



**SUMMARIZED MINUTES
CITY OF SCOTTSDALE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
THURSDAY, AUGUST 20, 2009
KIVA - CITY HALL
ONE CIVIC CENTER
3939 DRINKWATER BOULEVARD
SCOTTSDALE, ARIZONA 85251**

CALL TO ORDER

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

1. **ROLL CALL**

PRESENT: William Howard, Chair
Josh Weiss, Vice Chair
Carleton Cole, Commissioner
Terry Gruver, Commissioner
Paul Ward, Commissioner

ABSENT: Donald Maxwell, Commissioner
Howard Sukenic, Commissioner

STAFF: Dave Meinhart, Transportation Director
Paul Porell, Traffic Engineering and Operations Director
Phillip Kercher, Principal Traffic Engineer
Kathryn Kleinschmidt, Traffic Engineering Analyst
George Williams, Senior Traffic Engineer
Luis Santaella, Assistant City Attorney
Rose Arballo, Transportation Commission Coordinator
Kay Cooper, Assistant City Attorney

SPEAKERS DURING PUBLIC COMMENT (IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER):

Robert Anderson
Raoul Encinas
Robert Farrell
Ruth LeFlore

Patricia Lloyd
Lynn Pajerski
John Pajerski
Philip Rigier

Rick Sampson
Lisa Wilcoxson

2. **Approval of Meeting Minutes**

- Study Session of the Transportation Commission - July 16, 2009
- Regular Meeting of the Transportation Commission - July 16, 2009

COMMISSIONER GRUVER MOVED TO APPROVE THE STUDY SESSION AND REGULAR MEETING MINUTES OF JULY 16, 2009, AS PRESENTED. COMMISSIONER WARD SECONDED. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY BY A VOTE OF FIVE (5) TO ZERO (0).

3. **Public Comment**

There were no public comments on non-agendized items.

4. **Neighborhood Traffic Management Project (NTMP) Request**

Ms. Kleinschmidt presented the NTMP request for a project on 68th Street from Shea Boulevard to Turquoise Avenue. Chaparral High School lies to the east of the neighborhood. The speed awareness phase was completed in January 2009. Traffic volume and speed data were collected on 68th Street, Gold Dust Avenue, and Turquoise in February 2009. 68th Street met the program criteria. The average daily traffic was 1,046 vehicles. Average speed was 30 m.p.h. The 85th percentile speed for northbound traffic was 36 m.p.h., while for southbound it was 35 m.p.h. The percentage of speeds over 30 m.p.h. was 53 percent, and the percentage of speeds over 35 m.p.h. was 20 percent.

Ms. Kleinschmidt said Gold Dust is a one-way segment from 66th Street to 64th Place, and has three speed humps on it, which the neighbors paid for personally. The residents are concerned about parking in the neighborhood west of Chaparral, cut-through traffic, and excessive speeding. People park on both sides of 68th leaving only one travel lane. Sight distances are blocked at intersections. In May 2009, Staff met with 17 residents to discuss the plan. They chose to move forward with the petition option. A second meeting was held in June 2009 to present three plan options. The residents decided unanimously to support the option with the most traffic calming devices. The petition boundary included 103 homes. Information was disseminated through signage and the City's website. Eighty-five homes signed the petition, representing an 83% approval rate.

Because of the inverted crown on 68th Street, there are some drainage constraints. The City's Stormwater Management staff have recommended that all devices used there should be flush with the existing grade of pavement. Therefore, existing drainage conditions prevent the use of vertical devices, speed tables, and curbs on median islands. Islands would be about 40 feet in length, and the side islands would allow four feet of space for pedestrian access. The project plan uses ten median islands, three side islands, and one speed table. Intersection improvements have been made at 70th Street. Devices have been added to turning areas to mitigate speeding and cut-through traffic. Gold Dust has been re-striped to allow 28 parallel spaces on the north side near a church, and to create an eastbound right-turn lane. The total cost for 13 islands would be approximately \$150,000, and the speed table would cost \$5,000.

Chair Howard invited public commentary.

Robert Anderson expressed concern about pedestrian traffic safety on 68th Street. An island in the center would force cars towards the curb where pedestrians are. Drivers use 68th Street

because of the lack of stop signs on it. The best way to solve the problem would be to move traffic to 70th Street by installing four-way stops on 68th Street like the other streets have.

Robert Farrell said 66th Street is a one-way southbound street that occasionally experiences northbound traffic. He requested additional signage on Beryl and North Lane to indicate that cars should not enter there. He would like the option of adding another island on North Lane in the future if the traffic calming effort moves traffic onto North Lane.

