

TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY BOARD MEETING

APPROVED

HELD ON May 16, 2017

TAB Members Present

Troy Peterson, Chairperson
Kay Henry, Vice Chairperson
Dave Bergner
Jennifer Love
David Camp
Ian Murray
Ron Wilson
Mike Schmidt
Vern Mathern

TAB Members Absent

Michael Book
Louis Stephen

Others Present

Sabine Ellis
Erik Guderian
RJ Zeder
Ryan Hudson
Lt. Gina Nesbit
Renate Ehm

Chairperson Troy Peterson called the May 16, 2017 Transportation Advisory Board meeting to order at 5:30pm.

Item 1. Approval of the minutes of the Transportation Advisory Board meeting held on March 21, 2017

Board Member Mike Schmidt motioned to approve the minutes as written. Board Member David Camp seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Item 2. Items from citizens present

None.

Item 3. Discuss and take action on staff recommendation for the renaming of the Traffic Barricade Manual and adoption of a new Temporary Traffic Control Manual.

Sabine Ellis, City Traffic Engineer, introduced herself and shared that she would be giving a presentation on Mesa's proposed Temporary Traffic Control Manual, and requesting the Board approve the name change and adoption of the new manual.

Ms. Ellis shared that the current process requires reference to the City of Phoenix's Traffic Barricade Manual with a Mesa specific amendment and the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices.

Ms. Ellis explained that a name change would help to distinguish the City of Mesa's proposed Manual from the City of Phoenix's Manual, and indicated there were a few significant differences between the Manuals.

One notable change is that the City of Mesa will now require that a certified Designer submit Temporary Traffic Control plans on behalf of their company. Ms. Ellis explained that this will result in higher quality plans and help streamline the process for all parties involved.

Board Member Ian Murray wanted to know which agency certifies the Designer.

Ms. Ellis indicated that certifications can be received from either the American Traffic Safety Services Association or the International Municipal Signal Association, and that both are industry standards.

Board Member Ian Murray appreciated the clarification, and simply wanted to make sure the City of Mesa was not reliant on the State for certifications.

Chairperson Troy Peterson wanted to know if a plan sealed by a registered engineer would suffice, or if the engineer would also need a separate Designer certification.

Ms. Ellis explained that Temporary Traffic Control Plans are typically not sealed by an engineer; however, if an engineer were to submit plans they would be required to have the additional certification.

Board Member David Camp asked who needs to follow the Temporary Traffic Control Manual.

Ms. Ellis stated that the Temporary Traffic Control Manual would apply to anyone doing work within the public right-of-way.

Board Member David Camp wanted to know if the Manual only applied to public paved streets.

Ms. Ellis clarified that it is for everything in the City's right-of-way, such as: alleys, streets, and shared-use paths.

Ms. Ellis continued the presentation, and shared that another new feature in the proposed Manual is the addition of temporary traffic control for transit stops and special events. Using the knowledge Mesa has acquired in the last several years, staff has added information to the proposed Manual on how to design traffic control for these types of scenarios, which were not documented in the previous manuals.

Ms. Ellis also noted that the fee structure in the proposed Manual was updated last year. She explained that the fee structure changed from a tiered fee structure to a daily fee structure, and has helped companies more accurately estimate and plan the durations of their projects, which is a benefit to both staff and the public.

Chairperson Troy Peterson asked if the fees were assessed before or after a project.

Ms. Ellis explained that the fees are assessed when a company applies for their permit. If the work goes beyond the initial scope, staff works with the company to update the fee.

Ms. Ellis asked the Board to approve the renaming of the Traffic Barricade Manual and adoption of a new Temporary Traffic Control Manual, and explained the alternatives, if the Board chooses not to move forward with staff's recommendations.

Board Member Ian Murray made a motion to approve the renaming of the Traffic Barricade Manual and adoption of a new Temporary Traffic Control Manual. Board Member David Camp seconded.

Vice Chairperson Kay Henry asked how long the City of Mesa has been using the City of Phoenix's Traffic Barricade Manual with the supplemental documents.

Ms. Ellis explained that the City of Mesa has been using the City of Phoenix's Traffic Barricade Manual since 2008.

Vice Chairperson Kay Henry expressed her appreciation for staff putting this manual together and asked if future changes to the proposed Manual would need to come before the Board.

Ms. Ellis explained that future changes should not need to come before the Board, unless they were significant.

Board Member Dave Bergner stated his support for the name change and proposed new Manual. He also asked how often sites were inspected for compliance and if the City of Mesa has enough staff to handle the workload.

Ms. Ellis explained that the City of Mesa is fully staffed in the Temporary Traffic Control group and recently added a new full-time position. That group now has three (3) Traffic Barricading Coordinators who can inspect sites before, during, and after projects, and has also been able to issue more warnings for companies who do not comply. Ms. Ellis explained the City of Mesa seeks voluntary compliance and tries to avoid citations, if they can resolve issues with a warning.

Board Member Dave Bergner asked if there is a specific phone number and/or email address where people can report temporary traffic control complaints.

Ms. Ellis explained that there is a specific phone number and email address on the City of Mesa's website to report temporary traffic control issues. The City of Mesa has trained some non-temporary traffic control staff on what to look for regarding temporary traffic control. The City of Mesa also provides a map of all Traffic Restrictions Alerts and Closures, which anyone can access.

Board Member Ian Murray indicated his appreciation for the map, and stated that he uses the map often to plan his driving routes.

Board Member Dave Bergner asked if there were any chronic violators.

