

TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE MINUTES

May 7, 2001

The Transportation Committee of the City of Mesa met in the lower level meeting room of the Council Chambers, 57 East 1st Street, on May 7, 2001 at 3:00 p.m.

COMMITTEE PRESENT

Jim Davidson, Chairman
Pat Pomeroy
Claudia Walters

COUNCIL PRESENT

Mayor Keno Hawker
Bill Jaffa

OTHERS PRESENT

Mike Hutchinson

Chairman Davidson advised the audience that two public meetings are scheduled for May 9, 2001 at 6:30 p.m. and May 16, 2001 at 6:30 p.m. at Hermosa Vista Elementary School, Multipurpose Room, regarding end-of-freeway conditions at Gilbert Road and Hermosa Vista Drive.

1. Hear an update on the East Valley freeway projects.

Assistant to the City Manager Jeff Martin provided the Transportation Committee with a brief update regarding East Valley transportation projects which are currently being discussed and considered by the Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG) and the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) (see attachment).

- Environmental Assessment for US 60/Loop 202 Traffic Interchange

Mr. Martin informed the Committee that a consultant has been hired by ADOT to perform an environmental assessment in an effort to upgrade the design of the US 60/Loop 202 interchange to a full urban traffic interchange. Mr. Martin explained that the study is slated for completion by the fall of 2001. Mr. Martin indicated that the cost for the proposed interchange is estimated at \$150 million, as compared to the \$30-\$35 million for the loop-ramp design that is currently in ADOT's highway construction program. Mr. Martin added that the improvements would provide greater access to Williams Gateway Airport (WGA) and the surrounding areas of economic development. Mr. Martin noted that due to the anticipated costs, the construction of the interchange may be phased in over a period of years.

In response to concerns expressed by Committeemember Pomeroy that the estimated cost of \$150 million is for the construction of one additional lane, Mr. Martin clarified that the project would include the installation of a fully directional interchange. Mr. Martin confirmed that at a previous Transportation Committee meeting, the Committeemembers discussed the possibility of adding another lane to the Superstition Freeway in addition to the current construction project and that the matter is currently being explored by the City and ADOT. Mr. Martin added that in addition to the interchange improvements, the project would also include the widening of the Superstition Freeway for approximately two miles in each direction.

Discussion ensued regarding the complete redesign of the interchange; review by the consultants of alternative designs (A, B, and C); ongoing negotiations between City staff and ADOT, and the fact that at the request of the Committee, staff is prepared to make a presentation regarding Option B (\$150 million).

Chairman Davidson recalled that at a previous Transportation Committee meeting the Committee was provided three options to design a fully directional interchange; the Committee recommended an option that would improve access on Signal Butte and Ellsworth Roads, and one of the southbound lanes westbound to US 60 would have an additional lane to accommodate anticipated growth to the north. Chairman Davidson added that although he could not specifically remember the cost of the project, it was not the current costs listed in the staff report.

Committeemember Pomeroy recalled that the Committeemembers had voiced concerns relative to traffic flow from the interchange back to the Superstition Springs Mall and the surrounding area.

Committeemember Walters noted that her recollection of the meeting was that the construction of a full interchange would require the removal of a nearby mobile home park and that the potential costs would have been significant due to retention problems from freeway runoff.

In response to a question from Committeemember Walters, Mr. Martin assured the Committee that at the present time, the environmental impact study is being conducted in relation to Options A, B, and C and that a determination has not yet been reached as to which option is the most appropriate. Mr. Martin added that it was the opinion of staff to review Option B and to determine if the costs could be adjusted.

Chairman Davidson commented that it is the opinion of the entire Council and not just the members of the Transportation Committee that the interchange be designed in a manner to accommodate the anticipated expansion at WGA and the proliferation of residential growth in Pinal County. Chairman Davidson also stressed the fact that ADOT should consider future growth in northern Pinal County and southeastern Maricopa County.

