

APPROVED AT THE 04-21-22 TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION MEETING



APPROVED

SUMMARIZED MINUTES

**CITY OF SCOTTSDALE
TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING**

**Thursday, March 17, 2022
Kiva-City Hall
3939 N. Drinkwater Boulevard
Scottsdale, Arizona 85251**

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Iacovo called the regular meeting of the Scottsdale Transportation Commission to order at 5:16 p.m.

ROLL CALL

PRESENT: Pamela Iacovo, Chair
Don Anderson, Vice Chair
Karen Kowal
B. Kent Lall
Mary Ann Miller
Kerry Wilcoxon

STAFF: Dave Meinhart, Transportation Planning Manager
Kiran Guntupalli, Principal Traffic Engineer
Phil Kercher, Traffic Engineer & Ops Manager
Mark Melnychenko, Transportation & Streets Director

GUESTS: Audra Koester Thomas, Maricopa Association of Governments

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no written or oral comments.

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

There were no modifications.

VICE CHAIR ANDERSON MOVED TO APPROVE THE REGULAR MEETING MINUTES OF THE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION ON FEBRUARY 17, 2022 AS PRESENTED. COMMISSIONER LALL SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH CARRIED 6-0 WITH CHAIR IACOVO, VICE CHAIR ANDERSON, COMMISSIONERS KOWAL, LALL, MILLER AND WILCOXON VOTING IN THE AFFIRMATIVE WITH NO DISSENTING VOTES.

2. TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION MEETING SUMMER SCHEDULE

Commissioners discussed the summer month schedule.

COMMISSIONER WILCOXON MOVED TO CANCEL THE JULY 2022 TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION MEETING. COMMISSIONER KOWAL SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH CARRIED 6-0 WITH CHAIR IACOVO, VICE CHAIR ANDERSON, COMMISSIONERS KOWAL, LALL, MILLER AND WILCOXON VOTING IN THE AFFIRMATIVE WITH NO DISSENTING VOTES

3. PROPOSITION 400 EXTENSION

Audra Koester Thomas, Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG), identified the MAG planning area. She provided a historical review of Propositions 300 and 400. The new regional transportation plan and the Investment Plan is in place to support an extension of Prop 400. Its main goals include Safety; mobility; responsiveness; livability; preservation; and prosperity.

The team uses a performance-based evaluation process with multiple steps:

- Regional project screening
- Project-level evaluation
- Project/program review and validation
- Scenario planning and tradeoff analysis
- Project program and portfolio

Projects of particular interest in Scottsdale include bus rapid transit on Scottsdale Road heading south through Tempe and connecting to Chandler; traffic interchange at Pima Road; bottleneck improvements to Red Mountain Freeway; arterial investments throughout the City. Other noteworthy projects outside of the City include reconstruction of the I-17, complete buildout of SR-24 in the southeast Valley connecting to Pinal County, SR30 connecting from I-17 west to 85. It is estimated that the great recession reduced Prop 400 revenues by approximately 40 percent (over ten years). Some projects have been deferred due to this factor, compounding challenges associated with the extension of Prop 400.

The proposed investment plan details were reviewed:

- 367 new freeway/highway lane miles
- 186 new HOV lane miles
- 1,300 new or improved arterial lane miles
- 45 new or improved traffic interchanges
- 12 new DHOV or system interchange DHOV ramps

- 4 new or improved system interchanges
- 11.9 miles of new light rail
- 36.8 miles of Bus Rapid Transit
- 6.9 miles of new streetcar

Investment monetary categories were discussed, culminating in a total of \$36 billion with focus on: Active transportation; air quality; arterial improvements; bus transit, emerging technology, intelligent transportation systems, safety; and transportation demand management. Over the past five months, the focus has been on legislation to give Maricopa County voters the opportunity to extend the sales tax for another 25 years. The enabling legislation was introduced at the beginning of the session. There are concurrent bills in both the House and Senate via SB1356 and HB2598. Both bills have made it out of committee and as of yesterday, Senate Bill 1356 was passed out of the Senate floor with the emergency clause provision, which requires a higher threshold of votes at two-thirds or super majority vote of the Senate. The same super majority will be needed out of the House. The emergency clause is required in terms of allowing the measure to appear on the November 2022 ballot, so that the law becomes immediate and affords the County the time and opportunity to prepare the ballot.

Commissioner inquired as to whether current projects are being evaluated in terms of current traffic trends, volumes or diffusion of use patterns. Ms. Koester Thomas stated that they evaluated the series of projects against a couple of different scenarios, including current and future projected travel patterns. Also factored in is the influx of population out to year 2050 as well as employment density associated with the approved land use plans. MAG has a very sophisticated transportation demand model. It is an activity-based model and provides a few unique amenities for testing.

Commissioner inquired about new or extended light rail routes. Ms. Koester Thomas said there are two extensions of light rail, both heading west out of the City of Phoenix. In the east Valley, there are two streetcar extensions from Tempe heading east and south to Mesa.

Commissioner noted the 20 percent decrease in bus transit usage nationwide and asked how this affects plans for public transportation. Ms. Koester Thomas stated that there is a tremendous amount of existing transit demand that is not currently served by existing funded routes. There is increased interest in outer communities seeking alternative options to connect to locations of interest. Cities will likely have to continue to subsidize investments along with MAG. The investment plan does project out exactly where routes will be in 5 to 20 years and funding is being set aside to do proactive, iterative transit planning. The Region's investment will follow a performance-based process.

