

TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY BOARD MINUTES

DRAFT

HELD ON May 16, 2023

The Transportation Advisory Board of the City of Mesa met in the Lower Council Chambers, 57 East 1st Street, on May 16, 2023, at 5:30 p.m.

<u>TAB Members Present</u>	<u>TAB Members Absent</u>	<u>Others Present</u>
Michelle McCroskey (Chairperson)	Tara Bingdazzo	Ryan Hudson
Ryan Wozniak (Vice Chairperson)	Ashley Gagnon	Anna Janusz
Mike James	Rodney Jarvis	Noah VanHilsen
Daniel Laufer		Erik Guderian
Megan Neal		
Melissa Vandever		
David Winstanley		

Chairperson McCroskey called the May 16, 2023, Transportation Advisory Board meeting to order at 5:32 pm.

Item 1. Approval of the minutes of the Transportation Advisory Board meeting held on March 21, 2023.

It was moved by Board Member Wozniak, seconded by Board Member Winstanley, that receipt of the above-listed minutes be approved.

Upon tabulation of votes, it showed:

AYES – McCroskey – Wozniak – James – Laufer – Neal – Vandever – Winstanley

NAYS – None

Item 2. Acknowledge outgoing Board Members Ryan Wozniak and Sam Gatton.

Chairperson McCroskey thanked the Vice Chairperson for his 6 years of service to the board. She also acknowledged outgoing Board Member Gatton’s service.

Item 3. Annual election of Chairperson and Vice Chairperson.

Chairperson McCroskey gave a quick synopsis about the annual elections and opened it up to the board members for nominations.

Board Member James asked Chairperson McCroskey to do another term as chairperson.

There were no more nominations for Chairperson.

It was moved by Board Member James, seconded by Board Member Wozniak, to elect Board Member McCroskey as the next Chairperson.

AYES – McCroskey – Wozniak – James – Laufer – Neal – Vandever – Winstanley

NAYS – None

Chairperson McCroskey then asked board members for any vice chairperson nominations, and none were received.

Board Member Vandever self-nominated herself.

It was moved by Board Member Vandever, seconded by Board Member McCroskey, to elect Board Member Vandever as the next Vice Chairperson.

Upon tabulation of votes, it showed:

AYES – McCroskey – Wozniak – James – Laufer – Neal – Vandever – Winstanley

NAYS – None

Item 4. Items from citizens present.

None

Item 5. Discuss and take action on staff recommendation to approve the installation of speed cushions on Date between Main Street and University Drive.

Ryan Hudson, City Traffic Engineer, introduced himself and indicated that he would be giving a presentation on the staff's recommendation to approve the installation of speed cushions on Date between Main Street and University Drive.

Mr. Hudson gave a brief description of speed humps and speed cushions, then provided an overview of the Speed Hump Policy process.

Mr. Hudson provided details about the street segment and presented the results of the speed cushion study. He explained that the speed limit on this stretch of road is 25 MPH, and the traffic study results showed that the 85th percentile speed was 33.4 MPH with an average of 1,301 vehicles per day. He mentioned that 78 percent of the residents in the affected area were in favor of the speed cushions, while 22 percent were in opposition. In the secondarily affected area, 98 percent were in favor, with 2 percent opposed. Additionally, there was no opposition to the speed cushions from people outside the affected area, as gathered from the 2-week public survey process.

Mr. Hudson then opened the item up for questions and discussion.

Vice Chairperson Wozniak asked about the width of the pavement section from curb to curb.

Mr. Hudson responded that it is generally 34 feet, but in some areas, it is 32 to 33 feet.

Vice Chairperson Wozniak asked if that was the reason for parking prohibition on this street.

Mr. Hudson stated that the parking prohibition on this corridor dates back quite far and that the width of the street could have something to do with it. He explained that once a street drops below 34 feet in width, per Fire Department standards, parking is only allowed on one side.

Chairperson McCroskey inquired about the extent of the no parking restriction, whether they applied to both or one side of the street.

Mr. Hudson responded that he believes the parking prohibition is on both sides of the street throughout the corridor.

Expressing his opinion, Vice Chairperson Wozniak suggested exploring alternative measures to control speed, such as delineated bike lanes, planter boxes and other options that would enhance the aesthetic appeal of the corridor.

Chairperson McCroskey agreed with Vice Chairperson Wozniak's viewpoint. She then asked Mr. Hudson whether other traffic calming options were taken into consideration, such as replacing the parking prohibition with designated parking spaces marked with striping. She believed that visually narrowing the road would help reduce speed.

