CITY OF TEMPE
TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

IN RE:  

Public Comments relating to  
McClintock Drive Street  
Configuration

CITY OF TEMPE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION PUBLIC MEETING
Tempe, Arizona
June 13, 2017
7:30 a.m.

REPORTED BY:
LAURA A. ASHBROOK, RMR
Certified Reporter
Certificate No. 50360
PUBLIC COMMENTS in the above-entitled matter
taken on June 13, 2017, commencing at 7:30 a.m. at the
Tempe Transportation Center, Don Cassano Community Room,
2nd Floor, 200 East 5th Street, Tempe, Arizona, before
LAURA A. ASHBROOK, a Certified Reporter in the State of
Arizona.

BEFORE:

DON CASSANO, Commission Chair
Members of the City of Tempe
Transportation Commission
MR. HERZ: I am Robert Herz. The last name is H-E-R-Z. I'm a resident of Tempe. I have been in my home for in excess of 40 years. The role of the Tempe Commission Transportation Commission is advise and make recommendations that will make a positive environmental impact through reduction of energy consumption, air pollution and congestion. The U.S. 60 traffic interchange at McClintock Drive is a major traffic converge point along McClintock Drive.

Prior to the reduction of traffic lanes along McClintock Drive, traffic flowed with minimal delays during the morning and evening rush hours. The reduction of traffic lanes from three to two lanes in each direction has created serious roadway congestion during rush hours.

Traffic stacking at traffic signals has increased at least 150 percent. It extends a quarter mile or more, blocking access from adjoining side streets and driveways. With the two-lane configuration from Baseline Road through Southern Avenue, it often takes two or three signal cycles to clear each signalized intersection during rush hours.

The time delay for vehicles traveling along McClintock and the time delay for vehicles trying to enter
onto McClintock Drive from side streets and driveways increases energy consumption, produces increased emissions, air pollution and creates driver frustration.

Take into consideration bicycle and traffic volumes. Daily traffic volumes in the vicinity of U.S. 60 regularly exceed 35,000 vehicles. The daily bicycle volume identified in the June 6, 2017 staff report is 72. Providing bicycle lanes for the benefit of 72 bicycles at the detriment of 35,000 motorists is not environmentally beneficial and it makes no economic sense.

For the past 17 years, I have been in charge of roadway design standards for Maricopa Department of Transportation. Prior to that, I was responsible for the design standards for roads in Pinal County.

My recommendation is that you return the lane configuration for McClintock Drive in the vicinity of U.S. 60 to three thru-lanes in each direction. Allowing any reduction in traffic lanes from the prior configuration is contrary to the Commission's mission to make recommendations that will have a positive environmental impact through the reduction of energy consumption, air pollution and congestion.

I am not against improving Tempe's bicycle facilities. Tempe should upgrade its bicycle network in a safe, environmental friendly and economically prudent
manner, pursue development of the Tempe bicycle boulevard system, a system that provides a safe bicycling environment away from high-volume, high-speed roadways.

Thank you.

COMMISSION CHAIR: Thank you very much.

Appreciate your comments this morning.

Anybody else want to make comments at this point in time? The next person I have here is Cliff Anderson.

MR. ANDERSON: Hi. My name is Cliff Anderson. Residence is 513 East Erie Drive. Thank you for having me here. Great presentation. Really appreciate seeing the details. Doing a great job.

Taking the bike lane with heavy traffic, I have done it on McClintock, the section north of Apache. Do not recommend that for anybody. I've done it. I've done it in rush hour traffic. Really, really dangerous to do that, take my life in my own hands doing that, but that level of traffic is pretty dangerous.

One of the important things I want to stress is there's probably going to be a cost tradeoff at some point, and I know that there's a lot of economic development, a lot of new employees are going to be working in the City of Tempe due to some of these expansions, and I want to make sure the transportation
commission is getting its -- its -- the kinds of things they think are important to address those additional traffic demands, are getting addressed from a cost point of view as it relates to McClintock because of this cost tradeoff.

So I do think that for bicycling, having multi-use path to dedicated path, for example, the Country Club Way is really important; you ought to be stressing that very highly.

But another thing, I think I agree on one comment, that continuing the bike lane all the way to the 202 is a really important part of your long-term strategy, so I want you to keep that in mind as well.

And in regard to the counts, I think if you were to look at, for example, pedestrian counts on McClintock, you said not a whole lot of people walking on the sidewalks. That's valuable real estate. Let's get rid of those sidewalks because there's not many pedestrians there. Think about that a little bit and see if that makes sense because that's a very similar argument to bicycles. And I think I'm about out of time, but I really appreciate your help. Thank you.

COMMISSION CHAIR: Thank you very much.

