



APPROVED SUMMARIZED MINUTES

**CITY OF SCOTTSDALE
TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING**

THURSDAY, AUGUST 18, 2016

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

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Olmsted called the regular meeting of the Scottsdale Transportation Commission to order at 6:01 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL

PRESENT: Steven Olmsted, Chair
Paul Holley, Vice Chair
Gary Bretz, Commissioner
Jyme Sue McLaren, Commissioner
Steven Rosenberg, Commissioner
Robert Stickles, Commissioner

ABSENT: Barry Graham, Commissioner

STAFF: Paul Basha, Transportation Director
Phillip Kercher, Traffic Engineering and Operations Manager

GUESTS: Maria Hyatt, Public Transit Director, City of Phoenix

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

No members of the public wished to address the Commission.

4. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

- Study Session of the Transportation Commission – June 16, 2016
- Regular Meeting of the Transportation Commission – June 16, 2016

Commissioner McClaren made a correction to attendance for the adjournment motion of the Study Session minutes.

COMMISSIONER MCCLAREN MOVED TO APPROVE THE STUDY SESSION MINUTES OF MAY 19, 2016 AND THE REGULAR MEETING MINUTES OF MAY 19, 2016 AS AMENDED. VICE CHAIR HOLLEY SECONDED. THE MOTION CARRIED BY A VOTE OF SIX (6) TO ZERO (0). COMMISSIONER GRAHAM WAS ABSENT.

5. 2016 SMART/CONNECTED/COMPLETE TRANSPORTATION SPEAKER SERIES

Paul Basha, Transportation Director, recalled that the Commission previously requested that someone from the City of Phoenix be invited to speak about its voter approved tax increase into the year 2050, particularly in terms of current plans for use of funds relative to transit.

Maria Hyatt, Public Transit Director, City of Phoenix stated that all of the items included in Phoenix's Transportation 2050 plan (T2050) were based on input gleaned through community outreach. The top three improvements requested by the community included: More bus frequency, shade at all transit shelters and reloadable fare cards. Expanding hours and frequency of bus routes could be implemented as soon as the transportation tax was approved, because the City already had the number of buses necessary. The first phase of increased frequency will be implemented in October of this year.

Currently in Phoenix, there are more than 4,000 bus shelters with approximately half currently shaded. A program is currently in place to provide shading for another 400 shelters over the next five years. All will be complete within eight years.

Valley Metro and the City of Phoenix are currently working to develop and implement use of reloadable fare cards as well as mobile technology. Mobile technology allows riders to purchase tickets with their mobile phone. A rider can pull up their ticket on their phone for viewing by a bus driver or by being pressed against device reader either on the bus or ticket vending machine.

Changes to bus and Dial-a-Ride hours of operation came in response to residents' personal experiences. Examples include second shift workers sleeping at work because no buses run at the time they are off work. Another example is a mother loading her small children into the family's only vehicle late at night in order to pick up her spouse from work. Equally important to riders was that the bus routes have the same hours as light rail. Many passengers utilize both forms of transportation and interchange between the two. Starting in October, the City will increase Monday through Friday bus service an additional three hours, one hour earlier in the morning at 4:00 a.m. and two hours additional in the evening, through midnight. In April of next year, the City will implement a matching to light rail hours. Hours will also be matched with Dial-a-Ride service.

Another significant improvement is that all 44 Phoenix routes will operate at frequencies of 30 minutes or less effective October, 2016. Currently 18 routes operate on hourly service. The majority of bus routes will be at 15 minutes or less within the next couple of years.

The shelter improvements will be completed through a partnership with ASU's College of Industrial design for innovative cost-effective options.

Technology improvements will include availability of real-time data for bus route times. It is hoped that change will result in additional ridership.

Another significant region-wide improvement, which became effective in July, is that ADA Dial-a-Ride passengers no longer have to transfer vehicles at city borders.