Raoul Encinas said the neighborhood has a lot of pedestrian traffic. A car has struck him. Drivers have a lot of disregard for the speed limit because of the width of the street. He commended staff for putting together a plan that addresses the neighbors' concerns. Only one person he spoke to during the petition drive rejected the plan and that was because they felt the City would not actually do anything.

Patricia Lloyd said stop signs would not work at the intersection she lives on. Cars have crashed through her block wall and into her yard, endangering her children. Staff has been very helpful. The data meets all requirements and the project should be approved.

Lynn Pajerski has had cars crash into her yard, destroying landscaping. Some accidents do not even get reported. Money has been set aside for this exact purpose. It took a lot of time to get the projects to where it currently is. It would be money well spent, as it would improve the neighborhood. 68th Street is too wide. Cars only slow down when the police are actively watching. The devices would be permanent and will force drivers to consider other routes. The side islands allow room for pedestrians. The petition had ten opponents, seven were not home, and one owner was deceased.

Philip Rigier became aware of the project late in the process. Staff has been very professional. The problem is Chaparral High School, which is expanding enrollment and the increased traffic is causing dangerous situations at certain times when people are walking. Anything that would slow down speeds would be money well spent. The project would increase safety, reduce the need for police patrols, and raise property values.

Rick Sampson is in favor of the changes. They are a great addition to the neighborhood. He expressed concern that Beryl will become a new cut-through point instead of Turquoise. He encouraged adding more to the project to address this.

Lisa Wilcoxson is opposed to the project. This project is about money. It is a disservice to the taxpayers, teachers, staff, and students of the high school. The neighborhood has problems, but she was aware of them when she purchased her house. The traffic data is skewed because it was generated during unusual circumstances. The high school was under major construction during the data collection period. The students were displaced and the parking lots experienced constant closures. A large house was built at Gold Dust and 68th Street during the testing period. There were six building permits for construction in the area. Southwest Gas was also installing gas valves at that time. Police reports indicate the lack of violations since construction stopped. Chaparral High School policy prohibits student drop offs on 70th Street, and this lot is monitored daily. The traffic is not cut-through traffic; it is part of the endorsed traffic plan for the school. Traffic has dropped by half since 2006. The devices will cause more traffic problems.

Ruth LeFlore lives in the complex across from Chaparral High School. She approves of the parking on the north side of the street. Her complex has three access points, but only one is usable when traveling east of Gold Dust, and this causes a lot of congestion problems. The island on the far west side should be modified to allow access going east.

John Pajerski said he finds it hard to believe that there were no speeders in the past two weeks. He has been part of an effort among neighbors to get drivers to slow down. The police are present every morning and they are pulling people over constantly. There are no developers building homes in the area. One home was under construction but it did not factor into students speeding.

Chair Howard read comments from three non-speakers. Mary Elizabeth Carroll is in favor of the project and for enforcing stop signs and speed limits before and after school. Carol and Lynn Dreffs indicated their support for the project.

Commissioner Cole said as congestion and traffic continues to worsen in Scottsdale, it would be prudent to spend money on these types of projects, especially since they are allocated for this purpose, and the community is involved in the process. Commissioner Gruver expressed concern about traffic going in the wrong direction on one-way streets, and inquired how they could be corrected. Ms. Kleinschmidt said staff is aware of the problem and is considering additional signage on Beryl or North Lane.

Vice Chair Weiss said the school should be notified that the City intends to implement this plan. Mr. Williams responded that staff has contacted the School District and has worked with them on the overall site plan. He was unsure whether the school requires parents to go through the neighborhood, separate from the District's plan. Vice Chair Weiss said construction issues on neighboring streets need to be taken into account during the data collection process. Mr. Porell said Staff always checks adjacent roadways for construction activities, but it would be difficult to wait until they are all completely clear. Staff makes judgments as to the impacts that construction has on traffic patterns. Technicians place testing equipment in locations where traffic is deemed to be flowing in its normal pattern. The neighborhood has waited a long time already. Vice Chair Weiss requested a future agenda item on this topic, since it would be worth waiting to get clean data.

Chair Howard noted that the school opening could have affected the data as well. He inquired whether other areas would be affected by traffic calming on 68th Street. Ms. Kleinschmidt responded that staff continues to monitor the situation and would address them if necessary. Chair Howard inquired about adding sidewalks. Mr. Williams responded that typically sidewalks are separate issues from traffic calming, as they do not have an effect on speeds if they are outside the curb line. Sidewalks in this area would be very expensive and would not fit the character of the neighborhood. Chair Howard inquired about four-way stops at some of the intersections. Ms. Kleinschmidt responded that four-way stops are not warranted by the Federal safety guidelines in this instance. Stop signs are generally not used to address speeding issues.

