



## Minutes City of Tempe Transportation Commission May 9, 2017

Minutes of the Tempe Transportation Commission held on Tuesday, May 9, 2017, 7:30 a.m., at the Tempe Transportation Center, Don Cassano Community Room, 200 E. Fifth Street, Tempe, Arizona.

**(MEMBERS) Present:**

Don Cassano (Chair)	Lloyd Thomas
Ryan Guzy	Susan Conklu
Shereen Lerner	Kevin Olson
Brian Fellows	Cyndi Streid
Charles Redman	Shana Ellis
Jeremy Browning	Paul Hubbell
Nigel A.L. Brooks	Bonnie Gerepka

**(MEMBERS) Absent:**

Charles Huellmantel

**City Staff Present:**

Sue Taaffe, Public Works Supervisor	Joe Clements, Transportation Financial Analyst
Chase Walman, Transportation Planner	Laura Kajfez, Neighborhoods Services Specialist
Robert Yabes, Principal Planner	Mike Nevarez, Transit Manager
Amanda Nelson, Public Information Officer	Mackenzie Keller, Public Information Officer
Shauna Warner, Neighborhoods Program Manager	Julian Dresang, City Traffic Engineer
Eric Iwersen, Principal Planner	Tony Belleau, Transportation Planner

**Guests Present:**

John Federico, resident	Gary Tenney, resident
Steven Voss, resident	Kate Borders, DTA
JC Porter, Arizona State University	John Reynolds, resident
Amy Unciarrence, resident	Robert Herz, resident
David Richardson, resident	

Commission Chair Cassano called the meeting to order at 7:31 a.m.

**Agenda Item 1 – Public Appearances**

John Reynolds spoke about the intersection of Rural and Broadway roads. Specifically he addressed the difficulty of making the turn movement from westbound Broadway to southbound Rural. The left turn lane westbound only allows for four cars to stack and because of that, cars trying to go straight get backed up to Terrace Road.

Steven Voss spoke about First Street, Ash Avenue, Rio Salado Parkway Realignment Concepts. He is in favor of Option #1 (leave as is) and encouraged the Commission to support that option. There has been no staff input from a

safety perspective or understanding as to what is driving this issue. He stated that he has property near the intersection and that there is currently full access. Any option other than #1 will impact that access.

Gary Tenney spoke about First Street, Ash Avenue, Rio Salado Parkway Realignment Concepts. He is in favor of Option #1 (leave as is) because there is no other viable option and Option #1 complements the Streetcar. Other options would force employees and guests to not turn left but rather back into the downtown area.

David Richardson spoke about First Street, Ash Avenue, Rio Salado Parkway Realignment Concepts. He owns property at Ash Avenue and believes that Option #1 is the only viable option. The studies seemed incomplete with regards to traffic delays.

### **Agenda Item 2 – Minutes**

Chair Cassano introduced the minutes of the April 11, 2017 meeting and asked for a motion. A motion was made to approve the minutes.

**Motion:** Commissioner Nigel A.L. Brooks

**Second:** Vice Chair Ryan Guzy

**Decision:** Approved

### **Agenda Item 3 – Downtown Tempe Association Update**

Kate Borders with the Downtown Tempe Authority spoke about downtown Tempe. Topics of the presentation included:

- DTA Geographical Boundaries
- Business Improvement Districts
- Parking
- Traffic
- Downtown Living
- Mobility
- Homelessness
- Placemaking
- Looking Forward

The Commission asked the following questions, and Kate responded as follows:

- Where did she find the placemaking images for the slides? The images are from the internet.
- Is DTA part of the city budget? No, DTA is privately funded through an assessment area.
- How does DTA deal with future needs and growth other than conducting surveys and focus groups? DTA works with Neighborhood Services to see why residents come to downtown or why they don't. It's difficult to reach people who aren't already in Tempe.
- What is the current residential population in downtown? 1,500 to 2,000 people not including students live in the downtown area and that number is estimated to increase to 15,000.

### **Agenda Item 4 - First Street, Ash Avenue, Rio Salado Parkway Realignment Concepts**

Eric Iwersen made a presentation about the design concepts options for the First Street, Ashe Avenue and Rio Salado Parkway intersection. Topics of the presentation included:

- Project Background
- Alternatives/Options
- Traffic & Cost Analysis
- Public Input

The Commission asked the following questions, and staff responded as follows:

- Does the Streetcar operate in the left turn lane? Yes.
- Is there a signal for westbound travel in Option #2? The green symbols on the maps are signals. There will be multiple signals instead of one.
- In Option #2, with the enhanced westbound access how do pedestrians get across the street? There are crosswalks, but the bicycle and pedestrian access will not be enhanced.
- In Option #3, does the Streetcar travel through the traffic circle and is it paint only in the traffic circle? This would be part of the design which has not been determined, but the traffic circle could have landscaping.
- In Option #3, what do pedestrians do to get across the street? Typically the pedestrian crossings will be in advance of the intersection.
- Have traffic studies been conducted? There is some information about traffic counts, but not much. On First Street and Farmer Avenue there are new businesses and that has increased traffic. Traffic on Rio Salado is anticipated to increase.
- What is really driving this project? Consideration to revisit the project as a concurrent effort with Streetcar was reintroduced with City Council approving funding for design in the CIP FY 2017 budget.
- With Option #1, has staff looked at just improvements bicycle and pedestrian access?? Yes staff can explore.

