CITY OF SCOTTSDALE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
THURSDAY, JANUARY 16, 2003
KIVA - City Hall
3939 Drinkwater Boulevard, Scottsdale, Arizona 85251

Present: Vivian Johnson, Chair
David Hill, Vice-Chair
Brian Davis, Commissioner
Mark Melnychenko, Commissioner
Jeffrey Schwartz, Commissioner

Absent: Mark Gilliland, Commissioner
John Rooney, Commissioner

Staff Present: Rose Arballo
Debbie Astin
Michelle Korf
Jennifer Kroening
Fran LaPrairie
John Little

Chairwoman Johnson called the Regular meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 7 AND 21, 2002
COMMISSIONER SCHWARTZ MOTIONED TO APPROVE THE NOVEMBER 7, 2002 JOINT MEETING MINUTES WITH THE CITIES OF SCOTTSDALE AND TEMPE AND THE SCOTTSDALE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION STUDY SESSION AND REGULAR MEETING MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 21, 2002. COMMISSIONER HILL SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 5-0.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS FOR THE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
Chairwoman Johnson nominated Vice-Chair David Hill for Chairman. Vice-Chair Hill declined the nomination due to personal and professional commitments. He suggested that due to the absence of Commissioner Gilliland and Commissioner Rooney, this election of officers should be deferred until the next meeting in February.

Commissioners Gilliland, Davis, and Schwartz agreed it is important for the other commissioners to be present to vote.

COMMISSIONER SCHWARTZ MOTIONED TO POSTPONE THE ELECTION OF OFFICERS FOR CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR UNTIL THE NEXT COMMISSION MEETING IN FEBRUARY. COMMISSIONER MELNYCHENKO SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH PASSED UNANIMOUSLY 5-0.

Chairwoman Johnson asked Vice-Chair Hill if he would consider the nomination for Chairman next month. Vice-Chair Hill clarified he would not.

ITEMS FROM THE FLOOR
None.

ADOPT TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION 2003 WORK PLAN

The Commission reviewed the Draft Transportation Commission 2003 Work Plan.

Mr. Little mentioned this is the list the Commission has generated in identifying its major work plan items, which they would like to focus on in 2003. This is not a comprehensive list of all the items that might be addressed, but is a list the Commission has developed and will adopt as the major focus of its work plan. Once the Commission has adopted the Work Plan, it will be forwarded to the Mayor and City Council in memo form stating that these are the items the Transportation Commission is most interested in for 2003.

Vice-Chair Hill suggested that the 2003 Work Plan be adopted and that the memo to be submitted to the Mayor and City Council be written by Chairwoman Johnson. Vice-Chair Hill also suggested that the Work Plan items be re-organized by priority. Chairwoman Johnson explained that if the Work Plan were approved at this meeting, it would be her responsibility to write and sign the letter because the Work Plan would have been approved under her administration. If the Commission would like this to be part of the administration of the new incoming officers, then the adoption of this Work Plan would have to be deferred until the appointment of new officers for the Commission.

All Commissioners agreed that the adoption of this Work Plan should be voted on as it is inclusive of all that was discussed at the Special Meeting of the Transportation Commission held on January 9, 2003.

COMMISSIONER SCHWARTZ MOVED THAT THE COMMISSION ADOPT THE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION 2003 WORK PLAN. COMMISSIONER MELNYCHENKO SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH PASSED UNANIMOUSLY 5-0.

DOWNTOWN TROLLEY ROUTES

Ms. Korf provided a brief update on the downtown trolley and mentioned that:

- Transportation staff is in the process of purchasing seven new vintage style trolleys.
- It is important that the trolley route be kept meaningful, operate conveniently, and maintain 10-minute headways.
- Construction of a trolley pedestrian bridge over the canal near Marshall Way will take place. This is what triggered interest in re-examining the trolley route that currently operates downtown.
- Transit staff met with downtown stakeholders last summer to take a look at the activity centers and route connectivity.

Ms. Astin provided an overview of the three proposed alternatives developed by City staff and downtown stakeholders, and asked the Commission to forward a recommendation to the City Council as their preferred route.

Option 1:

This route closely mimics the original route and stays within the current budget. This route is predicated on an 18-minute one-way trip that allows 4 minutes of rest for the drivers. This route can currently be run with 4 vehicles on a 10-minute headway. This route does not serve the Galleria.