In response to an inquiry from Chair Howard, Mr. Meinhart said that assuming all anticipated projects move forward, there would be sufficient funds between the current and the next fiscal year to fund all the current NTMP projects. Chair Howard said given the data, the large amount of support, the proximity of the school, and the layout of the area, he felt this project was warranted.

COMMISSIONER GRUVER MOVED TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF THE 68TH STREET NEIGHBORHOOD TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT PROJECT FROM SHEA TO TURQUOISE AVENUE, AS PRESENTED. COMMISSIONER COLE SECONDED. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY BY A VOTE OF FIVE (5) TO ZERO (0).

Vice Chair Weiss clarified that these types of projects should not be used to solve temporary problems. In this case, the data proved that the problem existed before construction occurred,

but gathering data during construction periods could lead the City to draw inaccurate conclusions in the future.

5. **Commission Ordinance Revision**

VICE CHAIRMAN WEISS MOVED TO APPROVE THE REVISIONS TO THE COMMISSION ORDINANCE. COMMISSIONER WARD SECONDED. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY BY A VOTE OF FIVE (5) TO ZERO (0).

6. **Scottsdale Healthcare Transportation Management Plan**

Mr. Kercher provided an overview of the traffic control devices that could be installed over the next 20 years as part of the build-out of the Scottsdale Healthcare Shea Campus. As part of the hospital's rezoning process, Transportation did a traffic management assessment. The campus is located on Shea Boulevard between 90th Street and 92nd Street, and extends south to Mountain View Road. The City wants to better accommodate east/west movement of pedestrians and bicycles through this corridor. The traffic impact study estimated that the daily trip generation for the campus is 18,000 vehicles. At build-out, campus parking would increase to 5,300 spaces, including four new structures. As the site develops, the traffic is expected to increase to 24,400 trips by 2015, and 35,400 in 2030.

Phase One is expected to begin in 2010, while Phase Six would not start until 2025. The plan is to create a new driveway connection to Mountain View in the south. In the north, a 90th Street connection would be closed and a new driveway opened onto Shea Boulevard for emergency vehicles only. The hospital would also build two north/south paths that parallel Camelback Walk, and add three connections to it from their internal path system. Another sidewalk would connect to 90th Street and the transit center that is planned nearby. New traffic controls would be phased in. A roundabout would be built at the library entrance, and a signal at the main hospital entrance. As site traffic increases, another roundabout and traffic signal could be added to the system to line up with the commercial driveways on the east side of 90th Street. There may eventually be need for another roundabout at the middle driveway on 90th Street. In addition to improving vehicle and pedestrian traffic flow, the changes are intended to address collision rates in the area that are three times the citywide average.

The City currently has nine modern roundabouts. They have been shown to reduce the number and severity of collisions. They are a good alternative to multi-way stops and traffic signals when they are located and designed appropriately. They also reduce vehicle delay. Mr. Meinhart noted that both 90th and 92nd Streets were designated in the TMP as being urban in character. As such, the City is focusing on enhancing the pedestrian movements and supporting transit.

Commissioner Ward expressed concern about the significant increase in the number of traffic control devices on 90th and 92nd Streets. They represent a major change in character for the area. Mr. Meinhart said the increased number of devices reflects the increased number of vehicle trips that are anticipated in the area, especially the number of turning movements. Commissioner Ward suggested taking advantage of grade separation options. Mr. Meinhart responded that grade separation would contradict the TMP policy that supports the co-existence of pedestrian facilities in urban areas. Commissioner Cole said 92nd Street has trouble handling its traffic volume today. Mr. Meinhart responded that 92nd Street currently has traffic volumes under 20,000 vehicles per day. The standard necessary for widening from four to six lanes would be 40,000 vehicles.

Vice Chair Weiss expressed concern about the number of devices used in such a short amount of space. The two streets connect to Pima Road, which is a major arterial leading to the Loop 101. Visitors to the new spring training facility should be provided with an easier way into Scottsdale via Shea Boulevard. It would make more sense if the roundabout in this type of setting would have more outlets. He proposed adjusting the traffic flow plan to eliminate a traffic signal and incorporate multiple outlets into a single roundabout. The Planning Commission should take into consideration that the Transportation Commission is not comfortable with this traffic plan. It is almost being presented as a done deal already. Mr. Meinhart clarified that staff is expanding upon the normal pattern by allowing the Commission to review the plan at this early stage. Scottsdale Healthcare is pushing to get their project done as soon as possible, and it is moving quickly. The hospital did not look favorably upon the notion of combining outlets. Vice Chair Weiss responded that the City can do what is best for both the hospital and the citizens who use the roadways.