- Widen US 60, Val Vista to Power

Mr. Martin advised that it is anticipated that this high-priority project will be included in the update to the five-year highway construction program next year. Mr. Martin explained that with the addition of an HOV and general lane in each direction, the cost of the project will increase to an estimated \$104 million.

- Advance Stapley, Gilbert, and Val Vista Drive Interchanges Over US 60

Mr. Martin noted that these projects would provide better access on/off the Superstition Freeway with the addition of left-turn lanes. Mr. Martin stressed that the City is working with ADOT and MAG to expedite the completion of the three projects to coincide with the widening of US 60, scheduled to commence in June of 2001 and be completed in mid-2003. Mr. Martin commented that although the projects are currently scheduled for funding in 2005, the City would like to accelerate the construction programs by two years to occur simultaneously with the widening of US 60. Mr. Martin added that ADOT is amenable to staff's suggestion and that the City is exploring funding options.

In response to a question from Committeemember Walters, Mr. Martin clarified that the three projects should not be impacted by ADOT's anticipated budget cuts (\$25 million per year for two years). Mr. Martin added that additional Federal funding would be available to the City through the Revenue Aligned Budget Authority (RABA).

- Update of MAG Regional Transportation Plan

Mr. Martin informed the Committee that the estimated two-year update is designed to develop criteria through a public input process; develop criteria for the assessment of proposed projects; and incorporate the criteria into a new regional transportation plan which could be submitted to the voters for an extension of the half-cent sales tax.

Mr. Martin noted that Mayor Hawker is currently the Chairman of MAG's Regional Transportation Subcommittee.

In response to a question from Chairman Davidson, Mr. Martin explained that citizen focus groups are scheduled throughout the Valley in an attempt to garner input in the update of the regional transportation plan.

- Commuter Rail Study

Mr. Martin indicated that at the request of the City, the Regional Public Transit Authority (RPTA) and MAG will conduct a joint study on commuter rail for the Valley, and will also evaluate the feasibility of extending commuter rail service to WGA. Mr. Martin advised that the focus of the study will include an analysis of commuter rail, a review of alternative transit options in rail corridors where commuter rail is not feasible, and the examination of additional transit options for the entire region.

In response to a question from Committeemember Pomeroy regarding participation by the railroad industry in this process, Mr. Martin advised that the scope of work for the study is currently being developed but noted that staff has encouraged the RPTA and MAG to invite the railroads to offer input.

Committeemember Pomeroy encouraged staff to recruit the assistance of the railroads and cited Salt Lake City as a success story wherein the railroad industry provided support and cooperation during the implementation of the city's commuter rail system.

In response to a question from Chairman Davidson, Mr. Martin stated that although he is not aware of specific direction at the national level that railroads work with municipalities, it is incumbent upon the State and regional level to work with the railroads.

Committeemember Walters commented that during a recent conversation with former Mayor Peggy Rubach, she became aware of a Federal law that mandates rail companies to assist local municipalities with commuter rail issues. Committeemember Walters requested that staff provide the Committee with additional input regarding the matter.

- Transportation Study for Southeast Valley/Northern Pinal County

Chairman Davidson commended Mayor Hawker and Mr. Martin for their guidance and foresight in endeavoring to work with officials outside Maricopa County on transportation issues and also their efforts to remove barriers that existed between the counties regarding this issue.

Mr. Martin said that the transportation study group, comprised of officials from Apache Junction, Queen Creek, Chandler, Gilbert, Maricopa County, and Pinal County, will provide the City with an opportunity to develop a relationship that will open a dialogue on this matter and future issues as well.

Committeemember Walters concurred with the comments of Chairman Davidson.

- Accelerate Completion of the Santan Freeway

In response to a question from Committeemember Walters, Mr. Martin stated that staff has expressed concern that it may be difficult to complete the project by 2007 due to escalating right-of-way costs, but added that locking in property values will improve the likelihood of retaining the scheduled completion date.

