



**SUMMARIZED MINUTES  
CITY OF SCOTTSDALE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION  
REGULAR MEETING  
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2009  
KIVA - CITY HALL  
3939 N. DRINKWATER BLVD.  
SCOTTSDALE, ARIZONA 85251**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Howard called the regular meeting of the Scottsdale Transportation Commission to order at 6:04 p.m.

1. **ROLL CALL**

**PRESENT:** William Howard, Chair  
Josh Weiss, Vice Chair  
Kelly McCall, Commissioner  
Donald Maxwell, Commissioner (departed at 8:42 p.m.)  
Paul Ward, Commissioner

**ABSENT:** Terry Gruver, Commissioner  
Howard Sukenic, Commissioner

**STAFF:** Mary O'Connor, Transportation General Manager  
Dave Meinhart, Transportation Planning and Transit Director  
Annie DeChance, Public Participation & Outreach Manager  
Paul Porell, Traffic Engineering and Operations Director  
Lorraine Protocollo, Administrative Secretary  
Teresa Huish, Principal Transportation Planner  
Bruce Dressel, ITS Manager  
Steve Ramsey, Senior ITS Engineer

**GUESTS:** Ray Hobbs, APS  
Don Pelley, SRP

**SPEAKERS DURING PUBLIC COMMENT (IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER):**

Dennis Boldron  
Suzan Curtin

Dave MacDonald  
Judi McMillin

2. **Approval of Meeting Minutes**

- Study Session of the Transportation Commission - January 15, 2009
- Regular Meeting of the Transportation Commission - January 15, 2009

**COMMISSIONER MCCALL MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 15, 2009 STUDY SESSION AND REGULAR MEETINGS, AS AMENDED. VICE CHAIR WEISS SECONDED. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY BY A VOTE OF FIVE (5) TO ZERO (0).**

3. **Public Comment**

**Dave MacDonald** noted that Scottsdale's photo radar system resulted in an estimated savings of \$10 million to \$11 million because of diminished property damage, personal injuries, and deaths. He encouraged the Commission to send a letter to the Governor suggesting that she not approve any ballot measure that would eliminate or reduce photo radar, until Simon Washington's year-long study is complete.

4. **Plug-in Hybrid Vehicles**

Ms. O'Connor introduced Mr. Hobbs, from APS's Future Fuels program, and Mr. Pelley, from SRP's Sustainability Initiatives and Technologies Department. Mr. Pelley said that in the near future, SRP is not going to have problems accommodating plug-in hybrids or electric vehicles. Some modifications might be necessary if there is a high concentration in one small area. SRP is working with the Electric Power Research Institute, which is studying smart grid applications for charging vehicles during off-peak times.

Chair Howard said that since these vehicles are anticipated to have an operational radius of 40 miles, the question arises of what to do about delivering power to non-residences. Mr. Pelley responded that SRP is looking at a model that would support the use of charging stations located in certain public places where cars could be left for some period. Some issues such as billing have yet to be resolved.

Mr. Hobbs said the lithium ion battery has made modern electric vehicles more viable. Plug-in hybrids are a transition technology, but soon after that, there will be a wave of battery electric cars. There will be no problems associated with supplying the necessary capacity for these vehicles in the near term. It might become more of an issue as demand grows, but many things will likely be different by then. The three types of charging levels differ depending on the length of time it takes to complete a charge. Fast charging has been a hot topic lately. The challenge will be whether municipalities are ready for a competitive electric vehicle market. Will building permits be issued fast enough to allow someone who buys a car to install a charger in their home quickly? How are road taxes going to be collected to pay for future infrastructure? The lithium ion battery is going to usher a change that will be with us for a long time, and these changes should be embraced.

Vice Chair Weiss said everybody knows this is coming, yet the Commission needs to know where to start. Mr. Hobbs responded that it starts with the battery. Without a good battery, a viable electric car cannot exist. From there, it becomes a question of how to recharge it conveniently. The reason gasoline is so attractive is because the infrastructure is everywhere. Electricity is everywhere too, but it is not convenient for recharging electric vehicles. As car companies introduce new products, they are going to compete, and refueling convenience is going to be a part of it.