Light rail is another significant component of T2015. The major commitment is to triple the amount of miles in Phoenix on light route. A new corridor is to be added to connect to ASU West. New corridors include:

- Capitol/I-10 W Phase 1&2: Connect existing rail to the Capital and to the 79th Avenue Park-n-Ride.
- South Central Avenue: Connect existing rail to Baseline Road.
- Norwest Phase 2 Rail: Connect existing rail to Metrocenter Mall
- Northwest ASU West Extension: Connect Metrocenter to ASU West Campus
- Camelback Road: Connect 19th Avenue and 43rd Avenue at Grand Canyon University
- Northeast Extension: Connect existing rail to Paradise Valley Mall
- Downtown Streetcar: Connect major commercial and employment destinations in Downtown Phoenix

A new station is planned at 50th Street. An existing station is located at 44th Street and Washington and the next is at Priest, with two miles in between. The new station will support increased development in the area as well as major destination site Ability 360. The station will be completely funded by the City of Phoenix. Ground breaking will take place next year with completion in 2019.

In terms of allocation of funds, Phoenix transit will receive 86 percent of the funds over the 35-year tax. Streets will receive approximately 14 percent. These improvements will be used for street overlays. Without these funds, resources were on track to service these streets every 62 years. The street transportation department will be setting a target for road improvements every ten years. New street lights will be LED for increased efficiency. More than 1,000 miles of bike lanes will be laid on collector streets and 135 miles of sidewalks will be added. There will be some measure of bus rapid transit, however it is being referred to as "BRT light," in that there may be a dedicated lane for some part of the day as well as coordination of signal systems.

Vice Chair Holley asked whether there is anticipation of needed participation from local improvement districts to supplement funding. Ms. Hyatt stated that there are multiple funding sources. Focusing on transit, she stated that T2050 funds will pay primarily operating costs. Other funds will be leveraged, such as those derived from Prop 400. The City estimates that for light rail expansions, it will receive a 30 percent FTA match. The 35-year funding plan was built on conventional bonding.

Vice Chair Holley referred to the corridor going west on I-10, noting that it was ideal for a BRT type route. Ms. Hyatt replied that it could also be a great commuter rail. The Public Transit Department communicated to City Council that the western cities have a strong desire to connect into the city.

A Commissioner asked about outreach prior to passage of the proposition. Ms. Hyatt stated that efforts began with traditional outreach via public hearing. Other outreach included information tables at events, festivals, fairs, neighborhood associations and village planning commissions. The Planning and Development Department used an online interactive program that allows participants to register as members who answer a variety of questions regarding what they would like to see happen in their neighborhoods and commuting routes. More than 4,000 comments were received. Department staff also visit transit centers and talk to passengers en route.

A Commissioner asked whether limited stop bus routes were considered, in order to allow travelers to move quickly across town. Ms. Hyatt confirmed that this was tested as a pilot project but may have been sampled too early for its time. The pilot was not successful in terms of ridership. This may be revisited in the future.

A Commissioner inquired as to the timeline for the proposed corridor west on the I-10. Ms. Hyatt stated that because a cost constrained plan is required, the timeline is 2030. However, City Council has directed that everything be done to bring it forward sooner.

Chair Olmsted addressed the breakdown with the high capacity transit conversation in the City. This was related to the intent to be more inclusive in the Master Plan of the high capacity element with a focus on rail. The Commission repeatedly reiterated that it was likely shortsighted of the City leadership in its representation for citizens to not be at the table and participate in the conversation. He expressed thanks for City of Phoenix' approach in addressing the entire capacity in terms of its citizens as well as outer Valley interconnectedness, adding that he would like to see the City of Scottsdale leadership take a similar approach.

Ms. Hyatt stated that prior to the measure being placed on the ballot, the mayor and City Council created a 34-member committee. Each Council district had three participants and the mayor had five to seven. The committee members were persistently asking about how the new systems would be connecting with Scottsdale, Tempe and West Valley cities.

6. LOCAL AREA INFRASTRUCTURE PLAN – DESERT FOOTHILLS AREA

Mr. Basha, Transportation Director, provided the presentation. The local area infrastructure plan is a technique used by Scottsdale for at least the last 25 years. Most of the community has been developed through large master plan developments, such as McCormick Ranch, Scottsdale Ranch, Troon and Troon North. Some areas of the City have not had the luxury of one large owner. There are a number of smaller parcels ranging from 2.5 to 40 acres. The local area infrastructure plans provide the opportunity for property owners to meet with the City of Scottsdale and develop a master plan for their area. The various disciplines are represented, including transportation, water, sewer, drainage and dry utilities. All property owners are involved in the discussion.