- Widening of Gilbert Road, McDowell to SR 87

Mr. Martin advised that a task force, consisting of City staff and representatives from Maricopa County and the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community, met for a period of four months to consider funding for the widening of a portion of Gilbert Road (including the bridge) north of the City. Mr. Martin explained that negotiations were unsuccessful and that the Maricopa County Board of Supervisors voted not to fund the full project, including the bridge. Mr. Martin commented that both the City and the Indian Community are interested in assuring that the bridge is constructed and added that the County's proposed low-flow crossing would be susceptible to washout during the flood season.

Mr. Martin advised that as the project currently exists, the County is not scheduled to widen the first mile of Gilbert Road (from McDowell Road to Thomas Road) until 2003. Mr. Martin commented that City staff has expressed concern that the public will be highly critical of traffic congestion and that it may appear as though the governmental entities were unable to resolve the matter. Mr. Martin said that the City has widened its section of Gilbert Road and has encouraged the County to widen its section to the north. Mr. Martin stressed that due to the County's inability to comply with the City's request, upon completion of the Red Mountain Freeway to Gilbert Road, major traffic congestion will occur along Gilbert Road with six traffic lanes merging into two lanes north of the freeway in the County.

Discussion ensued relative to the fact that Federal highway funds are limited and unavailable for the project; the City's offer to subsidize the interest costs on a County loan; the County's indication that this matter is not considered a high-priority project for the repayment of a loan; difficulties associated with separately considering issues related to the project; and the request from the Indian Community that all issues be thoroughly addressed.

Committeemember Pomeroy recommended that the Council and the Indian Tribal Council adopt a joint resolution encouraging the County to work with both entities on this project.

Mayor Hawker concurred with Committeemember Pomeroy's suggestion and stressed the fact that it is imperative that the public be apprised that the City does not have control of the County portion of Gilbert Road; that it is the desire of the Indian Community to address all issues related to the project at the same time, and that the City is willing to work in a cooperative effort with the Indian Community to resolve this matter.

Committeemember Pomeroy requested that staff prepare a resolution for the Council's approval in this regard.

Committeemember Walters commented that an upcoming meeting to be conducted by Mayor Hawker with residents in the area of Gilbert Road would be an appropriate forum to update them on the current status of this matter.

- Add a Traffic Interchange at Lindsay Road and US 60

Mr. Martin informed the Committee that staff has asked ADOT to consider a traffic interchange at Lindsay Road on the Superstition Freeway. Mr. Martin explained that it would be necessary for the City to partner with ADOT relative to the funding for the interchange. Mr. Martin added that due to the fact that no interchange currently exists at this location, traffic has shifted to Gilbert Road.

Chairman Davidson thanked Mr. Martin for his concise and informative presentation.

2. Discuss and consider Loop 202 landscaping enhancements and ADOT artwork plans.

City Engineer Keith Nath introduced representatives of the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) and addressed the Committee relative to this agenda item (See attachment). Mr. Nath stated that approximately one year ago, staff presented to the City Council the wall treatment designs for the Red Mountain Freeway (Loop 202) from Country Club Drive to Gilbert Road and commented that this portion of the project is currently under contract and construction.

Mr. Nath informed the Committee that ADOT recently provided staff with wall design renderings for the Red Mountain Freeway from Gilbert Road to Higley Road. Mr. Nath stated that in addition, staff reviewed ADOT's conceptual plans for the landscaping treatment for this portion of the freeway. Mr. Nath advised that staff has requested from ADOT additional enhancement alternatives based on various funding levels.

Discussion ensued relative to Council's involvement in the selected artwork for the section of the freeway from Country Club Road to Gilbert Road.

Mr. Nath clarified that the renderings for the freeway walls from Country Club Drive to Gilbert Road were presented and reviewed by the Council approximately one year ago and at that time the City Council had expressed an interest for additional enhancements such as landscaping. Mr. Nath stated that based on Council's direction, staff discussed various enhancement proposals with ADOT, primarily landscaping.