Vice Chair Weiss inquired whether there would be incompatible standards between different competing recharging systems. Mr. Hobbs said initially, the car companies all came out with their own standards, but he believes they are working through those issues to develop a universal connector. Mr. Pelley added that the Society of Automotive Engineers is working to coordinate standards so that any type of car can use a charging station. In response to an inquiry from Vice

Chair Weiss about the role of the utilities in infrastructure development, Mr. Hobbs said that as a regulated utility, APS is responsible for serving the electric needs of customers in its territory. If businesses want to provide charging infrastructure, APS has the obligation to serve them. Mr. Pelley added that there is most likely going to be enough private enterprises that will recognize a demand for these types of services.

Vice Chair Weiss said he is trying to understand what the municipality's role is, and how to avoid building an infrastructure that would quickly be obsolete. Many people in Scottsdale are interested in this type of vehicle and this would make a good place for a pilot program. What does the City need to do in terms of infrastructure, and how can it help residents make the transition? Mr. Hobbs responded that developers should be encouraged to include 240V circuits from their meter box into the garage of new homes. This will save a lot of money in the future. The car companies are not talking about demo programs anymore; they are preparing for launches of full product lines. Scottsdale can help by becoming a customer. Nissan intends to compete directly with gasoline vehicles in terms of price. Electric vehicles are going to be cheaper to run because the newer vehicles will be able to get 365 m.p.g. Taxation for infrastructure will likely become an issue soon, but initially the biggest need will be to streamline building codes. Mr. Pelley added that car companies are concerned about the after sale experience of customers. New vehicle owners will have to be able to charge their vehicles.

In response to an inquiry from Commissioner McCall, Mr. Pelley explained that current hybrids have both mechanical and electrical drive trains. The new Volt, however, is an extended range electric vehicle with a fully electrical drive train. The Volt can run for 40 miles before needing the engine to charge the battery. Seventy-two percent of users drive fewer than 40 miles per day. The small gasoline engine provides enough charge to keep driving, but this is not intended for fully charging an idle vehicle. Mr. Hobbs added that the car companies are being driven by CO2 emission regulations. If they make the transition to batteries, they can start meeting their long-term objectives. Plug-in hybrids will be a short duration phenomenon that will soon be replaced by pure battery vehicles. Customers will have options to buy longer-range vehicles and fast-charge options. Commissioner McCall inquired about health risks associated with electrics. Mr. Pelley responded that to date there has not been any evidence that there are health risks with these vehicles.

Chair Howard inquired about the three charging levels. Mr. Pelley said the Volt can charge on Level 1 in an overnight period, while Level 2 charging takes about half that time. Homes are wired to 240V and chargers are in the 6 to 7 kilowatt range; about the same as an air conditioner. Level 3 charging will develop rapidly as consumer preference dictates the market. Fast charging stations will take about 20 minutes. Chair Howard asked whether power plugs at parking meters are a viable idea. Mr. Hobbs said many cities in the world rely on on-street charging since few residents there have garages.

In response to Chair Howard's inquiry, Mr. Hobbs said he sees many commercial opportunities. The City can help the most by planning and zoning to facilitate the convenience of the infrastructure. Mr. Pelley added that many companies are looking at providing third party services related to the smart grid. One issue that utilities will have to address is how to reconcile the switching of the carbon load from the oil companies to the electric utility companies. Mr. Hobbs added that a different vision of the future is emerging that uses photovoltaics or other paradigms to create new opportunities. These are limited only by creativity.

Vice Chair Weiss requested that staff inform the proper City departments and commissions about the nature of this discussion.

Mr. Meinhart noted that the nation's transportation systems are heavily reliant on gasoline taxes. There are considerations being made towards focusing more on taxation based on vehicle miles traveled rather than on the fuel sources used. It is really more about the use of the facilities. From a policy perspective, the Commission needs to be aware of this.

