



Transportation Advisory Board Report

Date: February 16, 2016
To: Transportation Advisory Board
From: Sabine Ellis, City Traffic Engineer
Subject: Update to Sidewalk Width in City Code

Purpose and Recommendation

To promote the vision of Mesa as a walkable and livable community and to be in compliance with Americans with Disabilities Act ('ADA') requirements as well as new Engineering Standards, staff recommends the following update to City Code:

Subsection 9-6-5(B): Modify sidewalk width on local residential streets from four feet to five feet

Background

This has been discussed at the December 15, 2015 Transportation Advisory Board meeting. At that time, the Board requested more information from staff regarding the impacts of the sidewalk widths to residential developments. The information requested was:

- To ensure that with the increased sidewalk width, utilities can be still be accommodated within the public right-of-way, and
- To allow the option for a variance from the five-foot width.

Staff collected this information since the December Transportation Advisory Board meeting and a summary is presented in the Discussion section below.

Discussion

Transportation staff met with the Engineering Department to discuss any issues for other utilities in the existing right-of-way or easements if the sidewalk width is increased. Based on their information, increasing the sidewalk width from four feet to five feet will not have a negative impact on any utilities that are located within the public right-of-way. Utilities can also be accommodated within utility easements that are required along all public streets in addition to the public right-of-way. The Engineering Department is supportive of the increase in sidewalk width.

In regards to the issue of providing a variance to City standards, the City Engineer or City Traffic Engineer may review and approve requests for a deviation from the five-foot sidewalk requirement as long as it is in compliance with ADA. The deviations to standards do not need City Council approval.

One of the focal points of the 2040 Transportation Plan is making Mesa more inviting and accommodating for pedestrians by providing choices that give people the opportunity to walk. Walking for recreational and utilitarian purposes has great benefits to the pedestrian and the surrounding environment, positively affecting the quality of life as well as the health of the walking individual and the community while reducing traffic and congestion. Increasing the sidewalk width in residential communities from four feet to five feet promotes this vision by offering pedestrians additional space to walk at their chosen pace, stand, sit, socialize, or merely enjoy their surroundings.

Alternatives

Doing nothing is an alternative that is not recommended. Subsection 9-6-5(B) of City Code specifically refers to the “Desert Uplands” planning area of Mesa, see attached figure for the proposed changes to City Code. The sidewalk width for all other developments is regulated within Mesa’s Engineering Standards, which are in the process of being updated. Making no changes to this subsection of City Code will contradict the new Engineering Standards.

Coordination

The proposed change to City Code has been coordinated with Engineering, Development Services, and the City Attorney’s office.

Fiscal Impact

There is no fiscal impact to this update.



9-6-5(B)		LOCAL RESIDENTIAL STREETS - PUBLIC						
DIST.	LOT SIZE, SF	R.O.W.	CL TO BC	PARKING	CURB	SIDEWALK	WATER MAIN	STREETLIGHT
R1-6 to R1-9	6,000+ to 9,000+	53'	17.5'	Both Sides	2' Roll	5'4" Width, Detached 5'*	1' Behind Curb	4' Behind Curb
R1- 15	15,000+	47'	14.5'	One Side Only	2' Roll	5'4" Width, Detached 5'*	1' Behind Curb	4' Behind Curb
R1-35	35,000+	43'	12.5'	None	2' Roll	5'4" Width, Attached	1' Behind Curb	5' Behind Curb 6'
R1-43 to R1-90	43,560+	30'	12.0'	None	3' Ribbon	None	1' Behind Curb	None

*Landscaping shall consist of trees with limited canopies and shrubs selected from the Preferred Desert Uplands Plant List in accordance with Subsection (G)3 of this Section. Fifty percent (50%) of the trees are to be twenty-four-inch (24") box (new or salvage), within the five-foot (5') landscape strip between the curb and sidewalk. Street lighting for the area north of McDowell Road, east of Hawes Road, and west of Utery Mountain Regional Park shall be in accordance with Subsection (D)6 of this section.

Streetlighting for the area north of McLellan Road, west of Ellsworth Road/92nd Street Alignment, south of McKellips Road and east of a north/south line one-quarter mile west of Hawes Road, and the area north of McKellips Road, west of Ellsworth Road/92nd Street Alignment, south of Hermosa Vista Drive, and east of Hawes Road, shall be in accordance with Subsection (D)7 of this Section.

(4233,4513,4570,4766)

Homeowners' associations shall be responsible for maintenance of landscaping between the curb and sidewalk. To avoid damage to landscaping, the covenants, conditions, and restrictions are to require garbage/recycling barrels to be placed in the street adjacent to the curb, not in the landscaped area. (4233)

- Where topographical conditions warrant, cul-de-sac lengths in excess of four hundred feet (400') may be approved by the City Engineer if an improved turning radius of fifty-five feet (55') is provided to facilitate the turning radius of emergency vehicles. In such situations, however, the Fire Department may require installation of individual protection systems where appropriate. Cul-de-sacs should be designed to serve twelve (12) to fourteen (14) homes maximum, regardless of length. (2474/Reso. 6188,4233)
- With approval of the Traffic Engineer and City Engineer, the minimum centerline radius may be reduced to two hundred feet (200') and the minimum curve length reduced to seventy-five feet (75') with a twenty-five-mile-per-hour (25 mph) street design (see Figure 26). Local street intersections may vary from ninety degrees (90°) on short street segments, at cul-de-sacs, or at the termination of streets where the traffic speeds and volumes are lower. At "tee" intersections, the intersection tangent length may be reduced to one hundred fifty feet (150') minimum. For twenty-five-mile-per-hour (25 mph) streets terminating at the "tee" intersection, the center line radius shall be no less than a two-hundred-foot (200') radius. For thirty-mile-per-hour (30 mph) streets terminating at the "tee" intersection, the center line radius shall be not less than a three-hundred-foot (300') center line radius. (2474/Reso. 6188,4233)