ADOT representative Joe Salazar presented graphic designs for the freeway segments from Country Club Drive to Gilbert Road and from Gilbert Road to Higley Road. Mr. Salazar also noted the aesthetic pattern design chosen for the bridge parapets between Country Club Drive and Gilbert Road. Mr. Salazar stated that the design theme will reflect the mountains, riparian and equestrian elements.

Mr. Salazar outlined three alternatives for landscaping along the freeway from Country Club Drive to Gilbert Road, noting a base level cost of approximately \$2.7 million (Alternative A), an intermediate enhancement of approximately \$266,000 funded by the City (Alternative B), and a more extensive landscaping proposal of approximately \$533,000 funded by the City (Alternative C). Mr. Salazar presented graphics illustrating the differences between the landscaping alternatives.

Committeemember Walters pointed out that the majority of the base level cost is for the infrastructure of the landscaping, planting and irrigation systems.

It was moved by Committeemember Walters, seconded by Committeemember Pomeroy, to recommend to the Council that ADOT proceed with Alternative B for landscape enhancements on the Red Mountain Freeway from Country Club Drive to Gilbert Road.

Discussion ensued relative to the fact that the total cost to the City for landscape improvements between Country Club Drive and Higley Road is estimated at \$500,000; the fact that staff would anticipate similar landscape design enhancements from Gilbert Road and Higley Road, and the fact that HURF Bonds will be the funding source for the landscape enhancements.

Committeemember Walters noted that the proposed costs contained in the staff report are not the same as those outlined by Mr. Salazar and requested that staff's estimates be utilized.

Committeemember Pomeroy requested that the total cost to the City for landscape enhancements be limited to \$200,000 from Country Club Drive to Gilbert Road and \$280,000 from Gilbert Road to Higley Road.

In response to a question from Committeemember Walters, Committeemember Pomeroy advised that he would support an amended motion which would increase the total landscape enhancement costs by an additional \$20,000.

It was moved by Committeemember Walters, seconded by Committeemember Pomeroy, to recommend to the Council that ADOT proceed with Alternative B (at a cost to the City of \$500,000) for landscape enhancements on the Red Mountain Freeway from Country Club Drive to Higley Road.

Upon tabulation of votes, it showed:

AYES - Pomeroy-Walters

NAYS - Davidson

Chairman Davidson declared the motion carried by majority vote and noted that he would discuss his reasons for voting in opposition to the motion at a future Regular Council meeting.

Mr. Salazar provided the Committee with a graphic display of the proposed wall designs (icons) for the portion of the Red Mountain Freeway from Gilbert Road to Higley Road and also the wall designs that are currently under construction from Country Club Drive to Gilbert Road.

Committeemember Walters voiced dissatisfaction relative to the selection of icons slated for construction from Country Club Drive to Gilbert Road and inquired regarding the availability of alternative design options.

Mayor Hawker concurred with Committeemember Walters' comments and noted that the Council was not given the opportunity to provide feedback to ADOT with regard to the icons selection prior to the bid advertisement. Mayor Hawker assured the Committee, however, that efforts are underway to design a program whereby the City will participate in any future selection process.

Chairman Davidson inquired if the members of the Transportation Committee would consider not voting on this matter in protest of the fact the Council has never had the opportunity to vote on this matter in the past.

Committeemember Pomeroy concurred that the Committee should not vote on this issue.

Mayor Hawker questioned the City's ability at this time to modify the selection of icons from Gilbert Road to Higley Road. Joe Warner, a representative of ADOT, noted that time and economic constraints do not permit altering the proposal.

Committeemember Pomeroy said that he does not object to the icons currently selected for the freeway segment from Gilbert Road to Higley Road. Committeemember Pomeroy stated that he does not favor the icon selection under construction from Country Club Drive to Gilbert Road and noted the City's apparent inability to intervene at this time.

