

Minutes City of Tempe Transportation Commission April 9, 2013

Minutes of the Tempe Transportation Commission held on Tuesday, April 9, 2013, 7:30 a.m., at the Tempe Transportation Center, Don Cassano Community Room, 200 E 5th Street, Tempe, Arizona.

(MEMBERS) Present:

Charles Huellmantel (Chair)

Aaron Golub

Sue Lofgren

Kevin Olson

Don Cassano

Ben Goren

Nikki Gusz

Philip Luna

Charles Redman German Piedrahita
Benjamin Sanchez Gary Roberts

(MEMBERS) Absent:

Pam Goronkin Peter Schelstraete

City Staff Present:

Angel Carbajal Joe Clements
Eric Iwersen Greg Jordan
Yvette Mesquita Nancy Ryan
Shelly Seyler Sue Taaffe
Robert Yabes Kathy Wittenburg

Guests Present:

Ben Limmer, Corridor & Facility Development Manager at Valley Metro, Lisa Procknow, Community Outreach Coordinator at Valley Metro

Commission Chair Charles Huellmantel called the meeting to order at 7:34 a.m.

Agenda Item 1 - Public Appearances

None

Agenda Item 2 – Approval of Meeting Minutes

Commission Chair Charles Huellmantel introduced the meeting minutes of March 12, 2013 and asked for a motion.

Motion: Commissioner Cassano Second: Commissioner Olson

Decision: Approved

Agenda Item 3 – Scottsdale/Rural Rd. LINK Study

Greg Jordan, Deputy Public Works Director-Transit, introduced Ben Limmer, Corridor & Facility Development Manager at Valley Metro, and gave a brief presentation on the Scottsdale Study of LINK service.

Greg explained that the concept to provide limited bus rapid transit service to link east valley cities was identified in the 2010 regional transit plan, but was cut due to resources. The city of Scottsdale is ready to move forward with their portion of the plan to link Rural Road and Scottsdale Road.

Ben gave a brief update on the Project Definition Study Valley Metro is analyzing. The Scottsdale and Rural Road link is identified in the Regional Transportation Plan as a high capacity transit corridor extending to link services between Tempe, Mesa and Chandler.

An Alternative Analysis study on Scottsdale and Rural in 2011 recommended developing a bus rapid transit in mixed flow traffic between the Tempe Transportation Center and the Thunderbird Park and Ride-and-Ride on Scottsdale Road. Valley Metro is analyzing the recommendation to determine service elements and equipment requirements by 2014 and anticipates being operational by 2015. The LINK service is intended to provide high quality bus service to light rail and more enticing amenities such as Wi-Fi and ticket vending machines.

Commissioner Goren requested clarification on available wireless services. Ben responded that Wi-Fi service would be available for laptop use.

Ben concluded that Valley Metro is working with Tempe and Chandler on service components such as frequency and hours to improve operations between north and south Scottsdale, as well as pairing up service hours and frequency to serve the most number of riders, efficient with regional transit operating dollars. Public outreach will be initiated over the next few months.

Greg commented that Phase 1 is Scottsdale funded and Phase 2 lacks operating costs.

Commissioner Cassano asked about ridership estimates. Ben replied that many factors determine ridership which is currently under review and will be presented in a future meeting.

Commissioner Redman inquired about the differences of the buses in a devoted lane. Ben replied that the bus can operate more like light rail, provide more predictable service levels, be branded separately from Valley Metro bus services, offer more substantial bus stops that provide a shelter with trash can or big bike racks, and real time information boards.

Greg added that the 2010 study (the Alternatives Analysis) proposed business access and transit lane where the right hand lane would be designated to business access and transit usage only, which increases speed. The second piece uses a signal priority, which allows the bus to get through intersections more quickly than other traffic and the

third piece implements a change to the intersection design which allows a bus to go ahead of regular traffic via queue jumpers. Those three options are the major elements to increase speed for buses.

Commissioner Goren commented that the route makes sense for population going to school and inquired how Tempe residents working in Scottsdale will be serviced.

Ben replied that service needs are being evaluated, but most traffic is going south to Tempe. This will be addressed further in Phase 2.