There are seven local area infrastructure planning areas throughout the City. East Shea is from the southern border to Via Linda, approximately 110th Street to 136th Street. The other six areas are farther north.

Mr. Basha presented an example of one infrastructure planning areas, which consists of more than seven smaller subdivisions. This will provide an example of the types of access provided to such properties. The area of focus is Desert Foothills. Area 1 is a quarter square mile, or 160 acres. Each property represents 20 acres and each parcel is a five-acre property. Typically, these parts of the city are zoned for one home per five acres. Without a local area infrastructure plan, there would be streets at every 20-acre parcel in all four directions. The local area infrastructure plan ensures that every five-acre parcel has at least one access. Access is minimized to Scottsdale Road with direct access to Ashler Hills, 68th Street and Lone Mountain.

Desert Foothills Area 2 shows a wash coming from Scottsdale Road to 68th Street just north of Montgomery Road. It must be ensured that all the properties south of the wash have access to a street system and also have water, sewer and dry utilities. Access is provided north and south of the wash without crossing the wash. This provides the opportunity to have a trail through the wash, which is included in the local area infrastructure plan and agreed upon by all adjacent property owners.

Desert Foothills Area 3 consists of primarily five acre properties. This area includes a larger area with one owner as well as smaller five acre parcels. The areas with curvilinear streets has been developed by one large property owner, who is free to meander the streets, rather than developing them in a rectilinear fashion. These are located north of the wash and southeast wash. In the southwest corner, there are five-acre parcels, which must have direct access to a street, so there is a rectilinear street system in this vicinity.

A Commissioner asked why Mr. Basha considered Area 1 a good example. Mr. Basha explained that because all parcels are five acres, this requires development of a rectilinear system that would provide streets and utilities to all the five-acre parcels while minimizing the disruption to the desert.

A Commissioner asked whether a local area infrastructure plan would be used for a master planned community. Mr. Basha clarified that a local area infrastructure plan would be used when it is not master planned by a private property owner.

A Commissioner inquired what happens when an owner does not want to participate. Mr. Basha stated that it is a collaborative, democratic process. Frequently, a group of property owners will seek assistance from the City on how to obtain utilities or access to their properties. The City then contacts other properties in the area, at which time the collaboration begins. If one owner does not want to participate, City staff meets with the owner to discuss the owner's preferred method to provide access and utility corridors to the property.

A Commissioner asked about how much space remains in the City for local area infrastructure plans. Phillip Kercher, Traffic Engineering and Operations Manager that most of the five acre lots are established, but not all are built out. As undeveloped lots come in, they must be incorporated into right-of-way access routes. Most of the larger undeveloped properties are State owned.

7. OTHER TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS AND PROGRAM STATUS

Mr. Basha reviewed recent projects and programs. During the discussion on the Transportation Master Plan, a few members of the community mentioned that there was a federal designation of a rail route on Scottsdale Road. Staff researched the issue and discovered there is no federally designated rail route on Scottsdale Road and never has been. This was found to be a misinterpretation of a City Council vote in 2003. The vote was to designate Scottsdale Road as a locally preferred alignment for rapid transit. It was local, not federal. It was not rail, but was rapid transit. The discussion included bus rapid transit. It might have included rail, however it was a City of Scottsdale City Council designation as a locally preferred alternate. It was a four to three vote for the locally preferred alignment designation. In 2006 a proposal to overturn the local designation was defeated when four Council members dissented so the designation remains in effect. There has been no further discussion by the City Council, the region or the federal government.

A Commissioner asked how such misinformation affects community dialogue when considering a master plan. Mr. Basha stated that misinformation is dramatic and substantial. It destroys credibility and renders conversation to an almost petty level. This level of conversation did occur with bus routes, trolley routes, trails and number of lanes for streets. The discussion centered on what transportation system is best for Scottsdale. Assistance was required from the City Clerk's office to find the minutes of the City Council meetings where topics related to the federal designation occurred.