Committeemember Walters expressed the opinion that the City should have had the opportunity to provide input relative to this matter and concurred that the Committee should not vote on the issue.

Chairman Davidson stated that it was the consensus of the Committee not to vote on this matter and emphasized the importance of obtaining Council's input prior to the selection of any future design features.

Chairman Davidson thanked ADOT for their presentation.

3. Adjournment.

Without objection, the meeting adjourned at 4:25 p.m.

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I hereby certify that the foregoing minutes are a true and correct copy of the minutes of the Transportation Committee meeting of the City of Mesa, Arizona, held on the 7th day of May 2001. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held and that a quorum was present.

Dated this ____ day of _____ 2001.

BARBARA JONES, CITY CLERK

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Attachments

May 4, 2001

TO: CITY COUNCIL TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE
THROUGH: JACK FRIEDLINE
FROM: JEFF MARTIN
SUBJECT: Update on Regional Transportation Projects in the East Valley

This report provides an update on regional transportation projects being discussed and considered by MAG and ADOT, which are of importance to the East Valley.

Environmental Assessment for US60/Loop 202 Traffic Interchange

ADOT has hired Entranco, a consulting engineering firm to assist in conducting an environmental assessment on upgrading the design of the interchange to a fully directional urban traffic interchange. It is anticipated that the study will be completed in the fall of 2001. The consultants are currently reviewing three alternative designs. These improvements are needed to serve the needs of the area, particularly Williams Gateway Airport and the surrounding development. A full urban interchange will cost about \$85 million - \$115 million more than the loop-ramp design that is currently in ADOT's highway construction program. Some of the funds for these added costs could come from the savings from the Superstition Freeway widening project, which came in about \$50 million less than estimated.

Widen US60, Val Vista to Power

The City agreed to defer this project in exchange for widening the US60 from Val Vista to I-10 as a design build project. This project is the highest priority for the MAG/ADOT Cooperatively Developed Transportation Program for FY2007 and should be added to the highway construction program next year. The estimated cost for this project is \$104 million. The project would add a HOV and General lane in each direction. The widening is needed to address traffic congestion.

Advance Stapley, Gilbert and Val Vista Drive Interchanges over US60

MAG and ADOT have programmed these traffic interchange-widening projects for FY2005. The projects would add left turn lanes to address traffic congestion. The City is working with ADOT and MAG to advance construction of these projects so that they are completed during the US60 widening, which is scheduled to start in June of this year and be completed in two years in mid-2003. Staff is reviewing financing options to advance these projects, including the State Infrastructure Bank (SIB) and Grant Anticipation Notes (GANs). The project cost for each of these interchange improvements is about \$3 million, with a total price tag of about \$10 million. To advance these projects, the City may consider funding the interest cost of roughly \$1 million to advance construction and ADOT would advance the design.

Update of MAG Regional Transportation Plan

Last fall MAG started the process of updating the regional transportation plan. The update includes a lengthy study and public input process that will be used to develop criteria for assessing proposed projects. This planning process was started in anticipation of the completion of the current regional freeway system in 2007 and expiration of the countywide half-cent sales tax for transportation in late 2005. Once new criteria are developed, they will be used to develop a new regional transportation plan that could be submitted to the voters for a possible extension of the existing sales tax. This planning process is expected to require about two years to complete. It is anticipated that transit improvements will be a major component of the new plan, along with funding for other modes as well.

Commuter Rail Study

The City has asked the RPTA and MAG to do a joint study on commuter rail for the Valley. The study would evaluate the need and feasibility of commuter rail, which could be extended to the Williams Gateway area in the East Valley. It is important to complete this study so that the findings may be used in updating the MAG transportation plan and ultimately in setting transportation priorities for the region. The interested parties are currently working on the scope of work for the project. The scope of the study has recently been expanded and will likely include three phases. These phases would include studying commuter rail, reviewing other transit options in rail corridors where commuter rail is not feasible and studying additional transit options for the entire region. City staff has supported expanding this study into a more comprehensive transit study to complement MAG's transportation plan update and study.

