

TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY BOARD MEETING

APPROVED

HELD ON APRIL 16, 2013

TAB Members Present

Ron Barnes, Chairman
Dawn Fortuna, Vice Chairperson
Ian Bennett
Bruce Hallsted
Kay Henry
Jim LeCheminant
Mike Schmidt
Ron Wilson

TAB Members Absent

Troy Peterson (Excused)

Others Present

Dan Cleavenger
Randi Davis
Renate Ehm
Sabine Ellis
Amanda McKeever
Haley Mengel
Kimberly Nelson
Jodi Sorrell
Sgt. David Meicke

Chairman Ron Barnes called the April 16, 2013 Transportation Advisory Board meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

Item 1. Approval of the minutes of the Transportation Advisory Board meeting held on March 19, 2013.

Board Member Ian Bennett moved to approve the minutes as written. Vice Chairperson Dawn Fortuna seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Item 2. Acknowledge incoming Board Member, Mr. Ron Wilson.

Chairman Ron Barnes welcomed Board Member Ron Wilson. Board Member Wilson introduced himself and gave a brief background on himself.

Item 3. Items from citizens present.

None.

Item 4. Hear a presentation and discuss the Central Mesa Light Rail Extension Update.

Interim Transit Director Jodi Sorrell introduced Rob Antoniak from Valley Metro and explained they would be giving an update on the Central Mesa Light Rail Extension. Mr. Antoniak introduced his team members present and began by discussing the current construction activity. He then discussed the utility relocations taking place and reviewed intersection impacts that will take place. Mr. Anotoniak explained that the contractor is trying to complete intersection work when there is less demand and impact to drivers.

Ms. Sorrell then discussed the downtown parking coordination that has taken place. She explained the needs of and impacts to local businesses. She then reviewed a downtown map

created for this project showing parking options, showed the series of signs that have been created to help people find parking options, and explained the color coded parking lots. Ms. Sorrell explained that the contractor will provide business access signs that can be customized based on needs and that those signs will be color coded to match the parking lots in the areas. She said that parking lots outside of the color coded parking lots will have standard blue business access signs.

Mr. Antoniak then discussed the temporary street lights that will be installed starting May 1, 2013. Mr. Antoniak explained that work will be done to remove the street lights located in the center median and temporary wood poles will be installed and will be up for 12 to 24 months. He said that those temporary poles will have overhead power lines.

Mr. Antoniak then reviewed the general schedule and explained that the ultimate goal for completion is in the fourth quarter of 2015. He then detailed each of the phases and the impacts in the area.

Mr. Antoniak then reviewed the conditions where there may be opportunities to speed up construction and explained the next steps.

Mr. Antoniak concluded by offering his direct contact information and offered to answer any questions the Board may have.

Vice Chairperson Fortuna asked about the summer work hours and Mr. Antoniak explained that construction will begin as early as 5 a.m. and conclude around 2 p.m.

Board Member Bennett noted the uptick in graffiti and asked what is being done to address it. Mr. Antoniak explained that the contractor is experiencing graffiti and is reporting incidents as well as monitoring activities and fencing projects in. He said that the contractor is trying to address the graffiti as it occurs and ensured that the contractor is trained on reporting the graffiti through the MyMesa Smartphone App.

Board Member Wilson asked about pedestrian crossings and Mr. Antoniak responded by discussing the conditions. He explained that sidewalks will be protected and then detailed the impacts to mid-block crossings.

Chairman Barnes asked about plans for email notifications encouraging patronage to affected businesses such as the Friends of Transit email that goes out. Ms. Sorrell explained that quarterly mixers/events to draw different groups of people into downtown are being planned. She explained that staff is looking for unique opportunities to roll out a campaign in the most appropriate way.

Item 5. Hear a presentation and discuss the Gilbert Road Light Rail Extension Update.

Ms. Sorrell continued by introducing Ben Limmer and explained they would be discussing the Gilbert Road Light Rail Extension. Mr. Limmer began by briefly reviewing the project details, the station locations for Stapley Drive and the end of line at Gilbert Road, and the various factors used for evaluating site locations.

Mr. Limmer then explained the evaluations that took place for the Stapley Drive station location and explained that a recommendation is being made for the station to be located east of Stapley Drive. He explained this recommendation is being made in order to maximize the re-use opportunities of adjacent land and to connect with existing bus routes and minimize the impacts to private properties.