In response to a Commissioner's question, Mr. Basha stated that the federal government very minimally provides such designations. There are not designated rail routes within cities. They do designate rail routes in large corridors. For example, in Arizona, there is a federally designated rail route between Phoenix and Tucson.

A Commissioner asked which people were propagating the misinformation. Mr. Basha stated that certain members of the community made these statements in public hearings, before the Transportation Commission, before the City Council and in presentations Mr. Basha gave to various groups that asked him to speak on the Transportation Master Plan. A Commissioner commented that it is not unreasonable that a member of the community might recall a federal designated route along Scottsdale Road, as the process undertaken for identifying a locally preferred alternative within a corridor is a federal process. It would be understandable that someone might confuse the federal process in order to become eligible for federal funds as a federal designation.

Mr. Basha addressed the controversy surrounding a proposed Basis School at the southwest corner of the intersection of 128th Street and Shea Boulevard. This topic never came before the Transportation Commission, as there was no specific transportation issue with the proposed school. The City Council, development review board and planning commission did consider the proposed school this past spring. Formal meetings occurred in January, February and March. Basis School is a charter school and the City has very limited authority pertaining to approving or denying charter schools. Because of state law, charter schools are allowed by right and the City has minimal opportunity to influence the design and planning of these schools. However, Basis School took the opportunity to present formally to the City Council. There were a number of objections based on the presentation.

Basis suggested a development agreement with the City of Scottsdale that took the place of a formal approval. An extensive development agreement was developed in collaboration with

Basis, and is a binding agreement. It covers such aspects as location of driveways, number of lanes and how long onsite queuing areas would be. Basis received approval of the development agreement from the City Council in early March of this year and the school opened on August 8th. It was constructed from March to August of this year. It serves approximately 1,100 students, grades four through 12. It is functioning well. Several staff members from the Transportation Department were onsite for the first few days of the school's operation to insure that the traffic circulation and parking worked well.

However, a couple of issues did arise. Although for decades Scottsdale traffic signals have used wire loop detectors in the pavement, cameras are currently being installed to identify whether or not vehicles are present. The contractor hired by Basis to construct the signal installed a camera for detection purposes. The camera was functioning properly. During the school arrival time period when many vehicles were waiting at the 128th Street light to get onto Shea Boulevard, the camera noticed this and gave the vehicles a long green light. The camera "learns," and "thought" that 128th Street would have large numbers of northbound vehicles all day long. As such, it provided long green lights even when not a single car was present. Fortunately, signal crews recognized the error and corrected it.

There were predictions that there would be increased collisions on Shea Boulevard as a result of the school. There was unfortunately a three car rear-end collision caused by a water line construction project that narrowed Shea from three westbound lanes to one westbound lane. The congestion which was created resulted in the collision.

Vice Chair Holley commented that he was in the area this morning and there was a four-block backup for vehicles traveling eastbound, wanting to turn right onto 128th Street. The middle lane was also not moving. He wondered whether there was anything the City could do to help resolve the problem. Mr. Basha stated that he was present two out of the nine days the school has been open and he never witnessed anything like what Vice Chair Holley described. He opined that this is an aberration, however, it will be investigated. Chair Olmsted commented that this is another example of ancillary issues that could be fairly addressed, where appropriate, using the Commission. He added that there are concerns about the safety of those using Shea Boulevard to move more quickly to their work destinations, if there is alternating speed or static queue associated with the route.

Mr. Basha addressed the Pima Freeway construction. A fifth lane has been added in both directions. The project was scheduled for completion late this calendar year, however the construction was expedited with near completion just before summer. Northbound paving has not yet been completed due to rains. The paving was scheduled for completion in September and the contractor has requested that ADOT allow them to pave in August on weekends, provided the temperature stays below 110 degrees. ADOT has tentatively authorized this. It is hoped that the work will conclude in the next two to three weeks.

A Commissioner asked how effectively the lane addition will reduce rush hour traffic. Mr. Basha replied that it will not reduce rush hour traffic. The freeway was Level Service F before the construction began and will remain so after construction. In response to the Commissioner's question, Mr. Basha expressed the opinion that it will have no net positive effect.