Transportation Study for Southeast Valley/ Northern Pinal County

Elected officials representing Apache Junction, Queen Creek, Chandler, Gilbert, Mesa, Maricopa County and Pinal County have begun to work together to address transportation and other needs of this area. Historically, transportation planners have not considered the population growth in Northern Pinal County in modeling for the needs of southeastern Maricopa County. In view of projections for population growth and the fact that the State and other entities are updating their transportation plans in preparation for a statewide transportation election, it is important that we conduct a study that focuses on the transportation needs for this area. MAG has estimated the cost of such a study to be about \$300,000 and is willing to consider funding two-thirds of the cost. Both CAAG and ADOT have expressed an interest in participating in the study. CAAG will consider the matter in early May.

Accelerate Completion of the Santan Freeway

A number of East Valley leaders have expressed an interest in advancing the Santan Freeway. This effort would assist in the development of the Williams Gateway Economic Activity Area. The City is beginning to work with the various interested parties in this area to determine if a partnership might be developed to advance the Santan Freeway. Such a partnership with property owners in the area would be necessary to advance the Santan.

Also, several years ago, the City agreed to assist in accelerating a portion of the Santan Freeway in Gilbert by swapping priorities with a portion of Red Mountain Freeway. The priorities that would be swapped would be the Red Mountain segment from Power to University with the Santan segment from Williams Field to Power Road. The swap would advance completion of the above portion of the Santan by three months to December, 2006 and move completion of the eastern portion of the Red Mountain back three months to March, 2007.

Widening of Gilbert Road, McDowell to SR87

Last fall, representatives of the City, Maricopa County and the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community formed a taskforce to consider funding the widening of a portion of Gilbert Road (including the bridge) north of the City. This section of Gilbert Road is the responsibility of Maricopa County. The purpose of the taskforce was to meet the urgent need to widen this road prior to the completion of the Red Mountain Freeway to Gilbert Road in December of this year. City staff and residents of the area are concerned that the end of freeway condition will generate additional traffic, which is one reason why the City widened Gilbert Road to the south.

The taskforce met for about four months until it became clear that the Maricopa County Board of Supervisors would not fund the full project, including the bridge. The County proposed a low-flow crossing, which would be susceptible to wash out the next time it floods. Both the Indian Community and the City indicated that it would not be a good use of taxpayer money to build a crossing that will ultimately be washed away. Such an at-grade river crossing would also not be compatible with efforts to restore the Salt River. In any case, the scope of the project has yet to be finalized and the project will not be started any time soon. City staff is concerned that the public will be highly critical of the traffic congestion that will result from narrowing Gilbert Road from six traffic lanes to two lanes north of the freeway in the County.

Add a Traffic Interchange at Lindsay Road and US60

City staff has asked ADOT to consider adding a traffic interchange at Lindsay Road on the Superstition Freeway. The City would need to partner with ADOT in funding this traffic interchange in order to receive any favorable consideration from ADOT. Several years ago, the estimated cost for a half diamond interchange was roughly estimated to be about \$4 million. The fact that there is no interchange in this location has shifted traffic to Gilbert Road, one mile to the west of Lindsay.

City Council Report

Date: May 3, 2001
To: Transportation Committee
Through: Mike Hutchinson, City Manager
Paul Wenbert, Deputy City Manager
From: Jack Friedline, Development Services Manager
Subject: Landscaping and Wall Enhancements on the Red Mountain Freeway
City Council Districts 1, 2 & 5

Purpose and Recommendation

The purpose of this report is to provide information on landscaping and wall treatments currently proposed by the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) for the Red Mountain Freeway between Country Club Drive and Higley Road. Additionally, enhancement alternatives have been developed by ADOT for landscaping and will be presented at the meeting to the Committee. At this time, staff is seeking the Committee's direction for landscaping treatments for the Red Mountain Freeway from Country Club Drive to Higley Road and for wall treatments along the Red Mountain Freeway from Gilbert Road to Higley Road.

