

TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY BOARD MEETING

APPROVED

HELD ON MARCH 19, 2013

TAB Members Present

Ron Barnes, Chairman
Dawn Fortuna, Vice Chairperson
Bruce Hallsted
Kay Henry
Troy Peterson
Mike Schmidt

TAB Members Absent

Ian Bennett (Excused)
Jim LeCheminant

Others Present

Jessie Brodersen
Dan Cleavenger
Randi Davis
Sabine Ellis
Tom Ellsworth
Ken Hall
Julie Howard
Amanda McKeever
Alan Sanderson
Jodi Sorrell
Mark Venti
John Wesley

Chairman Ron Barnes called the March 19, 2013 Transportation Advisory Board meeting to order at 5:35 pm.

Item 1. Approval of the minutes of the Transportation Advisory Board meeting held on February 19, 2013.

Vice Chairperson Dawn Fortuna moved to approve the minutes as written. Board Member Mike Schmidt seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Item 2. Items from citizens present.

None.

Item 3. Hear a presentation and discuss the integration of the Mesa General Plan 2040, Mesa Transportation Plan Update and the Transit Plan.

Transportation Department Director Dan Cleavenger began by giving a brief overview of what staff would be presenting and introduced the staff members.

Senior Planner Tom Ellsworth began by giving a background on the General Plan Update Process and described the timeline staff is working along. Mr. Ellsworth explained that staff is currently working on the first draft of the General Plan (Plan) and the ultimate goal is to get the Plan on the November 2014 ballot for approval. Mr. Ellsworth then described the Community Visioning exercises staff has conducted as a part of the General Plan Update. Mr. Ellsworth described survey questions and general responses staff has received thus far. Mr. Ellsworth

explained that one of the overarching responses they have received is the desire to have a sense of community.

Mr. Ellsworth then gave results of surveys conducted so far. Mr. Ellsworth said that 90% of respondents want existing neighborhoods' quality maintained. Mr. Ellsworth explained that one goal of the Plan is to make Mesa more recognizable. Mr. Ellsworth also summarized some of the comments received.

Mr. Ellsworth described Mesa today and what is desired for Mesa's future. Mr. Ellsworth said that the bulk of the Plan will outline how to get Mesa to the desired future. Mr. Ellsworth described the Transforming the City section further including the key issues and the differences each side of the City has in their desires.

Mr. Ellsworth then explained the different character area types. Mr. Ellsworth explained that the Plan will focus on the desired character rather than a particular land use. Mr. Ellsworth gave examples of the different character area types as well.

Mr. Ellsworth then went over the draft land use/character area map. Mr. Ellsworth discussed specific areas and the mix of characters in certain areas.

Vice Chairperson Fortuna noted that she did not see the transit corridors identified in the draft map integrated in the employment areas. Planning Director John Wesley said that the Plan will hopefully address that concern. Mr. Wesley said that staff is working to direct development to existing transit corridors.

Board Member Bruce Hallsted asked what involvement the Mesa Chamber of Commerce has had in the Plan Update Process. Mr. Wesley explained some things are currently addressed such as zoning, but that staff is working with the Chamber as well as the Economic Development Advisory Board. Board Member Hallsted said that he feels the economic component is a more critical component of the Plan, but it may be difficult to make economic development happen in the way some would like to see it happen. Board Member Hallsted expressed the importance of enticing businesses to stay in Mesa, and Mr. Wesley said the new Plan will hopefully address that concern.

Board Member Troy Peterson said he would like the pre-zoning map to be more of a tool to inspire creativity. He asked to what degree the General Plan is being used to allow for creative alternative transportation corridors. He asked if those types of elements are being worked into the Plan and Mr. Wesley said that is the intent of the plan and that content is being added to address that in the near future. Mr. Wesley explained that the intent is to set the vision and direction and make it flexible within certain parameters. Mr. Wesley gave an example and said that the Central Main Plan approved a couple of years ago adopted Form Based Code in the downtown area.

Board Member Peterson asked if staff and politicians' desires are along the same lines as the citizens. Mr. Wesley said that the Council supports the Plan and that staff has just started citizen outreach.