The Commission made the following statements:

- The best way to address issues at the intersection is to provide for more signal time for pedestrians to cross the street since cars are not always looking when making the left hand turn.
- As a resident who lives near the intersection, a review of the traffic signal timing would be helpful. It is dangerous for bicyclists and pedestrians and confusing for motorists. The Commissioner also noticed that there was no accident data in the presentation.

A motion was made to support Option #1.

**Motion:** Commissioner Kevin Olson

**Second:** Commissioner Shereen Lerner

**Decision:** Approved

### **Agenda Item 5 – Streetcar**

Eric Iwersen provided an update on the Tempe Streetcar project. Topics of the presentation included:

- Project Timeline
- Off-Wire Operating Costs Risks
- Current Off-Wire Design
- Off-Wire Design Alternatives
- Mill Avenue Configuration
- Public Involvement
- Federal Funding
- Construction Schedule

The Commission asked the following questions, and staff responded as follows:

- Is it possible to build the system wireless and retrofit it later to be on-wire? On the Gammage curve it depends on how it is designed, but staff believes it is possible.
- What is the plan for battery failures? The Streetcar would be towed back to the maintenance yard.
- Do these alternatives take into consideration summer temperatures? Yes, the scenarios take into account heavy traffic and high temperatures.

- What happens to the Streetcar when there is an event on Mill Avenue? The train will use Ash Avenue in both directions.
- Is it possible not to have small segments of wires like on University at Ash and at Mill? Having the Streetcar be on the wires, even in short segments, allows for the battery to recharge.
- Have any park and ride lots been created? There are two park and ride lots on Apache Boulevard that can be used. There are no plans to build additional park and rides.

A motion was made to keep the current off-wire configuration.

**Motion:** Commissioner Kevin Olson  
**Second:** Commissioner Susan Conklu  
**Decision:** Approved

A motion was made to support Option #1, Shared Lane on Mill Avenue.

**Motion:** Commissioner Jeremy Browning  
**Second:** Commissioner Ryan Guzy  
**Decision:** Approved

#### **Agenda Item 6 – Maricopa Association of Governments Design Assistance Grants**

Chase Walman presented the three projects identified by staff for the Maricopa Association of Governments Design Assistance Grants. The three projects included:

- Upstream Dam Pedestrian Bridge over Town Lake at the Dorsey Lane Alignment
- Tempe Canal Multi-Use Path from Union Pacific Railroad to US 60
- Dorsey Lane Bicycle Pedestrian Improvements/Streetscape

The Commission asked the following questions, and staff responded as follows:

- How much money has Tempe historically received. In the last two years Tempe received? \$82,500 for the Country Club Way Streetscape design and \$52,000 for the Western Canal MUP extension.

The Commission made the following statements:

- The decision should be made based on which project provides the most bang for the buck.
- The bridge would score high at the Maricopa Association of Governments because it connects four cities, and the Dorsey Lane Streetscape would score next best because of the population density.
- The bridge has been put off for several years and it seems like an obvious choice given the connections.
- There is a new soccer stadium to the north of the lake and the Rio Salado Path between Indian Bend Wash and McClintock will be constructed soon providing more connections.

A motion was made to advance the Upstream Dam Pedestrian Bridge over Town Lake at the Dorsey Lane Alignment project.

**Motion:** Commissioner Brian Fellows  
**Second:** Commissioner Ryan Guzy  
**Decision:** Approved

#### **Agenda Item 7 – Tempe Involving the Public Plan**

Shauna Warner presented the Tempe Involving the Public Plan (TIP) and explained the history of the TIP and the City Council approval process.

The Commission asked the following questions, and staff responded as follows:

- Is private development public involvement handled by the city? No, but private development projects are required to use a similar process as the city.
- Does the city follow up to make sure that private developers conduct a public input process? Yes.

**Agenda Item 8 – Department & Regional Transportation Updates**

Sue Taaffe reminded the Commission that the opening of the Bike Share system would occur Monday, May 15.

**Agenda Item 9 - Future Agenda Items**

Commissioner Paul Hubbell requested that “Maintenance Procedures for Sidewalk Shade Trees near Overhead Power Lines” be added as a future agenda item. The following future agenda items have been previously identified by the Commission or staff:

June 13

- McClintock Drive Street Configuration
- Road Construction Traffic Mitigation

July 11

- Autonomous Vehicles
- Western Canal Expansion MUP Final Design
- Highline Canal MUP Final Design

August 8

- Leading vs. Lagging Left Turn Signals
- Bus Security Program
- Plan for Expansion of Bicycle/Pedestrian Paths
- Streetcar

September 12

- Fifth Street Project Update
- Annual Report
- North/South Railroad Spur MUP

October 10

- Annual Report
- Alameda Drive

November 12

- Bike Share Update
- Streetcar
- Speed Limits

December 12

TBD: Bicycle/Pedestrian Signal Activate Operations Update

TBD: Small Area Transportation Study

TBD: Prop 500

The next meeting is scheduled for June 13, 2017.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:55 a.m.

Prepared by: Sue Taaffe

Reviewed by: Eric Iwersen