Commissioner Olson reiterated that this is the logical high capacity corridor due to the highest employment density; stated there is no service that provides transit to get to the job at the other end; and inquired as to what kind of service will be provided around the airpark.

Commission Chair Huellmantel commented that Scottsdale places a different value on mass transit and it's a great study and if there were more talk about extending service southbound, the commission would want more information about ridership.

Agenda Item 4 – Broadway Rd. Streetscape Project

Eric Iwersen, Interim Transportation Planning Manager, gave a brief update on the Transportation Plan project between Mill Avenue and Rural on Broadway Road.

This project is in the Tempe Transportation Plan and is in concert with the policies in the General Plan; \$2.4 M in federal funding has been secured and must be obligated by the end of Summer 2014. Based on feedback from Council, staff and the public, five concepts are being proposed for review.

Five options have been proposed with two different direction elements. Direction 1: Remove one lane of travel on the roadway (currently three lanes) and Direction 2: Keep all lanes of travel, work with right-of-way and create a project baseline treatment for all concepts that are in compliance with plan and funding, include street trees on south side, provide wider sidewalks, have median islands with landscaping, incorporates bike lanes on Broadway, and offer intersection improvements.

Eric described the five options as

- 1) 1A: 5 travel lanes, traditional 3 lanes eastbound, 2 lanes westbound, 8' sidewalk and trees on south side, no parking on Broadway Lane with 4' sidewalk, builds into City right-of-way
- 1B: 5 travel lanes, shared 3 lanes eastbound, 2 lanes westbound, 8' sidewalk and trees on south side, no
 parking or sidewalk on Broadway Lane with cars and pedestrian share street space, builds into City right-ofway
- 3) 2A: 4 travel lanes, traditional 2 lanes eastbound, 2 lanes westbound, 8' sidewalk and trees on south side, parking allowed on Broadway Lane with4' sidewalk, builds into City right-of-way
- 4) 2B: 4 travel lanes, shared 2 lanes eastbound, 2 lanes westbound, 8' sidewalk and trees on south side, parking allowed on Broadway Lane with cars and pedestrians share street space, builds into City right of way.

5) 2C: 4 lanes, existing back s/w 2 lanes eastbound, 2 lanes westbound, 8' sidewalk and trees on south side, no parking on Broadway Lane with 5' sidewalk, does not require building into City right–of-way.

Commissioner Redman commented that Broadway Lane is not used because the roads are too bumpy and suggested making it more inviting as a bike route alternative.

Commissioner Roberts supports 2A because of the north side of Broadway Lane over option 2B which mixes pedestrian walkway with vehicles. Eric confirmed that option 2A is a more traditional streetscape with a more dedicated pedestrian sidewalk.

Commissioner Luna asked if there are brick paver sidewalks to direct people to go back and forth along a path and added that he does not support walls. Eric replied no, it just illustrates the different uses in the rendering.

Commissioner Piedrahita commented that he prefers options 2B and 2A.

Commissioner Olson stated he prefers 2A and 2B, as 2B will challenge the designers to create a space that could be used elsewhere.

Commissioner Golub stated he prefers 4 lanes and inquired about community input. Eric replied that the preliminary data is split; but the neighbors support lane removal.

Shelly emphasized that staff is specifically reaching out to Broadway Lane residents regarding parking and both plans could be implemented.

Commission Chair Huellmantel redirected the dialogue to focus on defining commission consensus and indicated staff will reach out to the public.

Shelly commented that the traffic analysis on the lane removal suggested that one way of increasing the Mill and Broadway capacity is to extend the lane through the intersection and drop it on the far side to decrease congestion and delay on the west side, which is the old Walgreen's site to improve service.

Commissioner Golub asked if that concept would reduce costs because there would be less modification west of Mill. Shelly agreed and reiterated that there are several options available.

Commissioner Lofgren supports moving to four lanes and does not support a wall and landscaping. She also inquired about using low water use vegetation.

Commissioner Goren mentioned the space by the Harkins Theater with the rabbits as an example of an area that combines all uses; it works because there is an expectation that all travelers are going the same speed, as limited by design.