The Board and staff then discussed the City's eastern boundary and the State Trust land to the southeast. Mr. Wesley explained that the land is being left off the Plan for the time being.

Board Member Kay Henry asked if the plan will address county islands and Mr. Wesley responded that staff has not talked about including an annexation policy as a part of the Plan update. Mr. Wesley said that the City's policy is to welcome anyone who is interested in annexing into the City.

Senior Planner Ken Hall then spoke on the Transportation Plan Update Process. He gave a background on the existing Transportation Plan and described the work done thus far. This has included forming the Transportation Plan Update Committee comprised of staff members and identifying areas that need to be updated in the Transportation Plan. Mr. Hall explained that the Transportation Department is coordinating with the Planning Department and that the Transportation Plan update will be a coordinated effort along with Planning, Transportation, and Transit Services.

Mr. Hall explained that the Transit Plan will be a standalone document and will become an element of the Transportation Plan Update. Mr. Hall explained that the Transportation Plan Update will be another standalone document and will be incorporated into the General Plan Update. Mr. Hall said all three Plans will focus on coordinated public outreach.

Mr. Hall then explained plans for Transportation Department Outreach including district neighborhood meetings, attendance at Celebrate Mesa events, and participation at General Plan public meetings.

Mr. Hall described the planning committees that will provide technical and advisory input and explained that the Board will ultimately recommend the final draft to the Council. Mr. Hall then described the schedule and the planned adoption date of June 2014, as well as the eight primary transportation elements to be included in the Transportation Plan.

Based on Board Member Peterson's question about the timeframe and schedule, Mr. Hall provided more details and explained that the Board can expect to see the Transportation Plan 90-120 days prior to June 2014. Mr. Hall explained that staff is in the process of writing chapters now and setting up a Municipal Advisory Board.

Mr. Hall said that the Board can look for a product to review in approximately 90 days. He said that a number of chapters will come before the Board for review and Board Member Hallsted said that getting the chapters several weeks in advance was helpful when reviewing the Bike Plan and suggested doing the same with future Plan updates.

Chairman Barnes asked how staff is addressing commuter rail. Mr. Hall said that commuter rail would be addressed in the Transit Element, which would be a part of the Transit Plan update. Mr. Hall stated that the Transportation Department will rely on the completed Transit Plan and incorporate its findings into the Transportation Plan.

Interim Transit Services Director Jodi Sorrell gave a history of the current Transit Plan and the difference between the transit environment in 2002, when the plan was last updated, and now. Ms. Sorrell then described where staff will go from here. She said the goal of the Transit Plan

update is to develop an activity center to activity center based Plan. Ms. Sorrell explained that staff will work closely with the community, various advisory boards, and several others. Ms. Sorrell said that as the transit services provided are regional, staff will work with neighboring cities and incorporate their feedback as well. Ms. Sorrell said that the intent is to get all interested parties involved to identify where service is most desired and what changes can be made. Ms. Sorrell said that staff is in the initial phase of the Transit Plan update.

In regards to the passenger/commuter rail study, Ms. Sorrell explained that ADOT is meeting with different cities and narrowing seven options down to two. Ms. Sorrell said that public meetings and open houses will be held in the near future, but that there is more work to do. Ms. Sorrell said that ADOT is moving forward methodically and that staff will send public meeting information to the Board when staff receives it. Ms. Sorrell concluded that it may be difficult to include the commuter rail element into the Transit Plan update as ADOT's timeline is after the timeline for the Transit Plan update.

Public Information and Communications Management Assistant II Jessie Brodersen explained that she is the liaison between the Public Information Office and the Departments represented. Ms. Brodersen explained that the Public Information Office has developed a strategy to help the public understand the General Plan process and to bring together the other plans cohesively. Ms. Brodersen then reviewed the This Is My Mesa portal that is used to collect feedback, as well as the iMesa site. Ms. Brodersen explained that the iMesa website, a Channel 11 production about the various plan updates, and draft plans will be available on the portal, as well as opportunities for people to get involved.

Chairman Barnes thanked staff and noted the importance of all the Plans.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:48 p.m.