Commissioner Gruver said Scottsdale has had trouble getting people to readily adopt the roundabout concept. Those with multiple lanes could cause problems. The City should consider what driver education would be necessary to improve the public's comfort with them. Mr. Porell said the national experience has been that of resistance at first, but once they are constructed, citizens wholeheartedly support their use. He agreed that a strong public outreach effort would be necessary to teach about the proper way to navigate multi-lane roundabouts. Mr. Williams added that the best way to educate the public would be to design them correctly. With phasing over a 20-year plan, the public would have many opportunities to become familiar with the single lane variety. The primary benefit of well-designed roundabouts is to move traffic in a safe, efficient manner.

Commissioner Gruver requested more information about the thought process and the evaluation of other options that were considered in the traffic study. Did any other configurations have merit, and why were they discarded?

Chair Howard remarked that if the hospital expands as it is projected to do, it will be difficult to get through the area under any circumstances. The question is how best to minimize that. The Commission should at least discuss with engineers what the other alternatives are. Do 90th Street and 92nd Street have to remain in their current configurations, or would another way work better? He shared concerns about the density of devices in a small area. Mr. Meinhart said he would reschedule this item for next month.

7. **Congestion Management Report**

Mr. Porell presented a draft of the Congestion Management Report for the Commission's consideration. The report contains updates on the City's Intelligent Vehicle Transportation System, deployment and construction of turn lanes at various intersections, an overview of completed and planned intersection improvements, and a program to handle improvements along with the construction of additional bus pullouts and lanes. The recommendation section has been left blank so that the Commission's input could be incorporated into the report. Staff believes that the City has made considerable progress over the years and has created a solid base to address congestion moving forward. The Airpark area generates considerable comments regarding congestion. Staff has identified potential alignments for the ring road system.

Mr. Williams presented a conceptual design of key elements of the Airpark ring road system, which was recommended in the Transportation Master Plan. The plan is designed to mitigate future congestion there. He displayed maps of the area in question. Congestion is present not

only because of the large traffic volume there, but because of the number of turning movements. Turning movement lanes have less capacity than through lanes. The ring road is intended to provide a clear, simple, sustainable way around the airport. Key considerations are the effect it would have on businesses, revitalization efforts, existing neighborhoods, and the safety of the public, and route and mode options. Other considerations are the project's cost, and its proximity to the runway. Around \$72 million in funding is available for Airpark projects through the Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG).

Chair Howard inquired when more detailed plans would be available. Mr. Meinhart responded that concept design should be finished by the beginning of 2010. The Commission would have two opportunities to review progress during that time. The timeline is meant to match up with the Planning Department's timeline for the Airport Community Area Plan Update.

Commissioner Ward felt that the public would have been better served by having the Airpark handled as a separate agenda item. In response to his inquiry, Mr. Meinhart said staff intends to coordinate with both Planning and Aviation staff. Commissioner Ward inquired about Federal grants. Mr. Meinhart said the current Federal stimulus money is intended for shovel-ready projects. Once this project has been more clearly defined, the City could approach the Congressional delegation during their annual budget process. Regional funding requires a 30% local match. The City could also request that MAG consider pushing out other Proposition 400 projects in order to focus more immediately on the Airpark.

Commissioner Ward said the overall long-term benefit of this project is greater than average. He urged staff to look at all the reasonable options, and identify the pluses and minuses of each, and cautioned against drawing conclusions before they have had a chance to gain public support or opposition. Mr. Meinhart said Council desires that the project have a minimal impact on existing properties, but it does not preclude that acquisitions be totally avoided. Commissioner Ward said the Airpark is a land use project that will affect the City for many years to come. He suggested exploring the possibility of public/private partnerships for at least part of the project. Now is the time to start thinking about a champion for the project to ensure it gets the support it needs for completion.

Vice Chair Weiss said the Airport issue is important, but felt it was slipped into this item at the last moment. The Council did not ask about Airpark congestion. They are two separate issues that got lumped together. The ring road was one recommendation on the Airpark, but there were others, such as the connection between Thunderbird and Raintree to the south. The ring road was not prioritized over any of the other options. It would make more sense to establish another east/west route past the Airpark before starting on a major construction project north of the airport that would cause long-term disruptions. The Commission voted to put the Thunderbird/Raintree connection on the five-year CIP unless the funding was confirmed through MAG, which would push the date out further. Mr. Williams explained that staff looked at every alternative to connect east/west and north/south. The ring road is at the center of it all, and those routes would either have to connect to it or go around it. It would be too limiting not to look at all the options concurrently. Mr. Meinhart said staff would seek direction from the Commission on whether it would be critical enough to do the Thunderbird/Raintree loop first, even if it would mean waiting on the other pieces.