Mr. Limmer continued and gave the recommendation for the Gilbert Road station location. He explained that the recommendation is for a station to be located west of Gilbert Road. He explained that this will allow for future expansion south on Gilbert Road or east on Main Street. Mr. Limmer added that the primary reason for this recommended location is to connect to a Park and Ride site.

Mr. Limmer detailed the Park and Ride site. He explained that locations at the northwest and southwest corners of Gilbert Road and Main Street were considered. Mr. Limmer explained that the northwest location would hold approximately 850 spots and the southwest location would have around 700 spots. Mr. Limmer explained the considerations made for future growth and said that an estimated 500 spots would be needed the first year. Mr. Limmer said that in 20 years, staff estimates a need of 850 spots.

Mr. Limmer explained that the recommended Park and Ride location is on the southwest corner of Gilbert Road and Main Street. He said that this location allows for fewer impacts on business and buildings. He said that there is a lower cost and that cars will be able to get into the site quickly.

Mr. Limmer then addressed the street configuration. He explained that a four lane, two lane, and a hybrid cross section were considered for Main Street from Mesa Drive to Gilbert Road. Mr. Limmer said that the four lane option would require significant right-of-way acquisition for the station locations and left turn lanes. Additionally, a four lane option would remove all on-street parking, which would eliminate over 200 parking spots.

Mr. Limmer said that the two lane option would not have on-street parking at the stations and left turn lanes, but most right-of-way would be left intact. He explained this option affects fewer properties and reduces traffic flow along Main Street, but leaves on-street parking.

Finally, Mr. Limmer detailed the hybrid option which has two through traffic lanes, widens to four lanes at the major intersections, retains bike lanes, and some on-street parking. Mr. Limmer said this option would add two roundabouts at Horne and Harris. He said the primary benefit of this option is that it would carry more automobiles than the two lane option and require less right-of-way than the four lane. Mr. Limmer said that Salt Lake City has a good example of roundabouts being used in this manner. He said that the roundabouts would require crossing gates and two more traffic signals and more right-of-way than the two lane option. Mr. Limmer explained that the hybrid option is being recommended.

Mr. Limmer concluded by explaining the stakeholder and business outreach that has been conducted thus far. He described attending public meetings, reaching out to businesses, and the many emails that have been sent. Mr. Limmer said that the team is reaching out to stakeholders versus waiting for stakeholders to reach out to them. He then offered to answer any questions the Board may have.

Board Member Bennett asked about meeting the needs of bicycles at the new stations. Ms. Sorrell responded that the station locations have not been designed yet and the bike parking needs have yet to be identified. Mr. Limmer added that bicyclists' needs are a high priority, and careful attention will be paid to the station designs.

Board Member Jim LeCheminant asked what response business owners have had in regards to the recommendations. Ms. Sorrell responded that a good number of businesses are supportive and believe the project will transform the area and that she would estimate the support being at around 60%. Ms. Sorrell said that other business owners are concerned about losing left hand turn ability, as well as funding.

Vice Chairperson Fortuna asked about the future parking needs for the Park and Ride. Mr. Limmer responded that the future modeling is an estimate and that the numbers included are an approximation. Mr. Limmer said that in the future, a parking structure may be considered at the Park and Ride location.

Vice Chairperson Fortuna also asked about the traffic volumes of the various street configuration options and the benefits of the roundabouts. Mr. Limmer explained that the roundabouts would allow neighborhood access as well as driver ability to do u-turns to access businesses. Transportation Department Director Dan Cleavenger added that signalized intersections would be fully protected and turns would only be allowed with a green arrow, but that roundabouts would allow for constant movement with the exception of when trains are crossing. Mr. Cleavenger explained that the roundabouts would allow more on-street parking as well.

Board Member Kay Henry asked about the ratio of Park and Rides to the number of stations. Mr. Limmer responded that typically Park and Rides are located between three and five miles apart.

Chairman Barnes asked if the east side of Gilbert Road would be used for storage of trains and Mr. Limmer responded that pocket tracks west of Gilbert Road will allow for storage. Chairman Barnes then thanked the speakers for their time.

Item 6. Discuss and take action on staff recommendation to approve the installation of speed cushions on Pampa Avenue between Pennington and Saguaro.

Senior Transportation Engineer Sabine Ellis began by giving background on the speed cushion program. She outlined the steps involved and the requirements that must be met in order for street segments to be considered for speed cushions.

Ms. Ellis then began describing the details of the proposal for speed cushions along Pampa Avenue between Pennington and Saguaro. She explained that this collector street has a posted speed limit of 25 mph and a daily traffic volume of 1,185 vehicles. Ms. Ellis said that the 85th percentile is 33.7 mph, 8.7 mph over the posted limit.