## 5. Noise Abatement Policy

Ms. Huish noted that the Council directed the Commission to review roadway noise abatement criteria and guidelines and provide a recommendation. The Transportation Master Plan (TMP) has general noise mitigation policies in the streets element and the policy element. It states that Scottsdale will generally follow the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) noise mitigation policies. There is also a recommendation that Scottsdale adopt a modified version of that ADOT policy.

Currently the City uses rubberized asphalt on new roads and resurfacing projects to reduce roadway noise. Complaints are dealt with on a case-by-case basis. ADOT's noise policy is based on the Federal Highway Administration criteria, but has a lower threshold for triggering mitigation. Different criteria vary depending on the land uses. ADOT's policy indicates that if mitigation is used, it should reduce noise levels to 64 decibels or less, and should be aesthetically integrated with the surrounding area. There should also be ample public information and input, and careful attention to neighborhood issues, and driver safety. Mr. Meinhart added that ADOT also requires that mitigation achieve at least a 5 decibel reduction from modeled noise levels. The other communities that staff researched do not have noise mitigation policies, but some have general plan policies.

Chair Davis invited public commentary.

**Judi McMillin** said the shopping center in her neighborhood was constructed before the homes were. Traffic has increased substantially since the shopping center added a gas station. Semi-trailers use Ashler Hills Road regularly to make their deliveries. The road is only 35 feet from property lines. The shopping center has not responded to complaints from the neighbors, who would like to see foliage planted in the median to mitigate noise. She asked why the City does not have an ordinance specific to motorcycle noise, and asked how close semi-trailers are allowed to get to property lines.

**Dennis Boldron** said his home backs onto Ashler Hills. The trucks that use the road to access the shopping center make noise and shine their lights into the homes. There are access points off of Scottsdale Road that are available to use. It may be feasible to add a traffic signal that would allow trucks the opportunity of exiting the shopping center safely.

**Suzan Curtin**, President of Sands East HOA, asked what specific decibel levels are expected from the rubberized asphalt. Scottsdale's ordinance says nothing about putting a cap on spending, which is unconscionable. Other abatement forms should be considered for properties that need abatement but where walls cannot be used. The Indian School Road corridor has more traffic than most other roadways in the City. There are many inconsistencies between what neighborhoods are told, and what the Commission is hearing at public meetings. Citizens deserve a greater voice. She suggested that a focus group be formed to work on the noise mitigation policy, and that an ADOT representative be invited to speak.

Commissioner Ward said administrative controls might solve the majority of existing roadway noise problems. He asked whether staff has the administrative tools necessary to potentially address these issues. Ms. O'Connor responded that administratively, the City could suggest to the

commercial development that they consider other ways of addressing truck traffic, but she noted that the shopping center preceded the adjacent residential development and is operating consistently with its approvals. New developments could be required to meet certain restrictions, but these cannot be applied retroactively. Mr. Porell added that the trucks at Ashler Hills are operating within the City truck ordinance. Trucks are using the road because it is a signalized intersection at Scottsdale Road. Staff will investigate the addition of another signal. Chair Howard said the Commission should not attempt to solve this particular case tonight, but should focus instead on the bigger picture.

Commissioner Ward inquired what staff was expecting from the Commission. Ms. O'Connor responded that the City does not have an ordinance that addresses ambient noise. Carefree's motorcycle ordinance was created in response to problems associated with a specific event, whereas Scottsdale is more interested in addressing everyday traffic noise that might be exacerbated by volumes, proximity, or traffic type. The truck route ordinance has been focused on designating routes, and areas where no trucks are allowed, but it could be expanded to include truck activity. Staff expects the Commission to provide direction on what to do with a neighborhood when a nearby roadway section is completed but there are still noise issues. Other issues would include alternatives to berms and walls, sources of funding, and the use of neighborhood enhancement funds to assist residents in making changes to their own properties. Mr. Meinhart added that the initial question the Commission should answer is whether Scottsdale should adopt additional guidelines beyond what is already in the TMP.

Vice Chair Weiss said the purpose of this item is to gather facts in preparation for an eventual recommendation. He explained that on this agenda item, the Commission is only allowed to discuss the overall noise ordinance, not specific situations, though the comments do have an impact on the greater discussion. He requested that the Commission be provided with a summary of anything in the TMP that has been vetted and discussed for potential implementation on noise mitigation. The Commission cares what people have to say and is considering their comments, even if a full dialogue is not allowed.

