a map showing areas that do not have transit service and described some proposals for extending service. In the northern part of the City, Route 72 could be extended to Pinnacle Peak Road. It is felt that a perimeter and Airpark area trolley route are possibilities. A trolley route in the Cactus area is also possibility. Ms. Clemann pointed out the employment centers based on census data, schools and other activity centers. It is estimated that 74,179 employees work in areas

- that are not served by transit. This is 50 percent of all employees in the City. Mr. Basha stressed that this is a very significant statistic.
- Improving the unserved areas supports businesses. Scottsdale is a net importer of employees because housing costs are higher than in other communities so workers cannot afford to live in Scottsdale.
  - Transit is a safe, convenient and reliable option if it serves employment and activity centers and if the vehicles are clean and comfortable.
  - Future priorities could continue serving employment and school trips, serve key employment corridors and schools, emphasize peak hour weekday and Saturday service, and could provide convenient service by improving the frequency and scheduling.
  - Staff meets monthly with other agencies to discuss proposed changes in the region.
  - Sustainable funding is a priority.
  - Staff prioritized the proposed new routes. The Camelback corridor emerged as the top priority, followed by the Cactus and Airpark areas. Analysis is ongoing and staff will present more information at the March Commission meeting.

Highlights of the discussion following the presentation included:

- A Commissioner commented that the ranking of the proposed perimeter trolley route will be impacted by new higher density housing north of the Loop 101 between Scottsdale Road and Pima Road. The Planning Commission has already approved some multi-family developments.
- Mr. Basha commented that as staff works on the Transportation Master Plan, they will be using two prediction models for the future. Recently approved land uses and developments will be taken into consideration.
- A Commissioner suggested doing an analysis of past experience with the trolley route and express bus route in the Airpark area to ensure that future plans will be more successful. Ms. Clemann noted that the analysis has been completed and will be included.
- A Commissioner commented that perhaps employee participation in public transit could be doubled by providing access to transit services. Mr. Basha replied that participation could probably more than double.
- A Commissioner noted that the Airpark's lower ranking is a function of less housing units near the area, and that there is no connection to the light rail. He pointed out that had access to light rail not been included in the criteria, the Airpark would have ranked in first place. It is believe that taking into consideration the Airpark, Cactus, and perimeter areas as a whole, which accounts for 35% of the total employee base that does not currently have access to public transit.
- A Commissioner commented that Scottsdale could benefit from improved access to Sky Harbor Airport through public transit. A connection from Sky Harbor to Route 72 could be one possibility, which could benefit employees, tourists, students, and others. Ms. Clemann pointed out that people can ride the Route 72 or Route 56 to the light rail and get to Sky Harbor that way.
- A Commissioner suggested training sessions to encourage people to use transit. Ms. Clemann mentioned that Mr. Kelley has recently conducted the first transit training session at the Granite Reef Senior Center, teaching seniors how to ride the trolley. She agrees it is a good idea to offer this to the general public.

- A Commissioner noted that outreach, social media, and digital tools will be key to developing ridership.

## **8. CAMELBACK ROAD BUS AND TROLLEY IMPROVEMENTS**

Ms. Clemann noted that Ms. Koropella conducted extensive research on bus use, based on data she received from Valley Metro and the City of Phoenix. She outlined the proposed changes, including:

- Terminating Route 50 at Scottsdale Road and instituting a new free trolley route with 15-minute service from Scottsdale Road to Scottsdale Community College.
- Corridor frequency and schedule consistency could be improved.
- Provide service to additional neighborhoods on the weekends.
- Currently, the first bus arrives at the Scottsdale border at 6:15 a.m. and does not reach Scottsdale Community College in time for the 6:30 a.m. classes. The last bus reaches the college at 7:15 p.m. and leaves at 7:45 p.m.
- Existing service frequency varies widely and unpredictably, which is a barrier to ridership.
- Analysis demonstrates that riders are using the bus to come from Phoenix to Scottsdale for employment.
- Data comes from fare boxes, automatic passenger counters (APCs) and from passenger surveys.

Highlights of the discussion following the presentation included:

- Estimated improvement costs to improve the route on Camelback Road are \$550,000 to \$600,000. The City currently pays Phoenix \$358,000 per year for the service from 64th Street to Scottsdale Community College.
- A Commissioner asked whether having to transfer from the bus to the trolley would be a disadvantage. Ms. Clemann noted that increased frequency is the key to success, given Scottsdale's grid street plan. Mr. Basha pointed out that the transfer point is at Fashion Square, which is a destination as well as a transfer location.
- A Commissioner asked what it would cost to extend Route 50 and increase its frequency. Ms. Clemann said that increasing service to a 15-minute frequency would cost well over \$1 million per year. The Commissioner suggested that this figure should be included in the next presentation.
- A Commissioner asked if the cost of bus shelters for the new portions of the route has been considered. Ms. Clemann replied that staff would test the route for two years before investing in bus shelters. The Commissioner suggested there may be locations on the new portions of the route that would need a shelter and added that it will be important to let residents in the new neighborhoods know that transit service is coming.
- All of the City's new buses have automatic passenger counters and any new buses that are purchased will include this equipment.
- A Commissioner noted that riders are irritated by having to wait at transfer points.
- A Commissioner asked whether further analysis of potential evening ridership to and from the college should be conducted. Ms. Clemann said the current proposal is to