Next person is Jen Rode.

MS. RODE: Jen Rode, R-O-D-E. It looks like
rode. So I live at McClintock and Don Carlos, and I bike with my two children in a bike trailer on McClintock from Don Carlos to Broadway twice a week and then I turn into that neighborhood back there. This route includes the underpass between Apache and Broadway, so if the bike lane were removed, I would then need to travel in the car lane. That definitely wouldn't work. I wouldn't feel safe doing that or I would need to walk my bike, plus trailer and kids along the walled-off sidewalk.

While I have gotten in decent shape from riding up the underpass for almost a year now, I'm still slow and biking in the car lane with my children is not safe. The options of either walking my bike, plus trailer and kids through the underpass or going over to Rural which would add two miles to my commute, once I ride back to McClintock, removes the efficiency that comes along with biking.

So if the bike lane on McClintock is removed, it no longer makes sense for me to bike either of those mornings, so I would need to drive. This means I would be adding an additional car to the traffic on McClintock which goes against the broader Tempe objective of encouraging motorists to use alternative transportation.

While it's understandable that having this
small amount of cyclists southbound during evening rush hour may seem like enough reason to remove the bike lane, I believe this would be short-sighted, and I implore you to consider the bigger picture and the greater good.

While I do drive on McClintock, I do not find that the bike lane is an inconvenience. In fact, I wish we could encourage more cyclists to use it instead of driving so it could reach its full potential of reducing traffic.

I have only lived in Tempe for five years, and I recognize that others in the room have been residents for much, much longer. I appreciate the way that you have all shaped this city that we have grown to love and you care passionately about the trajectory of our community. I share your love for this place. It's where I live, I work, I go to church and I shop. Everything I do on a weekly basis is within a four-mile radius of my home.

COMMISSION CHAIR: Your time is --

MS. RODE: It's important. Can I finish?

Thank you.

It's an accomplishment I am proud of in a place where 30-minute commutes are commonplace, but more importantly, Tempe is the only home my kids have known. My husband and I are committed to the flourishing of this
city, largely because this is where we are raising our
kids, and we choose to raise our kids in this community
because we enjoy living here.

In addition to me commuting to work by bike,
we enjoy bike rides as a family because the city is
uniquely suited for cycling. We even have a tandem bike,
and when we attach the trailer with our kids, we are
pretty hard to miss.

In a city full of cars it's easy to be
isolated. In my experience, cycling in Tempe has helped
me chisel away at the walls of isolation, giving me a
fresh view of the city and encourages me to interact with
people in my community.

I am committed to the future of Tempe, and I
believe that both supporting the McClintock bike lane and
promoting the culture of cycling is in the best interests
of the community as a whole. As a cyclist who can't move
quickly, I appreciate the safety of the bike lane on
McClintock, and I hope that it will continue to be
supported by the city. Thank you.

COMMISSION CHAIR: Next individual, William
Terrance.

MR. TERRANCE: William Terrance. I live at
410 South Robert Road, just right down the block here.
I agree with Cliff and Jen's statements.
Quickly, I would like to add one thing, and that is the concept of prioritization here. The main thing I want to ask the Transportation Commission to kind of look at is is McClintock the highest priority project in Tempe right now? I mean, are there -- we just repaved this whole thing. Are there places with more potholes, more safety concerns and other issues that we really need to take a look at that need to be fixed, because this one's working.

COMMISSION CHAIR: Thank you very much.

Okay. Zina Alam.


Okay. I'm a Tempe resident. I do drive, commute along McClintock from Apache and McClintock all the way to Chandler and McClintock. I'm also a cyclist. I agree with a lot of what everyone has said, Cliff, Bill, Rode. Sorry. I didn't get your first name.

As a driver, I want to add that I have liked the bus pullouts a lot. That has been very helpful, preventing weird weaving and unsafe driving, aggressive driving from drivers. As a cyclist, although I do like the idea of Country Club Way, I also want to make sure that -- I bike to go to the businesses on McClintock.

I actually don't bike for the fun of it. I bike to get somewhere. So I want to go to the businesses on McClintock, so those bike lanes are important to me. I
accept that there's compromise and some drivers need some help with especially that southbound section, and I realize we'll have to go down to standard lanes and other things.

Thank you for all of your work researching those, and I hope you stick to the multi-modal approach to support our community. Thank you very much.

COMMISSION CHAIR: David Rice.

MR. RICE: David Rice, R-I-C-E. I live at 212 West Knight Lane in Tempe, father of six-year old, eight-year old and ten-year-old kids. I guess I'm talking about sidewalks. What is the usable width of a four-foot sidewalk? Because there's some places along McClintock before the re-striping where there were four-foot sidewalks directly adjacent to high-speed travel lanes.