Vice Chair Weiss said the ambient noise issue has to be acknowledged within the greater context of what the Commission is doing. The individual's responsibility also has to be considered, whether it is a motorcyclist or someone playing a stereo too loud. He also requested input from law enforcement officials on how such ordinances could be enforced.

Commissioner McCall said she is happy with the noise mitigation policy as it is. The Commission's task is to address noise mitigation plans that concern vehicle-generated noise. The Commission has been very responsive to neighborhoods that have had noise issues. She expressed concern that throughout the Indian School Road process, there has been contention between the information that has been presented by staff, and that presented by residents. She encouraged respectful dialogue and compromise between the two parties.

Commissioner Ward said the policy should be clear about what the City is measuring. The ADOT policy is designed for high-volume roads. Its test methodology might not be appropriate for Scottsdale's collectors. The City should consider what to do about existing noise and should incorporate, into the policy, ways to prevent noise from occurring in the first place.

Chair Howard said the Commission should look at three basic elements, noise sources, noise levels, and mitigation. The Commission recommendation should address each one of these, keeping in mind a number of issues including sufficiency, enforceability, penalties and the cost to benefit ratio. Specific cases can be used to help identify the adequacy or inadequacy of existing policies. The Commission may eventually discover that the existing TMP statement is sufficient, but it is not in a

position to make that decision right now. He suggested building a straw man and using it as a focus for debate, rather than starting completely from scratch with a new policy.

## 6. Scottsdale ITS Program

Mr. Porell presented an overview of the Scottsdale ITS Program, describing the City's traffic management center (TMC) as one of the most efficient centers in Arizona. The center is used to control traffic and synchronize signals.

Mr. Dressel said Scottsdale ITS recently looked at the current state of practice nationally and globally. The next big thing is technology that allows vehicle-to-roadside, and vehicle-to-vehicle communications. The latest version allows for autonomous vehicles that can navigate streets properly and avoid accidents. Electronic freight management uses lane departure warning systems, curb speed warnings, lane-change merge functions, and forward crash warnings. It is being implemented in most new long-haul trucks. Vehicles can talk back to their command posts to inform when they are due for maintenance. In emergencies, the ITS center can turn all the lights green in specific directions to facilitate mass evacuations, should they ever be needed. He said traffic signal timing is complicated and there is no way to time them to satisfy everyone. However, integrated corridor management systems can satisfy most drivers.

Scottsdale currently has 55 cameras at major intersections, with 30 more planned in the next year. There are 25 fixed dynamic message signs, which can provide real-time information to drivers. A great deal of coordination with public safety officials and public information officers occurs to inform drivers of collisions and lane blockages. ITS coordinates with ADOT's freeway management system. When cameras become functional again on the Loop 101, they will be integrated into the system. The entire ITS infrastructure should be in place and operational very soon. The installation of fiber optics will eliminate the need for any leased phone lines to the field. The new traffic signals will be ethernet capable. Most of the signals in Scottsdale are 15 to 20 years old. They do not have vehicle detection inputs and cannot accommodate advanced signal programming. New controllers are on order and, if the City is successful in obtaining Federal stimulus or other funds, should be in place within the next 18 months.

Commissioner McCall inquired whether ITS was being coordinated with activity in the Salt River Pima/Maricopa Indian Community (SRPMIC). Mr. Dressel responded that fiber optic lines are on Pima Road from Thomas Road north to McDowell Mountain Ranch. This should be adequate to handle any development to the east of Pima Road. Mr. Porell added that Scottsdale has a project in cooperation with the SRPMIC to look at the potential widening of Pima Road and long-term maintenance along the corridor. ITS staff is also looking into an arrangement to possibly control all the signals along the Loop 101 from McDowell Road north to 90<sup>th</sup> Street. This will allow for continuity of service along important corridors, and hopefully, there will be the ability to share images with ADOT cameras along the freeway itself.