Chair Howard felt this item was not included to discuss the details of the Airpark ring road, but to use it as an organizing principal for how to discuss congestion. He proposed identifying the key areas in the City where congestion is focused; determine what needs to be done to get them right, and then working on improving the connections between them. Mr. Porell agreed that addressing congestion in the Airpark area has to be comprehensive. Mr. Meinhart agreed that staff could reorganize the report according to that principle. Chair Howard said the current

report is clearly the product of a lot of work, but it does not give any indication as to why it is being done and what should happen next. Vice Chair Weiss felt that combining the Airpark effort into the Council request was not helpful. It should be a separate conversation. Mr. Meinhart said staff would move forward in that manner. Mr. Porell added that staff would include the Commission's comments in the response to Council.

Vice Chair Weiss said most of his concerns were addressed during the Transportation Master Plan discussions. ITS specifically, is cost-effective and smart, especially during tight budget times. Improving ITS is a good use of money, even if it would mean doing fewer road projects. ITS money can be spread throughout the community instead of just improving one neighborhood like a road project.

Commissioner Gruver said the Mayor's request calls out certain measures for the Commission to comment on, but the introduction seems to interpret that more broadly. The Commission should be talking about managing congestion through a comprehensive system, focusing on all of the modes and methods that were described in the TMP. Chair Howard said the Commission still has a few months before the report goes before Council. He agreed with the importance of ITS and about using a comprehensive approach.

Commissioner Cole inquired about the impact the project would have on businesses in the Airpark. It might be better to delay such a project until the economy rebounds. Mr. Meinhart responded that the goal of the multi-departmental effort is to give businesses in the Airpark better predictability. Some of the pieces may not be built for a while, but staff intends to get to the level of detail that would allow long-term business decisions to be made.

8. **Other Transportation Projects**

Mr. Meinhart updated progress on the project with the Salt River Pima Maricopa Indian Community, to widen Pima Road to four lanes. The goal is to ensure that improvements are built in the section from Indian Bend to Via de Ventura in time to accommodate the new spring training facility that is planned no later than February of 2011. Drafts of the IGAs are being currently being reviewed

The City met with neighbors in the Hayden Road/Westland Drive area regarding current traffic control where there is a four way stop sign in place now. Staff analysis indicated that a two-way stop would be a better solution. Public opinion is split closely regarding the proposal.

Mr. Meinhart said Councilman Littlefield requested an agenda item to discuss the NTMP at the September 15 study session. The Commissioners can review the materials that will be presented to Council, and are invited to participate.

9. **Public Comment**

There were no public comments on non-agendized items.

10. **Identification of Future Agenda Items**

Commissioner Cole said the reconfiguration of traffic around the intersection of Northsight/Raintree area has caused confusion for drivers. The blinking yellow left-turn arrow for cars going southbound is confusing. Mr. Meinhart said staff has looked at that intersection a number of times. The most recent change was earlier this year. Mr. Porell explained that

yellow flashing left-hand turn arrows are being used more often throughout the nation. In the past, Scottsdale has used a green ball to permit that type of left-turn movement, but this method provides no warning that the driver must yield to approaching traffic. Research shows that the flashing yellow indicator was most well understood to the vast majority of drivers; even those that misunderstood it acted in a way that was safe and appropriate. Oregon has already mandated that all left turn permissive indications use flashing yellow arrows, and it is becoming a national trend. Scottsdale's website has a page that shows the advantages of the system, and the outreach effort could be expanded. The City has heard far more complaints at that location prior to the change than after. While only a minimal amount of collision information is available, the trend is significantly downward so far.

Mr. Meinhart said the other option would be to allow drivers to turn left only on a green arrow, but this causes frustration and additional congestion, because it does not let drivers take advantage of breaks in the traffic. Vice Chair Weiss said he has problems with that intersection too. He requested an update on safety numbers once the City has been able to generate a year's worth of data at that intersection.

11. **ADJOURNMENT**

With no further business to conduct, Chair Howard adjourned the regular meeting at 9:02 p.m.

SUBMITTED BY:

A/V Tronics, Inc. DBA AVTranz.

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.