Option 2:

This route will serve the Galleria, which contains the Culinary Institute and will contain the Visitor and Conventions Bureau, and other offices in the near future. This route will eliminate the Loloma site and will shift the resting point from Loloma to Fashion Square Mall.

Option 3:

This route will serve the Galleria, but will have additional costs to the operating funds due to the use of five trolleys running this route. Interest in this route is high. Rick Kidder of the Chamber of Commerce recommends that the trolley route serve the Galleria.

Chairwoman Johnson does not believe that Loloma should be eliminated. She commented that the Loloma Station is the only major bus station in Scottsdale and believes that a city without a major bus station will not function well. Chairwoman Johnson feels that Scottsdale's regional plans for Loloma was for it to be a major transfer point. Chairwoman Johnson understands the importance of the Galleria, but feels that Loloma brings people downtown from all over the city and provides parking. Chairwoman Johnson pointed out that Loloma is not within walking distance from other bus stops. Chairwoman Johnson and Commissioner Melnychenko feel that Loloma was a big investment for Scottsdale; therefore, the need to have as many modes possible tying into Loloma is crucial

Commissioner Melnychenko asked if stakeholders and staff took into consideration the various services, such as libraries and art centers, and the shopping district when developing the various routes. Ms. Astin stated that the original route focused on tourists and visitors when looking at what route modifications could be made. She commented that with the bridge in place, the trolley would gain a bit of running time. One of the things the committee proposed is moving the route from Indian School Road to 3rd Avenue, which would allow the trolley to go east of Scottsdale Road to pick up the line of hotels on the east side of Scottsdale Road.

Commissioner Hill referred to a letter provided to the Commission from the Chamber of Commerce showing eight different recommendations for the trolley route. He asked if one of the proposed routes is one the Commission is being asked to take action on for approval. Ms. Korf mentioned that Transportation staff did work with the stakeholders group in an attempt to develop the original proposal; however, there could be other interests being served by the route.

Commissioner Hill commented it would be helpful to see a copy of the three potential routes side by side for comparison. He asked which of the potential routes to be forwarded to the City Council take more consideration of the eight recommendations from the Chamber as opposed to any other. Ms. Astin stated that some of the recommendations deal with signage and that one recommendation deals with operation on Scottsdale Road. The two proposals that will serve the Galleria will operate on Scottsdale Road for about three blocks. It appears there is a desire for the trolleys to run on Scottsdale Road.

Commissioner Hill stated it is important to take into account the Chamber's consideration and opinion as they are trying to make sure everyone's best interests are well taken care of. Commissioner Schwartz agrees and believes it is also important to review the budget in an attempt to bring resorts into the mix so that people staying at the various resorts have a way to get downtown. This will help revitalize the downtown area.

Commissioner Davis asked when the proposed route will be implemented and asked for a completion date on the bridge. Ms. Astin stated that the bridge is anticipated to be complete by Fall 2003. The trolley season begins approximately 10 days before Thanksgiving, so timing is crucial. Ms. Astin mentioned that if the bridge is not complete, the trolley would have to remain on the current route.

Commissioner Davis asked what the extra cost would be for running the fifth vehicle under option #3 and asked for statistics on ridership. Ms. Astin stated that the approximate cost to add an extra vehicle is $75,000 per season. She also stated that ridership at Fashion Square carries between 15-18%, Loloma carries 10-15%, and the remaining ridership is spread throughout all the trolley stops.

The following citizen comments were made:

Dwayne Richard, Downtown Scottsdale Partnership, 7044 East 5th Avenue, Scottsdale, AZ 85251

Mr. Richard stated that his organization is contracted with the City to manage the promotional and marketing efforts of downtown and to help coordinate the activities of downtown. Mr. Richard's office steers a lot of people towards using the trolley as a way to experience the downtown. It is proven that most people get off the roundabout at Marshall Way and Main Street because they do not want to sit for 4-5 minutes at Loloma; therefore, Mr. Richard suggests eliminating Loloma from the trolley route. He recommends that a stop be made at Fashion Square, as more people are prone to get off at the mall. Mr. Richard stated that people often request trolley service

at the resorts on Scottsdale Road. It is understood that private enterprise is attempting to create a route that will run through the resorts in the evening hours.

Mr. Richard also indicated that Indian School Road is not a good route for tourists. It is recommended that the Indian School Route be moved to 3rd Avenue because that is more retail and low scale, which is important for ridership on the trolley. Mr. Richard recommends that no matter what happens with the timing of the bridge, the new trolley route should begin by next fall. The need to find a way to make the new route work without the new bridge for the short term is imperative and the need to service hotels needs to be done.