Commissioner McCall said the cost savings of ITS have been impressive in terms of saved labor, and avoiding losses due to congestion. However, the cost to build the ITS infrastructure has been substantial. Does the future allow for more automation and further staff reductions? Ms. O'Connor responded that the ITS Strategic Plan identifies staffing levels over time. It is a long-range planning document only. The City does not anticipate adding any staff at all in the near future. Mr. Porell said one thing the technology cannot do yet is adjust to incidents as quickly as humans can. Commissioner McCall said she would like to see the message boards used to alert people to the dangers of texting while driving.

Vice Chair Weiss said ITS offers the greatest return on the City's investment in terms of improving quality of life. While Scottsdale is a leader in this regard, he asked what could be done to improve the system. Mr. Dressel responded that the biggest push right now is in communications between vehicles and signals. Mr. Porell added that a professor of transportation systems at ASU will address the Commission next month to delve into more specifics. In the far future, traffic signals will not be the device of choice to control intersections. Roundabouts and ITS will lessen overall delay, reduce major collisions, and provide a safe and efficient solution. Ms. O'Connor added that ITS could eventually be used to inform transit riders when the next bus is going to arrive at their stop. There could also be new methods of clearing incidents from roadways, and providing information to drivers about incidents.

Vice Chair Weiss felt that lack of money should not be used as an excuse. If it means delaying a road project in order to outfit all the signals in the City, then that would be a good tradeoff. ITS will have an overall greater impact on the system. He also encouraged the City to start promoting City achievements, because many residents are simply not aware of it. Mr. Dressel said ITS has been working with Channel 11 to do a video informing residents about the operation of the TMC, highlighting the specific routes and directions that are prioritized at different times in the day, and providing explanations of signal timing. Vice Chair Weiss said there are a lot of cost-effective ways for the City to get the message out, and they should all be used.

Commissioner Ward said ITS can allow for intersection improvements without using space for right turn pockets or additional lanes. Much of the character of a city is based on its land use, including the road network. Scottsdale has to make the best use of the system it has, because doing so will limit the physical growth of the road network. He said the City should let technology catch up so that money can be used most effectively. Reaching out to other cities will allow staff to learn different techniques and alternative ways of doing things. Being able to know when the next bus will arrive will reduce frustration dramatically. This can be done in partnership with a sponsor and be revenue neutral. Mr. Dressel said the fiber optics infrastructure is nearly complete. From this point forward the system is going to be wireless. The fiber optic system can also be used by other City facilities that require high bandwidth.

Commissioner Ward expressed concern that the video cameras could be used for purposes other than what they are intended for. He asked whether the City has a policy to guard against inappropriate uses of the video feed. Mr. Dressel responded that this issue has been discussed nationally for years. The ITS staff simply does not have the time or the inclination to do these things. The camera technology allows for blackout windows to cover areas of the picture that do not pertain to the roads.

Chair Howard commended staff on a terrific job. He encouraged them to look at ways to optimize the entire network, especially at regions instead of just intersections. Mr. Porell noted that the City has received a grant from the Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG) to assist in updating its computerized analysis network to focus on network operations instead of just arterial progressions.

## 7. Transportation Department Budget Update

- CIP budget for the current fiscal year and FY09/10 thru FY13/14

Ms. Huish reported that to date, tax collections decreased by 15% compared to last fiscal year, but construction costs have stabilized, which is making the capital improvement program projections easier. Sales tax alone will not provide enough money to locally match all Prop 400 funds. Scottsdale has received \$15 million in reimbursements for Prop 400 project costs this year. The

Federal stimulus package provisions have also been approved nationally for transportation, and the City is working with the regional agencies to attempt to secure stimulus funds for local projects. Mr. Meinhart noted that Bond 2000 funds constitute a smaller part of the budget each year, and will be largely spent out by next year.

Ms. Huish said funding for several projects and program budgets has decreased from last year. Five projects are being added from the TMP implementation program. Ongoing programs are funded at the same level in FY13/14. No projects are being eliminated this year, though their budgets are being decreased. The total CIP is \$166 million, down from \$215 million. This speaks to the completion of many projects, as well as reductions in budgets. The majority of projects involve streets, but Scottsdale is getting closer to its goal of a one-third split for non-motorized projects in CIP.