Mr. Hudson answered no and explained that the primary focus for this street at present is the implementation of speed cushions. He mentioned that removing the parking prohibition and installing striping could be explored in the future. Furthermore, he acknowledged the existence of other traffic calming options and other traffic calming projects citywide but noted that certain constraints, such as street drainage limitations, may prevent their implementation. Speed cushions are a viable traffic calming tool for this corridor given these constraints, validated neighborhood support, and the proven effectiveness of these devices in street retrofit situations such as this.

Chairperson McCroskey requested that the city explore additional options to address traffic calming in residential areas.

Vice Chairperson Wozniak proposed the idea of allocating a budget to support the implementation of alternative measures.

Residents who attended the meeting shared their comments with the board regarding the proposed speed cushions.

Terry Schmidt, resident at 310 N Date Street, expressed support for the speed cushions. Caroline Campbell, resident at 625 W 2nd, also voiced her support for the speed cushions.

During Carline's comments, it was mentioned that the process stopped and had to be restarted.

Board Member Winstanley inquired about the reason behind the interruption and the need for a restart.

Ms. Campbell responded, suggesting that the halt may have been due to insufficient number of signatures. She explained that despite knocking on doors in the neighborhood, it's not guaranteed that residents will answer. She also explained with all the rules along the way there is a potential for it to stop.

Chairperson McCroskey expressed her appreciation for the determination of the neighborhood to persist.

Mr. Hudson provided information that there were five speaker cards submitted online, all expressing support for the speed cushions. These cards were from the following citizens:

- 1) Enrique Garrido Jr at 141 N Date.
- 2) Joanna Payton at 607 W 2nd Pl
- 3) James Payton at 607 W 2nd Pl
- 4) Daniel & Kimberly Linstroth at 141 N Date #23
- 5) Ron Hufford at 554 W 3rd St.

Board Member Laufer moved to approve the installation of speed cushions on Date Street between Main Street and University Drive, which was seconded by Vice Chairperson Wozniak.

Upon tabulation of votes, it showed:

AYES – McCroskey – Wozniak – James – Laufer – Neal – Vandever – Winstanley

NAYS – None

Item 6. Discuss and take action on staff recommendation to establish speed limits on Williams Field Road from Ellsworth Road to east City limits.

Ryan Hudson, City Traffic Engineer, introduced himself and informed the board that he would be presenting on staff's recommendation regarding the establishment of speed limits on Williams Field Road from Ellsworth Road to east City limits.

Mr. Hudson explained he would divide his presentation into two segments. Segment 1 includes Williams Field Road between Ellsworth Road and Crismon Road, while Segment 2 includes Williams Field Road between Crismon Road and east City limits. He provided an overview of the area in the first segment, which included the alignment study to accommodate SR-24, the road's curvature and overall geometry, the plans for Phoenix Mesa Gateway Airport east of Ellsworth Rd, the existing Legacy Sports Complex, and the drainage situation in the area. He also explained that not all the lanes are currently utilized due to incomplete construction of the road to the east and west of SR-24.

Board Member Winstanley inquired about whether it was a single lane.

Mr. Hudson confirmed that was indeed a single lane in each direction for the majority of the corridor between Ellsworth Rd and SR-24.

Board Member Winstanley stated that Legacy has an intersection where left turns are not allowed.

Mr. Hudson acknowledged the observation and explained that a raised median would be installed later when the roadway is fully developed.

Chairperson McCroskey asked for clarification on the location of the sports complex mentioned by Mr. Hudson. Additionally, she inquired about any plans to ensure the safety of bike riders.

Mr. Hudson explained that once the north side is developed, Williams Field Road would be a 6-lane street with a raised median, and bike lanes would be incorporated.

Mr. Hudson proceeded with his presentation and explained that staff is recommending a speed limit of 40 MPH for Segment 1. He stated that the road's curvature could potentially accommodate a 50 MPH speed limit if the roadway cross section was superelevated, but this is not recommended. The recommendation of 40 MPH on Segment 1 is based on the roadway geometry and planned future land use adjacent to the street corridor.

Board Member Winstanley raised a question about whether the police department believes they can enforce that 5 MPH difference and whether that difference holds significant meaning.

Mr. Hudson stated that he could not provide insight into the enforcement aspect and referred the question to City of Mesa Police Officer Noah VanHilsen.

Officer VanHilsen responded, stating that for most drivers, a 5 MPH difference holds considerable significance in terms of traffic behavior.

Moving to Segment 2, Mr. Hudson explained that this segment extends from Crismon going east to the city limits. He presented a picture of the area and outlined the existing developments

adjacent to this street corridor. He stated that the majority of the land uses adjacent to this corridor are residential, with some multifamily and mixed-use commercial zones.

Board Member Winstanley brought up the issue of a median in this area that has been taken out three times. Although not directly related to the current presentation, he expressed his concern regarding the need for improved illumination for drivers making left turns. He explained that due to incomplete development of the area, the visual perspective at this intersection gives drivers the impression that the lane they are turning into is closer than it is.