Chair asked about the impetus for deciding on the half-cent amount. Ms. Koester Thomas stated that options considered included continuation of a half-cent as well as the option to going up to one cent. Directives were given by the legislature to regional mayors. This included a desire to avoid tax increases and remain at the half-cent amount.

Chair inquired as to current polling on passage of the measure. Ms. Koester Thomas stated that as part of the development process last spring, elected officials requested that MAG conduct some polling, which reflected tremendous support.

Chair asked whether a fixed amount of the tax revenue will go to transit versus roadway projects. Ms. Koester Thomas stated that as part enabling legislation, elected officials requested flexibility

in the dedication of investments. This includes up to a 5 percent variance between modes annually.

Commissioner addressed property value appreciation along the freeway network or light rail corridor, which leads to additional development along the networks. He asked whether there is a tracking mechanism for determining how this affects ridership. Mr. Koester Thomas stated that they are able to quantify much of the valuation, including identifying how many new locates occur for new business opportunities. Over 85 percent of new locates in the region have come within a proximity of one mile of a freeway or light rail corridor. There is not data available regarding associated ridership or behavior choices. However, there is an uptick seen in transit associated with high capacity transit investments.

4. GOLDWATER BOULEVARD AND HIGHLAND AVENUE INTERSECTION IMPROVEMENTS

Kiran Guntupalli, Principal Traffic Engineer, stated that as part of the Fashion Square development stipulation, the developer was required to study the intersection and come up with alternatives for improvement. An overview of the project location details were reviewed. The analysis included a study of left turn crashes occurring at the intersection. Challenges identified include Sight distance, roadway curvature, speeding and pedestrian crossing.

Alternative options were reviewed, including:

1. Remove vegetation
2. Lane drop to improve visibility
 - Add bicycle lane along Goldwater Blvd.
 - Reduce the posted speed limit on Goldwater Blvd. along the vertical and horizontal curve to 30 miles per hour.
3. Infinitybout (roundabout)

In response to a Commissioner question, Mr. Guntupalli confirmed that Highland Avenue is a stop controlled intersection. Phil Kercher, Traffic Engineer & Ops Manager, added that there is no stop sign on Goldwater. Mr. Guntupalli stated that when the roadway configuration is changed to a two-lane section, they will move the stop bar approximately nine feet into the travel lane.

In response to a question from Commissioner, Mr. Guntupalli stated that Macerich has indicated that a roundabout may not be a supported option in this location. The installation cost is estimated at \$5.4 million.

Commissioner referred to the left turn crash statistics and if it is known which lane the thru vehicle was occupying. Mr. Guntupalli acknowledged that those specific details were not included in the reports. The report documented the reason for the crashes, which indicated that the driver lacked oncoming travel visibility.

Commissioner asked whether the bike lanes tie into any bike travel routes on either end. Dave Meinhart, Transportation Planning Manager, stated that an upcoming pavement project will redo the pavement on Goldwater from the intersection on the north end of Scottsdale Road down to Indian School. The recommendation is to change the couplets from five lanes to four lanes, and a southbound bike lane could be added as part of the paving project.

Vice Chair referenced the intersection of Highland and Goldwater, noting that Highland comes in at Y configuration. He inquired as to whether there has been consideration for adjusting to a T configuration, which would mean drivers do not have to look over their shoulder to see oncoming traffic. Mr. Guntupalli stated that staff looked at various options. There are some right-of-way limitations in terms of movement.

In response to a Commissioner question, Mr. Guntupalli stated that no such proposed roundabout currently exists in the City.

In response to a question from Chair regarding the option preferred by the City, Mr. Guntupalli stated that staff recommends Alternative 2 as a preferred option. The location has been on the City's list of intersections for improvement for quite some time. There is also a capital project programmed. In addition, the study documented sight distance concerns, which the City feels should be addressed in a timely manner.

Commissioner asked how the intersection accident data compares with other intersections. Mr. Guntupalli acknowledged that it is not in the top list for intersections requiring immediate attention. However, there is now documented evidence of need and the recommended improvements are not high dollar items.

Commissioner noted that Alternative 2 calls for a reduction in the speed limit to 30 miles per hour and asked about the prevailing speed limit in the neighborhood area. Mr. Guntupalli said the current posted speed limit is 35 miles per hour. Mark Melnychenko, Transportation & Streets Director, commented that a new hotel is coming into the area and other developments will follow. As such, the City will continually review the area for possible additional phased improvements.

COMMISSIONER WILCOXON MOVED TO APPROVE STAFF'S RECOMMENDATION FOR ALTERNATIVE NO. 2. VICE CHAIR ANDERSON SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH CARRIED 6-0 WITH CHAIR IACOVO, VICE CHAIR ANDERSON, COMMISSIONERS KOWAL, LALL, MILLER AND WILCOXON VOTING IN THE AFFIRMATIVE WITH NO DISSENTING VOTES.

5. COMMISSION IDENTIFICATION OF FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

The following agenda items were identified:

- Presentation regarding how a.m. and p.m. fluctuations in travel demand time affects intersection and roadway capacity improvements.
- Tour of the Transportation Command Center
- Marshaling and staging of construction in Old Town
- ALCP status on project ramifications of cost overruns
- Update on program and projects

6. ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to discuss, being duly moved by Vice Chair Anderson and seconded by Commissioner Lall, the meeting adjourned at 6:34 p.m.

AYES: Chair Iacovo, Vice Chair Anderson, Commissioners Kowal, Lall, Miller, and Wilcoxon
NAYS: None

SUBMITTED BY:

eScribers, LLC

***Note: These are summary action meeting minutes only. A complete copy of the audio/video recording is available at <http://www.scottsdaleaz.gov/boards/transp.asp>**