



**SUMMARIZED MINUTES
CITY OF SCOTTSDALE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 17, 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 6:11 p.m.

1. **ROLL CALL**

PRESENT: William Howard, Chair
Terry Gruver, Commissioner
Donald Maxwell, Commissioner
Howard Sukenic, Commissioner
Paul Ward, Commissioner

ABSENT: Josh Weiss, Vice Chair
Carleton Cole, Commissioner

STAFF: Dave Meinhart, Transportation Director
Teresa Huish, Principal Transportation Planner
Rose Arballo, Transportation Commission Coordinator
Paul Porell, Traffic Engineering and Operations Director
Phil Kercher, Principal Traffic Engineer
George Williams, Senior Traffic Engineer

GUESTS: Paul Basha, Morrison Maierle, Inc.

SPEAKERS DURING PUBLIC COMMENT:

Suzan Curtin
John Kuhn

Dave MacDonald
John Berry

2. **Approval of Meeting Minutes**

- Study Session of the Transportation Commission - August 20, 2009
- Regular Meeting of the Transportation Commission - August 20, 2009

COMMISSIONER GRUVER MOVED TO APPROVE THE STUDY SESSION AND REGULAR MEETING MINUTES OF AUGUST 20, 2009, AS AMENDED IN THE STUDY SESSION. COMMISSIONER MAXWELL 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. **Scottsdale Healthcare Transportation Management Plan**

Mr. Kercher discussed the traffic control plan being considered for the proposed development at the Scottsdale Healthcare Shea Medical Center campus. The plan proposes that several traffic control elements be phased in. The first devices would be installed with the transit center planned along 90th Street. The second change would be the closure of the northern hospital driveway on 90th Street and the addition of a new driveway on Shea Boulevard to serve the Emergency Center area. The next step would be installation of a device, either a roundabout or a signal, on 92nd Street. Any additional devices on these corridors would be based on development occurring as projected and on future analysis by staff.

Mr. Kercher answered the Commission's questions from the last meeting. Why are so many traffic control devices necessary? He explained that six of the existing devices meet signal warrants today. The development has the potential to double the amount of traffic into and out of the site. The transit center would require traffic control to accommodate the movement of pedestrians. The two corridors also have consistently higher collision rates than the citywide average.

Is this traffic control plan consistent with the character of the area? Mr. Kercher said land-use intensity in the area warrants an urban corridor designation, according to the Transportation Master Plan (TMP). Accordingly, more emphasis is placed on accommodating non-vehicular traffic.

Have other options such as grade-separate pedestrian crossings been considered? Staff does not believe that conditions along these streets warrant grade-separated pedestrian crossings. Even with such elements, there would still be a need for additional vehicle traffic control.

Will these devices negatively impact traffic flow on 92nd Street? Expanded activity in the area is the main reason traffic flow would be affected. Any new traffic devices would be installed in phases to determine whether they accommodate the need, before opting to add more. Roundabouts do slow traffic under normal conditions--they do not require traffic to stop completely.

Are the devices too closely spaced? Mr. Kercher explained that the City would only build all the devices in the plan if conditions warrant doing so, and only in phases.

Can access points be combined to reduce the number of devices? A balance has to be maintained between allowing access and reducing impediments on the corridor. A large site needs multiple access points. The plan would eliminate one access point on 90th Street. Staff has explored combining the main hospital entrance with the library entrance.

Are the residents of Scottsdale ready for dual-lane roundabouts? Staff believes they are, and these corridors are good candidates for those applications. The City's one dual-lane roundabout has been successful, and the national trend is moving in this direction. Initial public concern over single-lane roundabouts has been replaced by general support since they were built. Well-designed roundabouts work well. Any proposed dual-lane roundabout would be associated with public outreach.

Have changes to the existing street alignments been considered? Camelback Walk and existing development in the area would make substantial changes difficult.

Did the consultant consider other alternatives for managing traffic? Mr. Kercher said the existing two-way stops are not performing that well. Signals and roundabouts would be options that are more appropriate.

Mr. Basha displayed diagrams and charts related to the project. The main entrance should be signalized as soon as next year. The new Shea entrance would accommodate vehicles turning right from Shea into the campus, and right out of the campus onto Shea. The median at that location would prohibit left turns there. The northeast intersection would be the next priority for signalization. This would accommodate pedestrian traffic across 92nd Street. Roundabouts could be considered at one location in 2015 and at another in 2030.