Commissioner Cassano asked if there is landscaping on the south side. Eric replied that landscape has not been established yet, although feedback indicates that the wall is important, but discussions are not final.

Commissioner Cassano asked if there is two-way traffic. Eric replied yes.

Commissioner Cassano supported options 2A and 2B and wants to hear neighborhood feedback.

Commissioner Gusz stated she supports a four lane plan and prefers the neighbors decide.

Commissioner Goren commented to be aware that landscape could impede cyclists.

Commission Chair Huellmantel commented that he supports a combination of the two concepts and does not support block walls and acknowledged that there is a consensus of going to a four lane project plan.

Agenda Item 5 - University Dr. Streetscape Project

Eric Iwersen, Interim Transportation Planning Manager, gave a brief update on the University Drive Streetscape project.

Eric reviewed the handout outlining the project details and informed the commission that the proposal will go to Council IRS on April 18th for approval. The latest drawings have been submitted to ADOT in anticipation of acquiring funding over the summer.

Commission Chair Huellmantel confirmed that formal action by the Commission was not warranted on this item and asked Eric to email out the latest version of the drawings.

Eric confirmed that action is not warranted and appreciates the Commission's support. There were general questions regarding pavers, drainage and median reduction, which Eric answered for clarification.

Commissioner Redman asked if the pavers would be designed to differentiate between bike and vehicle lanes and Eric confirmed it would.

Commissioner Luna asked water harvesting applied to medians or water shed from the street and Eric responded that it would drain off from the street.

Commission Chair Huellmantel asked how much median was removed and Eric responded approximately 4,400 linear feet was in the first concept and it's down to about half to date.

Agenda Item 6 – MAG Planning Grants

Eric Iwersen, Interim Transportation Planning Manager, gave a brief update on funding options through grants.

Eric reported that the Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG) has \$300,000 available in grant funds. Applications are accepted in May and the funding becomes available shortly thereafter. Staff anticipates submitting several projects for consideration this year, such as the pathway design along the railroad, which has not been agreed upon by the railroad to date, but if the community supports and region funds, it could influence railroad to accept the project which benefits the entire community.

Eric will provide the Commission with a list of all of the projects listed in the Transportation Plan for discussion at the May Transportation Commission meeting.

Agenda Item 7 – General Plan 2040 – Transportation Chapter

Nancy Ryan, Project Management Coordinator of Community Development, updated the Commission on the Community Working Group (CWG).

Nancy gave a brief update of how the General Plan Community Working Group (CWG) was compiled. The CWG consists of 23 community members who, over the past two meetings have performed small group activities and have discussed key elements of the general plan in regards to environmental, public services, open space, housing and growth areas.

The CWG is reviewing circulation transportation elements and regional components including freight/inner city rail/airport components of the general plan. Nancy referred the commission to the material included in the Transportation Commission packet, which identified some of the priorities identified by the Transportation Commission and will be a valuable resource for the CWG to use as they move forward in their discussions.

The next CWG meeting is April 24th at the Tempe Public Library in Meeting Room A. Nancy shared the public meeting provides the opportunity for public appearance and invited commission members to attend to express their priorities.

Commissioner Cassano asked when the priorities were put together. Nancy responded that is was initiated at the retreat in August 2012 and continued through January 2013.

Commission Chair Huellmantel confirmed that he will attend the next General Plan meeting and clarified that the priorities should be bulleted as the order of the priorities was not designated. Commissioner Lofgren agreed that the items were emphasized as priorities, not in order.

Eric affirmed that staff will be present at the next meeting as well.

Nancy continued that the General Plan CWG expects to introduce a draft by June and will continue the process and get public input over the summer. The plan will go before the Development Review Commission in October and to Council in November.

Development of the Transportation Master Plan will resume after the Preliminary General Plan 2040 is introduced to the public Staff confirm that the Transportation Commission agreed to the hiring of a consultant to assist with the Transportation Plan.

Agenda Item 8 – Bike Ordinance

Commission Chair Huellmantel introduced Angel Carbajal, Assistant Police Chief, to present the proposed Bike Ordinance.