Ms. Ellis explained that the City of Mesa does have some chronic violators. She added that when the City of Mesa went to four-day work week companies started to do un-permitted work on Fridays. To mitigate those types of issues Transportation has one (1) Traffic Barricading Coordinator that works on Fridays, which has helped cut down on these types of violations.

Board Member Vern Mathern asked if the City of Mesa will apply this Manual to work being done along the Gilbert Light Rail alignment, even though the work would take longer than 30 days.

Ms. Ellis explained that the light rail extension project will comply with the Manual but does require changes to be made to the design based on complaints or input over the course of the project.

Board Member Ron Wilson asked if the sanctions were stackable.

Ms. Ellis explained that it is possible to get cited for several violations, and that the citations go to the person on-site, not the company. She noted that this vested interest helps inspire compliance.

Chairperson Troy Peterson stated that a motion was made earlier and seconded, and called for a vote. The motion passed unanimously.

Chairperson Troy Peterson thanked Ms. Ellis for the presentation and for staff's hard work on the proposed Manual.

Item 4. Hear a presentation and discuss the efficacy of various speed mitigation measures in Mesa.

Ryan Hudson, Transportation Engineer, introduced himself and shared that he would be presenting information on speed mitigation measures in the City of Mesa, and would also share an overview of the speed measures studied as well as the findings and takeaways.

Mr. Hudson started the presentation with an overview of the two locations (Sossaman Road from Ray Road to Velocity Way and Harris Drive from Southern Avenue to 8th Street) where the City of Mesa deployed, and studied, the effects of Driver Speed Feedback Signs.

Mr. Hudson explained that on Sossaman Rd (adjacent to the Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport) the results from before and after the deployment showed little change in overall driver speeds. He noted that staff did find a slight reduction in speed at or near the Driver Speed Feedback Signs; however, as drivers left those areas their speeds tended to increase.

Chairperson Troy Peterson commented that it looked like speed reductions seemed to occur quickly before or after the Driver Speed Feedback Signs.

Mr. Hudson agreed with Chairperson Troy Peterson's comment.

Mr. Hudson continued the presentation, and explained that the results of the Driver Speed Feedback Signs seen on Harris Dr (adjacent to Mesa High School) showed an 8.7 mph reduction in the 85th percentile speed for northbound vehicles, while it resulted in a negligible change in southbound vehicle speeds.

Mr. Hudson noted that, depending on the location of the Driver Speed Feedback Sign, staff found that the Signs appear to be most effective on non-arterial roadways and are a good supplement for other features where there is high pedestrian activity.

Mr. Hudson continued the presentation, and shared staff's findings on the two locations (Main Street from Country Club Drive to Centennial Way and McLellan Road from Stapley Drive to Gilbert Road) where the City of Mesa reduced the posted speed limit from 30 mph to 25 mph. He also noted that driver speeds tended to stay consistent before and after the change in the speed limit.

Board Member David Camp asked if staff noticed a difference in vehicle traffic on Main St.

Mr. Hudson explained that staff is aware of the decrease in vehicle traffic, and has noted drivers moving away from using Main St.

Mr. Hudson continued the presentation, and shared that the overall takeaway for a reduction in the posted speed limits is that drivers will drive at a speed which they feel comfortable, which can be based on several different factors. He also noted that the results indicate that simply reducing the posted speed limit is not an effective way to reduce speeding.

Chairperson Troy Peterson asked if the study conducted on Main St was to address speeding, or was more about collecting data.

Mr. Hudson explained that given the speed data collected, the study validated that 25mph should be the posted speed limit.

Ms. Ellis added that another reason for the speed reduction was to increase safety for cyclists, since there are no longer bike lanes on Main St. Ms. Ellis also added that the City of Mesa installed sharrows on Main St. for cyclists.

Chairperson Troy Peterson asked if the signal progression on Main St is deliberate to calm traffic.

Ms. Ellis explained that light rail has priority, which can influence the signal timing.

Mr. Hudson continued the presentation, and shared the two locations (McLellan Road from Stapley Drive to Gilbert Road and Harris Drive from McKellips Road to Brown Road) where staff installed pavement markings to delineate the difference between travel lanes, bike lanes, and parking lanes. He shared that while results varied slightly between locations, the main takeaway is that pavement markings in these residential areas showed a slight increase in driver speed.

Mr. Hudson explained that the slight increase in speed could be attributed to several factors, such as schools in session or seasonal variability. He also wanted to note that the primary purpose of pavement markings is the delineation of lanes, and not speed reduction.

Chairperson Troy Peterson asked if staff had any thoughts as to why driver speed increased when pavement markings were present.

Mr. Hudson explained that there could be various factors that led to the slight increase in speed, such as drivers might feel more comfortable with clearly defined lanes and feel like they have more room.

Ms. Ellis added that there were areas where staff did see a reduction in speed, so it makes it difficult to say any one result was directly connected to the presence of pavement markings. She also noted that staff will continue to collect data, and overall, considering all three devices discussed in the report, the City of Mesa's data matches the national data.

Ms. Ellis shared that staff is still collecting information on speed cushions and school-zone flashers, and will update the Board once they have collected the information. She also noted that this report is going to be a fluid document that keeps growing.

Chairperson Troy Peterson stated that drivers pay less attention to Driver Speed Feedback Signs after they get used to seeing them on a regular basis.

Ms. Ellis noted that drivers also understand that there is no penalty if they speed near a Driver Speed Feedback Sign, which is another challenge.

Chairperson Troy Peterson thanked Mr. Hudson for the presentation and report.

Chairperson Troy Peterson thanked everyone for their hard work and expressed his appreciation for his time on the Transportation Advisory Board.

Meeting was adjourned at 6:11pm.