Mr. Basha noted that trip generation rates from traffic count data collection indicate that the campus has 40% less traffic than the national standards would predict. It is self-contained, is connected to other campuses through a bus system, there are multi-modal alternatives and mixed-use development within walking distance. SR 101 was initially intended to be on Pima Road; therefore, 90th Street was designed as a short street. The campus was built with this reality in mind. Today, 90th Street interchanges with the freeway and experiences more traffic than planned. Connecting 92nd Street to the freeway instead would be very expensive and disruptive to the area. A new street connecting 90th Street with 92nd Street would not relieve Shea Boulevard because it would be too short.

Dave MacDonald expressed his approval of the plan. Roundabouts have proven to be very safe, though special efforts have to be taken to accommodate pedestrians. A large transit center would have a lot of potential in that location.

Commissioner Gruver suggested that the public outreach effort on roundabouts be proactive, rather than reactive. The public would be more accepting of roundabouts if they were made aware of their safety statistics. She inquired about accommodating increased pedestrian movements in this area. Mr. Kercher responded that the combination of signals and roundabouts would provide pedestrians with alternatives depending on which device they felt more comfortable with. The traffic volume would not be heavy enough to prevent pedestrians from traveling across the roundabout.

Commissioner Ward expressed concern that emergency vehicles would have trouble accessing the hospital if the surrounding perimeter ends up not functioning as well as the internal campus. Mr. Meinhart noted that Scottsdale is considering Prop 400 funds to improve the Shea corridor, specifically in that area. Mountain View and Via Linda are currently underutilized. ITS improvements are being considered and the transit center would provide additional alternatives. The City's travel demand models do not indicate unsustainable volumes.

Chair Howard noted the proximity of the library roundabout with the signal at the main hospital entrance. He felt the combination of the two could magnify the disadvantages of both, and mitigate their advantages. Pedestrians who use the signal would reduce the efficiency of that intersection, and could cause traffic backups into the roundabout, effectively clogging it. In response to an inquiry from Chair Howard, Mr. Kercher said neither the library nor the hospital are interested in combining two driveways. Chair Howard said he is not convinced that the proposed design would work.

Mr. Basha noted that if both of the intersections had signals, they would both need left-turn lanes going north and south, whereas roundabouts do not require them. Closely spaced roundabouts can create congestion problems. The proposed combination provides the best of both options. Chair Howard said even if signal timing were adjusted to benefit 90th Street, left turns and pedestrian walk signals would still decrease capacity. Mr. Basha noted that the signal would have a permissive and exclusive left-turn arrow to allow southbound traffic to turn left on the green light for through traffic. The lagging left-turn arrow should allow most of the traffic to clear. If a problem develops, pedestrians could be encouraged to use the south intersection crossing to enable their movement to occur during the southbound left-turn arrow.

Chair Howard said he would like to see how the City intends to address traffic movement in the surrounding area to avoid creating problems elsewhere. Mr. Basha said the signal would allow left-turn exits from the hospital, where currently there is none. That would allow traffic to travel south to Mountain View, rather than having to continue to 90th Street and Shea. The plan utilizes Scottsdale's model projecting traffic volumes through 2030. That model indicates that traffic on 92nd Street will increase more than that on 90th Street. Chair Howard requested further opportunity to consider the information.

COMMISSIONER WARD MOVED TO TABLE THE DISCUSSION ON THE SCOTTSDALE HEALTHCARE TRANSPORTATION MANAGEMENT PLAN UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE BY THE COMMISSION. COMMISSIONER MAXWELL SECONDED. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY BY A VOTE OF FIVE (5) TO ZERO (0).

5. Pima Road Project

Mr. Porell provided an update on a project that Scottsdale is undertaking in cooperation with the Salt River Pima/Maricopa Indian Community (SRPMIC) and ADOT. The project addresses improvements to Pima Road along its entire length of the boundary between the City and SRPMIC. Objectives are to improve traffic flow, corridor aesthetics, business and multi-modal access, while safeguarding adjacent neighborhoods. A comprehensive environmental analysis, including social, economic, natural and cultural resources, air quality and noise impacts has been undertaken. Projected traffic volumes show a significant increase above current volumes by 2030.

There are three basic alternatives:

- Alternative A includes four 12' travel lanes, two 6' bike lanes, and a 16' median. This alternative utilizes maximum recommended lane widths.
- Alternative B includes four 11' travel lanes, two 5' bike lanes, and a 14' median. This alternative would not require additional purchase of land for right-of-way.
- The "No Build" Alternative, in which nothing would be built, remains an alternative at this time.