Angel reviewed the proposed changes in Chapter Seven of the Ordinance that relates to bike registration. Council Member Granville has expressed strong feelings about bike theft and renewed efforts to curb bike thefts. Angel reported that the current bike registration system is antiquated, cumbersome and limited in effectiveness and proposes to partner with neighboring cities and communities (ASU) to share resources and offer online services to improve and expedite bike registrations and reduce thefts.

The proposed system requests to mandate bike registration, charge civil penalty for failing to register, offer registration online, by mail-in card, walk-in service via police stations or by patrol officers on the street. Registration responsibility lies on the bike owner. Partnering with the City of Mesa, Chandler, Scottsdale and ASU will afford opportunities to compare data and curb bigger crimes that stem from bike thefts.

Commissioner Cassano commented that they registered bikes in the fire department in the 70's because they were more accessible. Angel replied that current trends move towards web registration.

Commissioner Goren asked for more details about the current registration process and Commissioner Luna asked how the new program will be promoted. Angel responded that there is a process in place, but no system to support it and that the greatest challenge is at ASU, and suggests having Crime Prevention and Community Relations attend ASU registration annually.

Commissioner Redman commented that it might be prudent to register bikes via the retailers when bikes are purchased. Angel responded that retailers could post the ordinance at their establishments.

Commissioner Roberts asked what the charges and fines are for bike theft and Commissioner Piedrahita asked if bike owners would get charged a fee for not registering. Commissioner Goren asked if there is a national bike registry. Angel responded that depending on the cost of the bike, the charge is a misdemeanor, but the goal is to make the program convenient for bike owners and partner with neighboring communities to utilize the data obtained to reduce bike theft and other crimes. Angel also noted that bike retailers do have the responsibility to notify buyers of bike regarding the registration ordinances; there is no cost for bike registration.

Commissioner Gusz asked if it would be beneficial to advertise this program around bike racks. Angel stated yes and described that the City of Mesa currently utilizes a program that leaves door hangers with a note advising the bike owner "your bike has just been stolen" and lists details on bike registration.

Commissioner Lofgren asked for clarification on how ASU registration interacts with city registration and Commissioner Goren asked how this program could be expanded regionally. Angel responded that it would require ordinance changes and data sharing processes.

Commissioner Goren suggested that language could be revised to support that element in Tempe's ordinance.

Commissioner Olson added that it should be explored; don't let it slow down Tempe's current progress.

Commissioner Cassano inquired how the process would work when a private bike owner sells their registered bike. Angel responded that the new owner would register the bike and an ownership trail would be created in the data source.

Commissioner Roberts asked if there was a timeline for the ordinance. Angel responded that there was not a set date, but the program will be presented to the Transportation Commission and the Economic, Lake, Downtown and Advanced Transportation Council Committee for approval before going to Council. Angel added that the language addressing altered serial numbers strengthens the ordinance and protects bike owners.

Commission Chair Huellmantel asked the commissioners if there was support for the proposed program ordinance. Commissioner Roberts and Olsen voice their support of the program and requested the item be added to the agenda to take formal action next month.

Commission Chair Huellmantel confirmed that there is consensus on this item.

Agenda Item 9 – Department and Regional Transportation Updates

Eric announced the upcoming Bike to Work event; Mayor Mitchell will lead the ride from Whole Foods to NCounter, where a free breakfast will be provided. Commission Chair Huellmantel reiterated what a good opportunity this event is to express how important bike paths are to the community. Greg confirmed that detailed announcement will be sent out via email. Commissioner Roberts gave kudos to Greg and staff for their work on the report to Council.

Agenda Item 10 - Future Agenda Items

- Broadway Rd. Streetscape Project
- MAG Planning Grants
- General Plan 2040 Transportation Chapter update in June; Commission Chair Huellmantel asked for statistical data; Nancy Ryan offered information on the study for review
- Commissioner Golub requested more specifics regarding the budget history for the Streetcar in the General Plan to help clarify the analysis and define the role of the streetcar and expressed interest in receiving the list of facilities transferred to Transit

The Committee's next meeting is scheduled for May 14, 2013

Meeting adjourned at 9:14 am.

Prepared by: Kathy Wittenburg

Reviewed by: Yvette Mesquita