

TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE MINUTES

July 30, 1997

The Transportation Committee of the City of Mesa met in the lower level meeting room of the City Council Chambers, 57 East 1st Street, on July 30, 1997 at 7:30 a.m.

COMMITTEE PRESENT

Pat Gilbert, Chairman
John Giles
Dennis Kavanaugh

COMMITTEE ABSENT

None

COUNCIL PRESENT

Wayne Brown
Wayne Pomeroy

STAFF PRESENT

C.K. Luster
Wayne Balmer
Neal Beets
Steve Hancock
Mike Hutchinson
Harry Kent
Ron Krosting
Keith Nath
Ellen Pence
Tom Remes
Denise Samuel
Doug Tessororf
Others

OTHERS PRESENT

Dan Nowicki
Others

1. Discuss and consider improvements to the Dobson Road and Guadalupe Road intersection.

Public Works Manager Harry Kent informed the Committee that in response to Council direction, staff has researched and prepared a report relative to the concept of including raised medians as part of the intersection improvements at Dobson and Guadalupe Road.

Engineering Design Director Keith Nath discussed staff's previously proposed recommendation to widen the intersection and provide for three (3) through lanes with double left turns on all legs of the intersection. Mr. Nath added that a southbound to westbound right-turn lane was also proposed for the north leg of the intersection. Mr. Nath noted that staff also previously proposed the installation of a painted median on the north leg.

Mr. Nath advised that staff has analyzed the raised median concept and is recommending that raised medians be included with the proposed improvements to the Dobson Road and Guadalupe Road intersection.

Discussion ensued relative to the fact that raised medians provide locations for street light installations and additional landscaping and control left-turn movements.

Mr. Nath also pointed out that raised medians may eliminate a number of left turns into and out of existing driveways and may decrease the landscaping strip width by two feet (from the back of the new sidewalk to the existing improvements). Mr. Nath reported that the difference in cost to install raised medians rather than the originally proposed painted medians is minimal.

Discussion ensued relative to increasing the amount of landscaping in medians to create an aesthetically pleasing effect, the fact that increased landscaped areas would restrict areas for left-hand turns, and concerns expressed by local businesses relative to raised medians resulting in less left-turn lanes and increased construction timetables.

Transportation Director Ron Krosting discussed left-turn bays and stressed the importance of balancing median safety and access.

Chairman Gilbert expressed the opinion that Dobson and Guadalupe Roads represent a major, crucial intersection and every effort should be extended to enhance the attractiveness of the medians.

Chairman Gilbert recommended that the Committee endorse the proposed design concept and direct staff to continue to define the actual layout of the project. Chairman Gilbert added that the possibility of increasing landscaping in the medians, to provide color and heighten attractiveness, should be explored.

Committeemember Giles concurred with Chairman Gilbert's remarks relative to the importance of landscaping in the medians and maintaining a 'green-belt atmosphere' in the area.

Committeemember Kavanaugh commented that although residents in the area have expressed concerns relative to the elimination of the current landscaping, they strongly support the widening of the intersection. Committeemember Kavanaugh added that medians represent an important safety measure and agreed that landscaping should be a priority.

Chairman Gilbert stated that it is the consensus of the Committee that the concept of including raised medians in the intersection improvements at Dobson and Guadalupe Roads be endorsed, and that staff be directed to research and prepare additional median designs for consideration at a future Committee meeting.

Mr. Kent indicated that staff will pursue the preparation of additional designs for further discussion and consideration at a future Committee meeting.

Committeemember Giles requested that staff also prepare a landscaping design for consideration.

Chairman Gilbert thanked staff for their presentation.

2. Hear a report and consider adoption of a bicycle plan for the City.

Bicycle Coordinator Steve Hancock and Transportation Director Ron Krosting addressed the Committee relative to the proposed adoption of a bicycle plan for the City of Mesa. Mr. Hancock noted that the plan was developed with the assistance of the Ad Hoc Bicycle and Pedestrian Activities Subcommittee and added that the Traffic Safety Committee recommends the adoption of the proposal.

Mr. Hancock briefly highlighted statistics relative to Mesa's bike paths and lanes. Mr. Hancock reported that during the last two and a half years, the City of Mesa has added approximately 62 miles of bike routes and approximately 10 miles of bike lanes.

Discussion ensued relative to the difference between bike lanes and bike paths, Federal funding and the utilization of those funds to construct two bicycle/pedestrian bridges and bicycle rest areas.

Mr. Hancock informed the Committee that the results of a survey conducted to assist in the establishment of a bike plan indicate that citizens support the development of bike paths on canal banks. Mr. Hancock commented that staff will pursue this matter as funding becomes available but added that issues such as liability and non-City rights-of-way would have to be addressed.

In response to a question from Chairman Gilbert relative to a previously discussed proposal for canal-bank development, Assistant City Manager Mike Hutchinson stated that the City of Chandler decided not to pursue the issue. Mr. Hutchinson added that Salt River Project (SRP) is unwilling to accept any liability associated with the development of bike paths on canal banks and requires full indemnification.

Committeemember Kavanaugh expressed appreciation to everyone involved in the preparation of the proposed bicycle plan. Committeemember Kavanaugh recommended that the development of bike paths on canal banks and the issue of liability be pursued.

It was moved by Committeemember Kavanaugh, seconded by Committeemember Giles, to recommend to Council that the proposed City of Mesa Bicycle Plan be adopted.

City Attorney Neal Beets recommended that the City engage the services of a safety expert to assist the City in addressing liability issues and stressed the importance of exploring licensing agreements between SRP and other communities in an effort to limit the City's liability exposure.

Committeemember Giles recommended that staff consider allocating a portion of the funding for this project towards the development of a course for jogging and/or road races with adjacent parking to maximize the benefits for citizens. Mr. Hutchinson indicated that staff will contact Parks and Recreation staff to discuss the feasibility of developing this type of concept at Red Mountain Park.

Chairman Gilbert commended everyone on their efforts relative to the preparation of the bicycle plan and encouraged staff to pursue issues such as adequate lighting, path surfaces and landscaping for the proposed canal bank bike paths.

Carried unanimously.

3. Adjournment.

The meeting adjourned without objection at 8:19 a.m.

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 30th day of July 1997. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held and that a quorum was present.

Dated this 5th day of August 1997

BARBARA JONES, CITY CLERK