Staff recommends the second option. The existing buffering wall along the roadway would remain intact, while still allowing the road to be widened from its current two-lane configuration. The project would include improvements to Granite Reef Wash, taking homes out of the floodplain and improving the potential for commercial growth along the SRPMIC border. The Maricopa County Flood Control District has identified Granite Reef Wash as a major regional project, and would fund 50% of the cost of the flood control improvements. A formal public meeting program begins October 28. All environmental analysis work and preliminary design should be completed by the end of 2009. Final design should commence early next year. The SRPMIC has already begun final design for a critical segment of the project near the Diamondbacks/Rockies spring training facility that is being built. The public can get information on the project by visiting pimaroadprogress.com.

Chair Howard invited public commentary.

Suzan Curtin said the Sands East neighborhood supports Alternative A, as it is the true context-sensitive design in terms of driver and bicycle safety. The HOA would like more information on how this project would impact traffic volumes on Indian School Road. The current Indian School Road project was stopped short of Pima Road and the City has not provided information on what their plans are. The community has concerns about noise, since the screening wall along Pima Road is short. Mr. Porell responded that staff would also prefer Alternative A if it did not impact on the private property that lies to the east of the current roadway. Volume increases on Pima would not have significant impact on Indian School Road volumes. Improvements on Pima will extend 300 feet west of the intersection with Indian School Road, and would match the current configuration that has been developed for that corridor. The extensive Pima Road noise analysis has determined that the wall to the west of the road would provide noise mitigation sufficient to meet the City's criteria.

In response to Commissioner Ward's inquiries regarding funding issues, Mr. Porell said the identified cost of the roadway improvements is \$49 million, of which \$30 million has been identified as an element of the Regional Transportation Plan. The SRPMIC in association with Scottsdale have submitted a grant application to the U.S. Department of Transportation requesting stimulus funds for the unfunded balance. Failing that, the two communities have agreed to determine an appropriate share of the unfunded balance. Commissioner Ward questioned how this project would rank in comparison to the City's other unmet needs. Mr. Meinhart said Council identified this corridor as a priority. The spring training facility on the SRPMIC will clearly benefit Scottsdale even though it is not within the city. The majority of the houses that receive floodplain mitigation would be removed from the floodplain are also in Scottsdale. Rose – I don't know if "removed from the floodplain is a quote, but it sounds like we're removing houses from their location, not saving them from flooding!

Mr. Meinhart addressed context sensitivity. He noted that the members of the SRPMIC community view land very differently. They feel they have already given up a lot of land to allow the freeway to be built while sparing Scottsdale much disruption. The existing wall is well within the 55-foot half street right-of-way west of Pima.

In response to Chair Howard's inquiry, Mr. Porell said the implementation plan calls for the project to be built in four stages. Impacts to Pima Road will be significant when the drainage structures are installed. The schedule would be staged so that no two adjacent east/west arterial intersections would be under construction simultaneously. The SRPMIC believes that the benefits associated with flood control improvement would greatly increase the value of affected land. Mr. Porell confirmed for Chair Howard that Staff would report to the Commission prior to submitting the intergovernmental agreements.

6. **Congestion Management Report**

Ms. Huish reviewed the draft Congestion Management Report, outlining the City's current policies, practices, and recommendations. She presented a map of the key corridors that staff has been focusing on, the downtown area, Hayden Road up to the Airpark, Shea Boulevard throughout the City limits, Scottsdale Road from downtown to the Airpark, Frank Lloyd Wright Boulevard from the Airpark to Shea, Pima Road north of the Loop 101, and the majority of northern Scottsdale north of the freeway. Staff recommends following the complete streets policies to continue leveraging ITS technology to relieve congestion, to focus on intersection improvements rather than roadway widening, and to limit the use of bus bays and pullouts in areas where safety issues take precedence over transit efficiency. Next month Staff will present the Commission with area and corridor focused management strategies

Commissioner Sukenic inquired about the effects of bus pullouts on congestion and safety. Mr. Meinhart explained that bus pullouts penalize transit users and the efficiency of the system. Urban corridors give priority to pedestrian and transit activity. Bus pullouts are considered where safety or level of service could be improved in suburban intersections. Commissioner Sukenic noted that he has seen drivers on Scottsdale Road and Hayden Road make unsafe lane changes when trying to get around buses.

Commissioner Gruver supported the consistent use of language emphasizing multi-modalism and increased choices. She proposed expanding upon language to ensure that the public is not just informed about the program, but is invited into a dialogue with the City to shape it.