Mr. Hudson acknowledged the concern and informed the board that a traffic signal would eventually be installed at this intersection. He also mentioned that active development is taking place at both of the vacant corners, which will fully build out the area and address the issue raised by Board Member Winstanley. Transportation staff will also investigate the existing conditions.

Mr. Hudson proceeded with his presentation, providing pictures of the area closer to Signal Butte Road. He explained that in certain sections, only part of the road has been built out, and then delved into the history on the road segment, including information on annexation, development, and the connection of various segments to create a continuous roadway segment. He stated that staff is recommending a speed limit of 45 MPH for the second segment of Williams Field Road from Crismon Road to the east city limits. He clarified that the current posted speed limit, which was placed prior to the annexation from the county and the subsequent development in the area, is already set at 45 MPH.

Board Member Winstanley sought clarification on whether the road is currently set at 45 MPH before it is fully built out.

Mr. Hudson confirmed that 45 MPH is the existing posted speed limit for the segment that was annexed from the county to the City of Mesa, as well as the other portions along this road. He explained that their intention now is to officially establish the 45 MPH speed limit for this segment in city code. He reiterated that staff recommends 40 MPH for Segment 1 and 45 MPH for Segment 2 of Williams Filed Road. He then opened the discussion for questions from the board.

Chairperson McCroskey inquired about the reason behind recommending a speed limit of 40 MPH for one segment and 45 MPH for the other segment.

Mr. Hudson explained that the major factor influencing the recommendation of a 40 MPH speed limit for segment one is the horizontal alignment of the street. He also mentioned the current and planned land use in the area, as well as future proposal by staff to propose a 35 MPH speed limit for the western section of the road (to the west of Ellsworth), which will eventually be renamed Gateway Boulevard. He mentioned that this segment will run through the Phoenix Mesa Gateway Airport area, which has significant plans for land use. As a result, staff intends to recommend a 35 MPH speed limit for this segment in the future to align with the planned land use.

Chairperson McCroskey requested further clarification on why Segment 2 has a speed limit of 45 MPH.

Mr. Hudson stated that Segment 2 is proposed at 45 MPH due to its straight alignment, overall characteristics and the surrounding land uses.

Chairperson McCroskey inquired about the presence of trails in this area where are bicyclist able to ride.

Mr. Hudson clarified that once these streets are fully developed, they will include raised medians, bike lanes, and travel lanes.

Chairperson McCroskey asked if the staff would still be in favor of the 45 MPH speed limit at that point in time.

Mr. Hudson confirmed that this is indeed a case.

Board Member James expressed his belief that arterial roads in central Mesa have a speed limit of 40 MPH. He then questioned why the speed limit is higher in a different area of the city.

Mr. Hudson explained that the speed limit reflects the characteristics of the southeast region of Mesa. He mentioned the limited access points to this segment and other arterial roads in the area that are already established with a speed limit of 45 MPH. Mr. Hudson then asked Erik Guderian if he had anything to add to this.

Erik Guderian, Deputy Transportation Director, introduced himself. He added that roads like Stapley Drive, University Drive and Broadway Road have a speed limit of 40 MPH because they are narrower than other arterial streets in Mesa. He explained that streets designed today are built to accommodate a speed limit of 45 MPH, per current City of Mesa standards.

Chairperson McCroskey inquired if the staff's plan involved transitioning from 40 MPH to 45 MPH, then to 35 MPH.

Mr. Hudson clarified that this understanding was incorrect. He explained that the speed limit transition is a gradual decline from 45 MPH to 35 MPH, using pictures to illustrate the board how it declined.

Board Member Winstanley also added that the speed limit is 45 MPH father out, but as you travel east, near the curve in the road, it will drop to 40 MPH. Then, as you enter the airport area of the road, it will further decrease to 35 MPH.

Chairperson McCroskey acknowledged the explanation but expressed confusion about why there would be 45 MPH speed limit between two segments that would have lower speed limits.

Board Member Vandever asked about the speed limit on Signal Butte in this area.

Mr. Hudson responded that the speed limit on Signal Butte in that area 45 MPH.

Board Member Vandever expressed her observation of excessive speeding on Signal Butte in the area and questioned whether the speed limit could be lowered.

Mr. Hudson explained that the speeding in this area might be attributed to the limited development along the roadway. He then asked for future clarification on Vandever's suggestion to reduce the speed limit.

Board Member Vandever explained that due to people consistently exceeding the speed limit, she proposed establishing the speed limit at 40 MPH for the second segment instead of 45 MPH. This would facilitate a smoother transition to 35 MPH and potentially even down to 25 MPH. She suggested considering this approach when the area is fully developed.