- have the trolley operate until 10:30 p.m. so that students would be able to use it to leave the college. Staff is working with College staff to quantify ridership.
- Ms. Clemann clarified that the additional \$550,000 to \$600,000 is net and covers the increase in frequency, the new trolley route, and the consistent 15-minute frequency. The trolley route is free because that is actually less expensive than installing electronic fare boxes at a cost of up to \$50,000 each. In addition, the use of fare boxes adds more responsibility in the money needing to be handled securely, counted, and transported by armored truck for deposit.
  - A Commissioner inquired whether a connection at 44<sup>th</sup> Street has been considered. Ms. Clemann commented that this was considered, however, because of the mountain, it is difficult for the vehicle to make the turnaround at that location.
  - Chair Olmsted mentioned that this has been the first presentation about proposed route improvements and noted that the Commission is interested in the cost of these improvements. Ms. Clemann explained that staff intends to present a summary of costs and options once all of the areas have been presented.

**COMMISSIONER BRETZ MADE A MOTION TO RECOMMEND THAT CITY COUNCIL SUPPORT THE PROPOSED CAMELBACK CORRIDOR TRANSIT IMPROVEMENTS AS PRESENTED. COMMISSIONER STICKLES SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH CARRIED BY A VOTE OF SIX (6) TO ZERO (0). VICE CHAIR HOLLEY WAS ABSENT.**

#### **9. TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT OPERATING BUDGET**

Mr. Basha briefly reviewed the Transportation Department's proposed operating budget.

Commissioners had no questions or comments.

#### **10. OTHER TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS AND PROGRAMS STATUS**

Mr. Basha reported the following:

- After 53 days of operation, the Day Tripper that serves hotels on Scottsdale Road shows that ridership is up approximately 16% over last year; however, ridership in mid-

February dropped compared to 2014. An analysis comparing ridership by day of the week with last year shows that ridership is substantially higher than last year. Ridership in 2012 and 2013 was lower than in 2014.

- Mr. Basha reminded the Commission that service frequency has doubled, yet ridership increased by less than 20%. The cost has increased by 50%.
- A Commissioner asked about the economic impact due to increased ridership. Mr. Basha mentioned that staff is conducting rider surveys and anticipates that information to be available in April.
- A neighborhood traffic calming project at Granite Reef Road and 86th Street north of Thomas Road has just been completed. Median islands, crosswalks, speed bumps and speed cushions were constructed. Landscaping is scheduled for the next couple of weeks.
- The Thomas Road streetscape project is now essentially complete. Rubberized asphalt will be applied in April after spring training.

Senior Transportation Planner Mr. Greg Davies reported on the Tempe City Council meeting he had attended that evening:

- Tempe City Council debated modern streetcar operation on Mill Avenue, Ash Avenue, Apache Boulevard and Rio Salado Parkway.
- The meeting was well attended.
- The Valley Metro Board approved the locally preferred alignment mentioned at the meeting. The Maricopa Association of Governments Regional Council will consider approval of this locally preferred alignment in March.
- The project is approximately three miles long at a cost of \$180 million. Tempe City Council prefers a median alignment very similar to the light rail system.
- The biggest challenge is a shortfall of \$25 million for the project. Tempe has to commit to fund this shortfall by May 2015 in order to move forward with the Federal Transit Administration application process due in late September.

A discussion of future agenda items covered the following:

- A Commissioner requested an update on the design of the canal path between Chaparral Road and the Silverado golf course.
- A Commissioner requested an update of the Phoenix Bike Share Program in April or May.
- A Commissioner requested an analysis of accessing Scottsdale from Phoenix and surrounding communities, with particular emphasis on how people access Scottsdale from Sky Harbor Airport, the wayfinding challenges, the role of public transit, vehicle rentals, and proposed improvements. This is an important topic given the importance of tourism and travel to the City. Without GPS, visitors cannot easily find their way to Scottsdale from the Sky Harbor car rental facility.

## **11. ADJOURNMENT**

With no further business to conduct, Chair Olmsted adjourned the regular meeting at 8:48 p.m.

SUBMITTED BY:

A/V Tronics, Inc. DBA AVTranz.

**\*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>**