7. **Airpark Area Transportation Projects**

Mr. Williams provided an update on the Airpark Circulation Project. Staff is currently reviewing options for accelerating funding, and is conducting an analysis of the alignments and the intersection options. The form and function of the ring road is a major component of the project. Staff is focusing on arterial options for the ring road to eliminate discontinuities. These discontinuities require many turning movements, and cause some intersections to fail sooner than they would if there were more thru movements.

Phase One priorities include the Hayden/Northsight area, and improving the connection from the Loop 101 and Raintree to Scottsdale/Thunderbird. Staff is looking at better utilization of

Northsight to help drivers get around the Airport without getting into the congested area of Frank Lloyd Wright and Hayden. The options here range widely from minimal to substantial changes. Three critical intersections of Raintree/Hayden, Redfield/Hayden, and Raintree near 76th Street have been identified for improvements. In general, the City would like to avoid spending a lot of money on right-of-way, and to encourage redevelopment by making both sides of the corridor available.

Commissioner Maxwell inquired whether staff recommends any particular alternative. Mr. Williams responded that staff has not reached that point yet. A public outreach effort must first be conducted. There are issues regarding land use that must be addressed, and more analysis must be done. Commissioner Maxwell felt the best route would be Thunderbird, and he thought that Council had taken the western extension of Raintree off the table. It would require the least amount of eminent domain. Mr. Meinhart added that staff is doing a thorough review of all options to understand what the costs and impacts of each would be.

Mr. Meinhart summarized potential sources of funding for this project. The Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG) Regional Plan has roughly \$72 million programmed towards improvements in the Airpark. None of that becomes available until 2016, and it would be spread over 11 fiscal years. The Pima Road project from Dynamite to Stagecoach Road currently has \$37 million programmed from 2013 through 2016. Travel volumes anticipated in this area of Pima will easily be manageable with a two-lane roadway. He identified on a map a number of critical improvements that would make the road system in the Airpark work better. A project exchange with MAG could make funding available for these types of improvements by 2013. There could also be alternative interim financing mechanisms that would allow the City to borrow funds in order to move the design and construction forward to 2011/2012, and then begin the repayment of those funds with the exchanged Proposition 400 money.

Commissioner Ward inquired whether the first \$5.3 million would go towards concept development rather than actual projects. Mr. Meinhart said the goal is to lock into preferred alternatives by January/February of 2010, before going into the detailed design phase. The Commission would help identify key pieces to move forward. Staff is working to ensure that the funding can be in place as early as possible, and that the right projects are chosen. The first priority is the passage around the north end of the runway. The rest of the ring road system depends on this problem being solved. In response to an inquiry from Commissioner Maxwell, Mr. Meinhart said neither the Airport Commission nor the Greater Airpark study group have reviewed the project to this level of detail. They will have that opportunity as part of the Airpark Community Area Plan update.

Mr. Meinhart confirmed for Commissioner Gruver that the MAG project exchange does not require the project be defined to a high level of detail. MAG is mainly concerned that the City not ask that more money be available in a given fiscal year than they have already programmed. Commissioner Ward inquired whether MAG was likely to be able to keep their commitments, given the recent financial challenges. Mr. Meinhart responded that MAG has already adjusted their regional plan to accommodate these conceptual elements in exchange for the old runway tunnel project, and have updated their program based on the best financial information that was available this summer. The project exchange is estimated at \$23 million, while \$37 million is available from the Pima Road project. MAG's arterial program uses Federal funds in addition to local transportation sales tax.

8. **Other Transportation Projects**

Mr. Meinhart reported that the Council reviewed the Neighborhood Traffic Management Program (NTMP). The Council understood that final decisions come from the public process as overseen by the Commission. They requested that future updates address exceptions, and indicated a preference that project reviews be grouped together to allow comparisons between projects instead of just against the criteria.

Mr. Meinhart said Scottsdale has been approved for Federal stimulus funds for the Cross Cut Canal improvements from Thomas Road to Indian School. The project should go to bid next month. On September 29, Council and the Budget Review Commission will hold a joint study session to discuss financial projections and expenditures. There will also be initial discussion regarding a potential bond election on the 2010 ballot.

9. **Public Comment**

There were no public comments on non-agendized items.

10. **Identification of Future Agenda Items**

No future items were identified.

11. **ADJOURNMENT**

With no further business to conduct, Chair Howard adjourned the regular meeting at 8:55 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.