Ms. Ellis said that of the 98 affected properties, 74 or 76%, approve of the speed cushions. Ms. Ellis explained that one property owner was not in favor of the cushions and 23 could not be reached and were considered to not approve.

Ms. Ellis stated that 22 comments were received from people who live outside the affected area; ten supported the cushions and 12 were opposed. Ms. Ellis said an additional two comments were received from individuals whose areas were not known and one was in favor and the other opposed the cushions.

Ms. Ellis concluded by stating that staff was recommending the installation of two sets of speed cushions for a cost of approximately \$8,600.

Board Member Wilson confirmed that property owners within 50 feet of the proposed locations of the speed cushions approved of their installation, and Ms. Ellis assured him that staff had their approval.

Resident David McCann then spoke in favor of the cushions.

Board Member Henry noted the existing speed cushions in the area and asked if additional cushions would be considered in the future for the continuing segment of Pampa. Ms. Ellis confirmed that staff is currently working with a resident on the survey process for the other segment and pending the outcome of the survey, it may come before the Board.

Board Member Bennett moved to approve staff recommendation, and Vice Chairperson Dawn Fortuna seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Item 7. Discuss and take action on staff recommendation to approve the installation of speed cushions on 54th Street between Sunnyvale and Southern Avenue.

Ms. Ellis continued and began detailing the next segment under consideration. Ms. Ellis explained that 54th Street is a collector street with a posted speed limit of 25 mph and a daily traffic volume of 1,816 vehicles. Ms. Ellis said that the 85th percentile is 33.2 mph, 8.2 mph over the posted limit.

Ms. Ellis said that of the 68 affected properties, 53 or 78%, approve of the speed cushions. Ms. Ellis explained that eight property owners were not in favor of the cushions and seven could not be reached and were considered to not approve.

Ms. Ellis stated that 65 comments were received from people who live outside the affected area and 26 supported the cushions and 39 were opposed. Ms. Ellis said an additional 36 comments were received from individuals whose areas were not known and 16 were in favor and 17 opposed the cushions.

Ms. Ellis concluded by stating that staff was recommending the installation of four sets of speed cushions for a cost of approximately \$17,200.

Board Member LeCheminant asked staff how long it would take for the cushions to be installed. Traffic Studies Supervisor Renate Ehm explained that generally it takes

approximately two months to complete the bid process, but that the bid responses have been higher than usual and that there have been some backups in the purchasing process. Ms. Ehm explained that staff is considering utilizing Job Order Contracting (JOC) for the installation of these cushions as well as the cushions the Board approved in December. Ms. Ehm said that staff hopes to have the cushions through the JOC process in the next few months.

Residents Daryl Runcorn and Shanna Liles spoke in favor of the cushions and resident Lauren Saar spoke in opposition.

Board Member Henry asked why a fifth set of cushions was not considered at the park and Ms. Ellis responded that street segments are generally limited to half-mile segments in order to allow the survey process to be manageable for the neighborhood coordinator. Ms. Ellis said that during the public comment phase for these cushions, staff was contacted to initiate the process for the other half of this street. Mr. Cleavenger added that if the street segments are larger than a half-mile, the survey process is often difficult for the neighborhood to finish.

Board Member Bruce Hallsted asked if there are any existing cushions in the area and asked staff about the residents in the affected areas who opposed the cushions. There are not any existing cushions in the area, and staff members and the Board discussed the details of the affected residents who responded in the survey process.

Vice Chairperson Fortuna spoke to Ms. Saar's suggesting of having Mesa Police Department patrol the area and cite speeders instead of installing the cushions. Vice Chairperson Fortuna advised that may not be the most cost effective option when compared to the cost of installing the cushions. Vice Chairperson Fortuna said that the cost of an officer would exhaust the same amount in a short amount of time.

Board Member Wilson asked if there were any before and after traffic studies showing the effectiveness of the cushions. Ms. Ehm responded that in general, staff's studies have seen speed reductions around six miles per hour and that the speed cushions have proved to be more effective than the speed humps due to the width of the different streets. Mr. Cleavenger added that he has read additional studies that supported these numbers.

Vice Chairperson Fortuna moved to accept staff's recommendation, and Board Member Mike Schmidt seconded the motion. The motion passed six to one, with Board Member Bennett casting the dissenting vote. Board Member Bennett explained that he opposed the cushions due to the significant opposition and did not feel that the speed warranted the cushions.

Chairman Barnes thanked staff and residents.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:53 p.m.