Commissioner Hill asked Ms. Astin what she has experienced with the stops on Indian School Road. Ms. Astin confirmed that fewer stops are made on Indian School Road, but is used to gain speed which can be used some place else. With regards to the possibility of changing the route mid-season, Ms. Astin cautioned the Commission that there is a lot of physical infrastructure on the current route. In all fairness, Ms. Astin believes that the Stakeholders Committee needs to see the proposed changes to give them a chance at providing input.

Commissioner Hill expressed his interest that regardless of what the current budget is, this issue is an important enough piece of the Scottsdale urban core transportation scenario that increasing the budget needs to be worked on for this service. If the five-car option (Option #3) costs an extra $75,000 per season, staff should find a way to increase the budget for this important amenity to meet the City Council's priority on revitalizing downtown. Commissioner Hill feels the position of the Transportation Commission should be to recommend to the City Council that staff find additional budget for the best possible route and the best possible excellence in all aspects of the trolley service. Commissioner Hill also agrees with Ms. Astin that it is not feasible to change the current route mid-season due to the infrastructure involved. Commissioners Davis and Melnychenko agreed.

Commissioner Davis commented it is important for the Commission to have a contingency route in case the bridge does not get built. He also asked for a timeline as to when a decision needs to be made and when the new route will be implemented. Ms. Astin stated that the trolley purchase will go forward regardless of the Commission's decision. Due to the additional infrastructure needed (such as stop signs, notification, advertising, etc.) before the new service can be implemented, she estimates that such infrastructure would need to start being put in at least 90 days before the start of service.

Commissioner Davis also questioned the difference between a 10-minute or 12-minute headway and asked of the possibility of splitting a route to serve more locations. Ms. Astin stated it has been demonstrated in Scottsdale and many other cities that riders waiting more than 10 minutes for a trolley makes people question the route schedule and tend to not want to sit around and wait for the trolley. Splitting the route would result in some areas having a 20-minute headway, which is too long; therefore, this will not work.

With regards to Commissioner Hill's question on the purchase of seven new trolleys, Ms. Astin explained that the city has four vehicles in service. Two additional vehicles are used as spares, especially during the month of March when ridership increases. Ms. Astin stated her concern is that the trolleys will run out of capacity by using the new smaller vehicles; this is the reason for the request to purchase seven vehicles. (Per Option #3 reflecting the use of five vehicles, two vehicles would be used as spares.)

COMMISSIONER SCHWARTZ EXITED THE MEETING AT 7:00 P.M. AND WAS NOT PRESENT TO VOTE ON THIS ITEM.

COMMISSIONER HILL MOVED THAT THIS AGENDA ITEM BE DEFERRED SO THAT STAFF MAY PROVIDE FURTHER INFORMATION CONSIDERING THE INPUT OF ALL STAKEHOLDERS INVOLVED. COMMISSIONER MELNYCHENKO SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH PASSED UNANIMOUSLY 4-0.

Because of staff work involved, the Commission asked that this item be brought forward for action in February or March.

NORTH SCOTTSDALE ROADWAY SAFETY

Mr. Little introduced Ms. Kroening who gave a presentation at a Citizens' Focus Group meeting to discuss roadway conditions and concerns on the major thoroughfare north of the CAP in the city of Scottsdale. Ms. Kroening then gave an overview of the results of this meeting held on January 15, 2003.

Ms. Kroening explained that a series of three focus group meetings have been held. The first meeting occurred in March 2002 after a series of traffic accidents on Pima. The second meeting was held in August 2002 where public input was received on changes, concerns, and suggestions for projects. The third meeting held on January 15, 2003 was for staff to respond to citizens' concerns and update them on the progress made as of August 2002. Ms. Kroening stated that as of August 2002, several traffic studies and improvement projects have been completed. (The Commission and citizens were provided with this information.)

Ms. Kroening stated that the results of one of the traffic studies completed is the Pima Road Speed Limit Study which was conducted to evaluate that speed limit changes should be considered on Pima Road. The results of this study are as follows:

Section 1 – 101 Freeway to Power Line Corridor
Recommendation is to change the speed limit from 55 mph to 45 mph due to higher traffic volumes and congestion; lower travel speeds (averaging at 50 mph); a roadway curve as it approaches the freeway; merging traffic; and transition to the 35 mph speed limit on Princess Drive.