After the re-striping, there is now a buffer between the fast-moving cars and four and five-foot sidewalks that are directly adjacent to the curb on many spots along McClintock and that makes the sidewalks nicer, safer and more usable.

I believe the city's design standard is to have eight-foot sidewalks. So what's the desired sidewalk width and buffer width when we're doing sidewalk retrofits? It seems like there should be maybe some standard or some goal, and it would be nice if when we're
doing repaving and things like that, those things get addressed at the same time as ADA stuff and bike and car stuff also.

So, I mean, I guess I would like there to just be a minimum level of sidewalk safety throughout the city. I should be able to go anywhere in the city, any business and be able to walk on the sidewalk with my kids and not fear for their safety. I shouldn't have to walk through parking lots instead of walking on the sidewalk to get somewhere, and I think that's where it hasn't really been discussed in this issue, is the fact that the sidewalks along McClintock before this re-striping was done were pretty below average. Thank you.

COMMISSION CHAIR: Kim Gresham.

MS. GRESHAM: My name is Kim Gresham, G-R-E-S-H-A-M, and I live over on 1026 South Ash. I'd like to thank you all for your time today. When I looked at the alternative solutions for the McClintock Drive street configuration, I was pleased that there were sections provided both that would benefit drivers and cyclists without sacrificing for safety.

However, I do question whether the alternative configurations are an efficient use of our limited economic resources. The current configuration has not had any negative impact to our safety. The only
hindrance to citizens is roughly a five-minute increase in our commute southbound.

The next part, I'm an accountant, so bear with me. The fiscal 2016-2017 budget overall decreased three and a half percent. Within that, our capital improvements budget decreased 11.8 percent to 143.6 million. The most cost effective alternative configuration is estimated at approximately $5 million.

So my recommendation would be to keep the current configuration. It seems like the best use of our resources, but in addition to that, I would like some additional information as to what type of funding, like where would we be getting our funding for these potential additional improvements? What would be the overall impact, positive or negative, to our Tempe master plan?

Thank you for your time.

COMMISSION CHAIR: Thank you very much for your comment.

The last one we have here is Kristian Doak.

MR. DOAK: My name is Kristian Doak. First name is spelled with a K, K-R-I-S-T-I-A-N, last name is D-O-A-K.

So I personally have used -- I have made a point of using the bike lanes on McClintock for the last couple of months. I've been riding to local businesses on
McClintock. Part of this is because bike lanes on McClintock are some of the finest cycling construction in the entire city. Part of it is because we have some very fine establishments on McClintock, Steve's Espresso, Back East Bagels, Sprouts, Flanny's Bar and Grill. Tuesday's mac and cheese night is spectacular, but I've been making a point of going out there riding on McClintock in the morning and evenings, and the bike lanes, I see quite a bit of traffic on them. There are a large number of cyclists. There are many more cyclists out on McClintock than there ever were before the bike lanes went in, and this is, in my eyes, a spectacular improvement for the City of Tempe.

We have got a lot more people out there who are using bicycles instead of driving. That's going to help drive down congestion in the city overall long term. It's going to make the city safer. It's going to make the city a more livable place. I'd like to see the city double down on that.

I want to see us put in more bike lines so that we can get more people riding, because this is working. This is doing what it's supposed to do. It's getting more people out there riding, getting more people out of their cars, and we're making progress and it would be a shame to see us roll that back. Thank you.
COMMISSION CHAIR: Thank you very much. That will -- that's the last request I had to speak. We'll close that portion of this item and we'll now go to Commission discussion.

(Public comment portion of the hearing concluded at 8:20 a.m.)
STATE OF ARIZONA  } SS.
COUNTY OF MARICOPA  }

BE IT KNOWN that the foregoing proceedings were taken before me; that the witness before testifying was duly sworn by me to testify to the whole truth; that the foregoing pages are a full, true and accurate record of the proceedings, all done to the best of my skill and ability; that the proceedings were taken down by me in shorthand and thereafter reduced to print under my direction.

I CERTIFY that I am in no way related to any of the parties hereto nor am I in any way interested in the outcome hereof.

[ ] Review and signature was requested; any changes made by the witness will be attached to the original transcript.
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I CERTIFY that I have complied with the ethical obligations set forth in ACJA 7-206(F)(3) and ACJA 7-206 J(1)(g)(1) and (2).

Dated at Phoenix, Arizona, this 21st day of June, 2017.

__________________________________________
LAURA A. ASHBROOK, RMR
Certified Reporter
Arizona CR No. 50360

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I CERTIFY that GRIFFIN & ASSOCIATES, LLC, has complied with the ethical obligations set forth in ACJA 7-206 (J)(1)(g)(1) through (6).

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