- Operating budget proposed changes for FY08/09 and FY09/10

Mr. Meinhart reported on the non-aviation portion of the Transportation operating budget. The Department met its goal of reducing the operating budget by 10% through the elimination of vacant positions, modifications to transit service, and shifting some of the cost for existing staff to capital projects. A citywide retirement incentive program has been authorized. A Citizen Budget Commission has been established to look at the City's overall budget. A benefits compensation proposal which does not increase the cost of benefits to the City goes before the City Council next week. Additional recommendations on staff restructuring could occur in April.

The department's current non-aviation budget is currently estimated at \$14 million. Incoming revenue continues to decrease. The Federal stimulus package could boost some local projects, but it is a small percentage of those identified.

Vice Chair Weiss noted that Ms. Huish had indicated that the projects to be funded were the first four taken off the top of the TMP priority list. He pointed out that in a previous meeting, he had specifically asked whether the order of the projects made any difference within that year, and he was told that it did not. This is unacceptable, especially considering that one of the projects was the Raintree/Thunderbird Loop, which the Commission spent much time on, and identified it as a high priority project. The Commission voted that it had to be done in 2014 unless the money was found through another source.

Mr. Meinhart explained that the Thunderbird/Raintree Loop was scheduled for year five or six of the plan. The City does not have enough money to do the complete project in year five. Vice Chair Weiss said planning for that project was supposed to start in 2014. Mr. Meinhart responded that the project was scheduled for the fifth year, assuming that the five years prior were funded properly. The first recommendation of the implementation plan was to finish the existing projects in the five-year plan, then start to work on the list of projects in year one.

Vice Chair Weiss said the widening on Redfield is still listed as a priority, when the Thunderbird/Raintree Loop could be built just a few years later, and would eliminate the need to widen Redfield. He said he would be comfortable with the research money being allocated for year five of the CIP in 2014, as that would; at least, put the project in the queue. If it is not put into the plan, it will likely be forgotten. Mr. Meinhart said that is not staff's intent. When it comes to making the loop road work, the most critical element is the Northsight connection, but that is also too costly for year five. Vice Chair Weiss said the Commission intended that the money that was set aside for the airport tunnel would be used on this instead. Mr. Meinhart said that under the MAG program, the tunnel money would not start to come in until FY2016.

Ms. O'Connor said staff recognizes the value of the Airpark projects. The problem is that they are relatively high cost and the funding will not be available for some time. The City is working to change the way the funds are designated at MAG in order to accelerate the project, and could try to identify design concept report funding in 2014, to assure that the planning is done in advance of the funds being made available.

8. **Other Transportation Projects**

Ms. O'Connor reported on the safety review on Hayden Road that stemmed from the recent NTMP exception request. The study found that 96% of the vehicles that travel that segment are exceeding 30 m.p.h., and 82% are exceeding 35 m.p.h. The updated traffic volume is 2,780 per day. Staff has determined the need to reduce high travel speeds, complete or improve the pedestrian infrastructure in that corridor, and to better delineate roadside objects. The School District has been contacted to see if better school bus locations and routes are possible. The Police Department also plans to focus enforcement efforts there. Municipal Services is looking into widening the shoulder and improving signage. The findings are consistent with earlier ones.

Ms. O'Connor clarified a response to a comment from Dave MacDonald at the last meeting, saying that given the current budget situation, the City is not in a position to propose a study of using taxi vouchers to supplement transit at this time.

9. **Public Comment**

No members of the public wished to address the Commission.

10. **Identification of Future Agenda Items**

No items were identified.

11. **ADJOURNMENT**

With no further business to conduct, Chair Howard adjourned the regular meeting at 9:30 p.m.

SUBMITTED BY:

A/V Tronics, Inc.

**NOTE: VIDEO AND/OR AUDIO RECORDINGS OF SCOTTSDALE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION MEETINGS ARE AVAILABLE FROM THE SCOTTSDALE TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT FOR UP TO SIX MONTHS FOLLOWING THE MEETING DATE.**

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