Section 2 – Power Line Corridor to ¼ Mile North of Pinnacle Peak
Recommendation is to change the speed limit from 55 mph to 50 mph due to higher traffic volumes and congestion; the number of commercial driveway accesses; and lower travel speeds (averaging at 51 mph).

Section 3 – ¼ Mile North of Pinnacle Peak to Lone Mountain
Recommendation is to not change the speed limit on this section of Pima Road. (It is currently posted at 55 mph.) The reasons for this is lower traffic volumes; higher travel speeds (averaging at 54 mph); few speed related accidents; few access points and no commercial access; and no commercial development access.

Commissioner Melnychenko asked if there is some type of signage that will be done at these segments to warn drivers that the speed limit will transition from one speed to another. Ms. Kroening explained that it is not necessary per the traffic standards to post a "reduced speed ahead" sign as the 5 mph change can be relayed to drivers by just using the speed limit sign itself, not with a "reduced speed ahead" sign. For the interchange approaching the freeway, there is a possibility a "reduced speed ahead" sign would be posted because the speed limit change in this area might not be as expected.

REGIONAL AREA ROAD FUND (RARF)

Ms. Korf provided an update on the Regional Area Road Fund (RARF) regarding regional road priorities and the upcoming vote for taxpayers to extend the sales tax for transportation purposes. She mentioned that a Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG) sub-committee called the Transportation Policy Committee has been formed with business leaders to discuss what might be on the ballot for this tax extension. It has been mentioned that this election could occur by Spring or Fall 2004. Some recent polling conducted by Behavior Research shows that currently, there is general support for this tax extension provided it is balanced between transportation modes (i.e., freeways, roads, light rail, bikes, etc.), and that it is balanced between regional projects and those local projects that have a regional benefit. If this tax is voted on, it could generate about $8 billion over the course of the next 20 years. Discussions have been held on the possibility of making this tax extension a 25-year tax. If this is approved, the extended tax could then generate about $10 billion.

Ms. Korf stated that this sub-committee consists of approximately 20 members, which includes Mayors from various communities in the valley, business leaders, and community leaders. There are freeway interests and transit interests represented on this committee. These Transportation Policy Committee meetings are held every third Wednesday of each month at MAG and are open to the public. Ms. Korf stated that public testimony is taken and would be an opportunity for the Commissioners or interested citizens to attend. Further meeting details and agendas are available on the MAG website at www.mag.maricopa.gov.

TRAFFIC IMPACT STUDY FOR PROPOSED AQUATICS CENTER

Mr. Little presented an update on the Transportation Department's activities related to doing the traffic impact analysis review on the McDowell Mountain Ranch Aquatics Center. Mr. Little stated that the Community Services Department has a municipal use site plan for an aquatics park to be located at McDowell Mountain Ranch Road and Thompson Peak Parkway.

Mr. Little mentioned that Transportation Department staff has been directed to work with the Community Services Department to do an additional traffic impact analysis of an alternative site that some members of the community are interested in. This site is located to the east of Pima Road between north of the freeway and south of Union Hills. This identified site is referred to as Site L. Kimley Horn is the consultant that will be conducting this study. City staff will then review Kimley Horn's Traffic Impact Study and will weigh in their analysis with the Kimley Horn analysis on the impacts of that site if this Aquatics Center were to be located in this area.

Mr. Little clarified that the Aquatics Center is a city project and is not solely a project of the McDowell Mountain Ranch community. The Aquatics Center is a municipal use master plan.

Commissioner Melnychenko asked if the traffic analysis includes the future connection to McDowell Mountain Ranch or DC Ranch on Thompson Peak Parkway, and if any other uses in the area were put into the mix for the traffic analysis. Mr. Little answered yes and that all known project development, both current and anticipated in the City's General Plan, is incorporated into the traffic impact analysis as well as traffic modeling.

COMMISSIONERS' ANNOUNCEMENTS

None.

GENERAL MANAGER ANNOUNCEMENTS

Per the Commission's request, Mr. Little advised the Commission that a chart entitled "Scottsdale Road/101 Freeway Major Infrastructure Funding Table" is included in the Commission's packet for their information. This chart was prepared by Transportation staff, which lists the various projects and detailed information showing which road segments are affected, timing, cost, etc.

ADJOURNMENT

COMMISSIONER MELNYCHENKO MOTIONED TO ADJOURN THE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING AT 7:29 P.M. COMMISSIONER HILL SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH PASSED UNANIMOUSLY 4-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Rose Arballo
Recording Secretary