Vice Chair Holley stated that he was impressed by the smoothness and quality of the work performed.

Mr. Basha addressed a Downtown pedestrian improvement project, which is included in the capital improvement plan. When the City Council approved the capital improvement plan for the current fiscal year, they included \$4 million total for Downtown pedestrian improvements, with \$2 million to be spent this year and \$2 million next year. The total project cost for all necessary improvements exceeds the \$4 million budget. The City Council removed the Happy Valley Road project between Pima Road and Alma School Parkway and directed that the funds be used for Downtown pedestrian improvements. The Transportation Department is developing ideas for use of these funds. They are coordinating with the tourism events department and the economic development department. Capital project management is responsible for hiring the design engineers and contractors. Downtown business owners will be involved in the process.

A Commissioner asked about the projected cost for all necessary improvements. Mr. Basha stated that during the current year, staff does not intend to develop a complete inventory of the needs. They expect to do this in the next two to three years. The goal with this project is to identify projects, design and construct them, which will lead to additional projects in the future.

Vice Chair Holley stated that since City Council is in agreement that the Downtown pedestrian improvements should be programmed in the budget, there is an awareness that this is a valuable investment. Mr. Basha stated that he was not able to weigh in on this particular comment. Chair Olmsted noted that some of the previous presentations and public comments have vocalized a desire to leave the area alone in its “quaintness.” He encouraged a resetting of these discussions to determine a vision for Downtown and particularly what the business owners want.

A Commissioner asked about the Transportation Commission’s involvement in the metrics used to select projects. Mr. Basha stated that staff intends to come before the Commission twice in the project identification process, once before the project begins and again after the identification has occurred.

Vice Chair Holley stated that his principal concern is safety in the area and that changes be made without destroying the character of the area. Chair Olmsted suggested ADA and designation of safety needs could be a good starting point. It may be timely to consider revisiting the capital improvement program process for the next year. Mr. Basha added that the goal for the project this year and next is to create projects that are very constructible. In October or November, staff will be coming before the Commission with the capital improvement plan. In terms of ADA considerations, this issue is complicated by issues of ownership. Many locations are entirely private property or jointly private property and public property. Chair Olmsted suggested that this was an opportunity for City Council to be a champion of this project.

Mr. Basha addressed a separate bicycle oriented project in the Downtown. This is a connection from the Indian Bend Wash to Downtown along 2nd Street. The purpose is to provide a very clear route for cyclists from Indian Bend to 75th Street. At this point, the Civic Center complex becomes an intrusion. There will be issues trying to connect through library. It is hoped that separate shared use paths will be included as well as separate bicycle lanes. Some portions will be a bicycle route, rather than a separate path or separate lane. This is in the early stages of planning and follows the Downtown pedestrian improvements project.

Four dozen old bicycle friendly community signs have recently been replaced by new signs.

A number of projects were constructed this summer. The first four projects are all school related sidewalk improvements. Two are pedestrian and bicycle improvements. The first location is under Thompson Peak Parkway just west of the McDowell Aquatic Center. South of the Aquatic Center, sidewalks were added in two areas. Another completed sidewalk project is a connection between Desert Canyon Middle School and the Arabian Library on 102nd Street South of McDowell Mountain Ranch Road.

Another project on McDowell Mountain Ranch Road is west of Thompson Peak Parkway. A missing sidewalk in this location has been constructed. A additional project near Notre Dame Preparatory School at 98th Street north of Paradise Lane. At the location, 98th Street has two lanes per direction and a center two way left turn lane. ADA conformance ramps and a pedestrian refuge area was constructed in the middle of the street. Another pedestrian refuge and accessible ramps were constructed at the vicinity of the greater southeast corner of the Pima Freeway and Frank Lloyd Wright Boulevard.

Finally, at 96th Street between Thunderbird and Redfield, a two way buffered bike lane was constructed on one side of the street. Vice Chair Holley suggested installing rubber stanchions to separate the bike lanes from the main traffic.

8. PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no public comments.

9. COMMISSION IDENTIFICATION OF FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

There were no items discussed.

10. ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to conduct, Vice Chair Holley adjourned the regular meeting at 7:44 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>**