Mr. Hudson explained that the planned speed limit decrease is only to 35 MPH. He noted that the City of Mesa arterial streets do not typically have a speed limit of 25 MPH unless they are in the urban downtown area of Mesa, which is not the vision for the Phoenix Mesa Gateway Airport area. He added that a progression from 45 to 40 then to 35 MPH is a reasonable approach and that artificial lowering a posted speed limit is not an effective means of reducing operating speeds.

Board Member Winstanley inquired about any plans for the city to annex the area east of Mountain St to the county line.

Mr. Guderian explained the requirements that need to be fulfilled by the county before the city can assume the road. He stated that he does not foresee these changes occurring soon.

Board Member Winstanley pointed out that Crismon Road from Williams Field Road to Ray Road has a speed limit of 35 MPH and requested an explanation of how it compares to the speed limit recommendation for Williams Field Road.

Mr. Hudson explained that the speed limit on Crismon Road in that stretch passes through the Cadence and Eastmark communities, reflecting the character of those communities. When determining the speed limit for that stretch, we consider factors such as the alignment with Inspirian Pkwy to the north, the number of intersections along the stretch, the interaction with other collector roads, and the characteristics of the communities adjacent to the street segment. Overall, the section of Crismon Rd north of Williams Field Rd is characterized as a district collector for the adjacent communities whereas Williams Field Rd east of Crismon Rd will be a standard arterial street.

Vice Chairperson Wozniak mentioned roads with a 45 MPH speed limit that have bike lanes, but no barrier separating vehicles and cyclist. He inquired about the city's progress in updating bike safety measures.

Mr. Guderian explained that ongoing discussions with leadership and council are taking place. He noted that, currently, the city is following its existing standards, but they will assess and evaluate as they move forward. He explained that options such as adding more pavement, reducing lanes or acquiring additional right-of-way come with significant ramifications.

Vice Chairperson Wozniak expressed his expectation for the city to be more advanced in considering alternative solutions. He stated that these segments that have been built out over recent years keep a blind eye to what the federal highway administration recommends.

Mr. Guderian acknowledged the engineering guidance but emphasized that acquiring property or reallocating lanes involved more than just an engineering decision.

Vice Chairperson Wozniak suggested exploring options to reallocate right-of-way if sufficient space is available, indicating that it is not solely a matter of acquiring additional right of way.

Mr. Guderian explained that the discussion on bike safety could be addressed at a later time as it is off the current topic.

Vice Chairperson Wozniak argued that it is relevant to the discussion considering the criteria for determining speed limits. He expressed concern about approving a 45 MPH speed limit that might compromise cyclist safety.

Chairperson McCroskey shared her approval for Segment 1 but expressed hesitation regarding Segment 2, suggesting that it should be 40 MPH throughout.

Board Member Winstanley commented that if the speed limit is set at 40 MPH, drivers would likely exceed it and drive at 50 MPH.

Chairperson McCroskey acknowledge the likelihood of drivers exceeding the speed limit but argued against the recommended 45 MPH speed limit, emphasizing the role of law enforcement in issuing tickets to those who suppress the speed limit.

Board Member Laufer inquired about the possibility of voting on Segment 1 separately from Segment 2.

Mr. Hudson explained that the decision on speed limits is a unified one and cannot be separated. He explained that the City Council ultimately votes on speed limit establishments as it is a matter of modifying city code.

Mr. Guderian added that the Transportation Advisory Board (TAB) is making a recommendation to the council, and whatever the TAB decides will be conveyed to the council prior to their final decision.

Board Member Neal sought clarification that it would be one motion, not two.

Mr. Guderian confirmed this.

Board Member James expressed no objection to making a recommendation to the council. He suggested that if the group believes the speed limit should be 40 MPH, they should make that recommendation to the council.

Board Member James made a motion to set both segments of Williams Field Road from Ellsworth to the east city limits at 40 MPH, which was seconded by Chairperson McCroskey.

Upon tabulation of votes, it showed:

AYES – McCroskey – Wozniak – James – Laufer – Neal – Vandever – Winstanley

NAYS – None

Vice Chairperson Wozniak inquired about the lane widths in the area.

Mr. Hudson explained that once the roadway is fully developed, it will have standard 11-foot lanes.

Board Member Vandever explained that she voted for a 40 MPH speed limit because she believes it will lead to a smoother transition down to 35 MPH for the entire segment.

Chairperson McCroskey mentioned that they had address all the agenda items but noticed that staff had additional items their agenda.

Mr. Hudson informed the TAB that the minutes from the previous TAB meetings had been approved by the council.

Board Member Laufer made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Board Member Neal.

AYES – McCroskey – Wozniak – James – Laufer – Neal – Vandever – Winstanley

NAYS – None

Meeting adjourned at 6:32 pm