Background

ADOT has previously presented wall treatment designs to Council for the portion of the Red Mountain Freeway from Country Club Drive to Gilbert Road. The wall designs previously presented for the Red Mountain Freeway from Country Club Drive to Gilbert are currently under construction. ADOT has now developed a proposed design for the landscaping for the Red Mountain Freeway between Country Club and Gilbert, and for wall treatments from Gilbert to Higley. Staff has coordinated with ADOT during the design, and has indicated to ADOT that enhancements beyond ADOT's base level project may be desired by the City. ADOT staff has prepared some landscape enhancement alternatives to address staff's comments, and has asked for a decision from the City regarding which enhancements the City wishes to implement.

Discussion

Country Club to Gilbert Segment

The Country Club to Gilbert segment of the Red Mountain Freeway is currently under construction and scheduled for a late 2001 completion. This construction includes the wall treatments and graphics selected by ADOT. Some examples of these are shown as Exhibit "A". The landscaping design is currently underway, with a proposed construction start in early 2002. The proposed design blends the freeway landscaping with the surrounding neighborhoods in several different themes, and is based primarily on use of tree materials at a density of 1,050 plants per mile. ADOT's budget for the proposed base landscaping is approximately \$2,700,000. This equates to an average landscaping cost of approximately \$750,000 per mile.

Gilbert to Higley Segment

The Gilbert to Higley segment of the Red Mountain Freeway is currently at the 100% design level, and scheduled for a June 8, 2001 bid advertisement. Construction should be completed by mid 2003. The roadway construction project includes the wall treatments and graphics being proposed by ADOT. Some examples of these are shown as Exhibit "B".

The landscaping design for this portion of the freeway is not yet underway, but will begin in the near future. It is anticipated the concept will be similar to the Country Club to Gilbert segment. The cost will likely be in the range of \$3,500,000 to \$3,750,000 for ADOT's base level landscaping, based on the same \$750,000 per mile average cost.

Alternatives

At this time, three alternatives have been developed for consideration. They are as follows:

Alternative "A"

This alternative consists of no changes to the ADOT design, which means accepting ADOT's design with no additional landscaping or wall treatment enhancements. There would be no additional cost to the City for this alternative.

Alternative "B"

This alternative provides enhanced landscaping through the addition of shrubs and low level plants along the corridor, as well as plantings on the perimeter of the retention basin at north Center Street and the freeway. The plant density would increase to approximately 2,000 plants per mile. ADOT staff will present exhibits

showing the enhancements gained with this alternative. Wall treatment and graphic under this alternative would remain as generally proposed by ADOT. The cost of this alternative to the City is estimated at \$200,000 for the Country Club to Gilbert project, which equates to \$61,550 per mile. The estimated cost for comparable enhancement on the Gilbert to Higley project is estimated at \$280,000.

Alternative "C"

This alternative is similar to Alternative "A", except that the plant density would increase to approximately 4,000 plants per mile. As in Alternative "B", ADOT staff will present exhibits showing the enhancements gained with this alternative. Wall treatment and graphics under this alternative would remain as generally proposed by ADOT. The cost of this alternative to the City is estimated at \$500,000 for the Country Club to Gilbert project, which equates to \$153,850 per mile. The estimated cost for comparable enhancement on the Gilbert to Higley project is \$700,000.

Fiscal Impact

Under Alternative "A", there would be no additional cost to the City. The cost to the City for enhanced landscaping for Alternatives "B" and "C" would be \$480,000 and \$1,200,000, respectfully. Funding for these enhancements would come from HURF Bonds.

Concurrence

No other departments are impacted by these projects.

Jeff Kramer, Deputy Engineer

Keith Nath, Division Director

Jack Friedline, Department Manager

Paul Wenbert, Deputy City Manager

Mike Hutchinson, City Manager