



mesa·az Transportation Advisory Board Report

Date: February 16, 2016
To: Transportation Advisory Board
From: Julie Christoph, Supervising Engineer
City of Mesa Engineering Department
Subject: Design Concept Report
Mesa Drive, 8th Avenue to Main Street
City Project C01400

Purpose and Recommendation

The purpose of this report is to present results of the planned improvements along Mesa Drive between 8th Avenue and Main Street as presented in the Design Concept Report (DCR).

Background

Improvements to Mesa Drive were included in the original Regional Transportation Plan projects. Improvements were planned to extend from US60 to Broadway Road. The Regional Transportation Plan was amended in the 2011/2012 cycle to extend improvements from Broadway Road to Main Street.

In July 2013, The City of Mesa (City) Mayor and Council laid out several Strategic Initiatives to improve the long term economic development, community engagement, financial stability, regional leadership, and quality of life within the City. In direct response to those initiatives, the Council identified several “Legacy Projects”, or high priority projects, to put the City’s Strategic Initiatives into action over the following four years. The “Legacy Projects” include revitalization of downtown Mesa as well as the improvement of all types of transportation networks (bike, pedestrian, light rail and street), with thought given to the advancement of regional connections.

With the completion of light rail in 2015 of the Central Mesa Extension on Main Street from Dobson Road to Mesa Drive, the improvements to the transportation networks from downtown Mesa to the light rail become essential to the implementation on the City’s Strategic Initiatives. The Main Street Light Rail project greatly improved the multi-modal connectivity while also defining a unique sense of place through the aesthetic enhancements. Improvements to Mesa Drive, a main arterial providing access to downtown, began in 2012 with the Mesa Drive, US 60 to 8th Avenue Improvement Project. That project, constructed in 2014, increased safety and capacity, multi-modal and regional connectivity, and substantially improved the visual quality through aesthetic improvements.

The Design Concept Report considers the extension of the Mesa Drive

improvements from 8th Avenue to Main Street, including the realignment of the Broadway Road Intersection. This project will improve the undeveloped section between the two legacy projects described above. This DCR evaluates Mesa Drive and multiple alignments of the Mesa Drive/Broadway Road intersection to mitigate impacts to adjoining properties while improving capacity and safety, multi-modal transportation networks and connectivity, and aesthetics in the corridor.

Discussion

The proposed project will improve Mesa Drive to a five-lane urban roadway section with a continuous two way left turn lane, bike lanes, and six foot wide sidewalks. The intersection of Mesa Drive and Broadway Road will be widened to include raised medians and left turn lanes. Broadway Road will similarly be improved for intersection widening and then taper to match the existing roadway.

Aesthetic improvements will consist of landscape, hardscape, and artistic elements. The theme of the improvements will blend with the themes of the two adjacent projects: Mesa Drive, US 60 to 8th Avenue, Improvement Project to the south and the Main Street Light Rail theme to the north.

All overhead electrical distribution (Mesa 12kV) and communication (Cox and CenturyLink) lines within the project will be converted to underground facilities enabling the removal of wood poles.

Existing water mains and gas mains in Broadway Road and Mesa Drive will be replaced as part of the improvements.

Alternatives

Several potential alternatives to the selected Mesa Drive/Broadway Road intersection alignment were evaluated by City staff for traffic delay, utility impacts, required right-of-way acquisition, and overall cost. The other alternatives have a higher projected cost, greater utility and right of way impacts, and do not function as efficiently as the proposed alignment.

Fiscal Impact

The project is projected to cost \$23.4 Million. Multiple funding sources, including Street Bonds, Water Bonds, Gas Bonds, and Electric Bonds, have been committed for this project. The transportation improvements, including design, right of way and utility relocation costs are eligible for Arterial Life Cycle Program funds by reimbursement to the City.

Schedule

The project is progressing to final design, with the 30% submittal due at the end of March 2016. The right of way acquisition process will run concurrent with the design and construction will proceed after the completion of the acquisition process which is anticipated to be Summer 2017.