

**DOWNTOWN LINKS CITIZEN ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETING SUMMARY**

Monday, February 10, 2014

Approved at the Downtown Links CAC meeting on Monday, April 14, 2014

FROM: TDOT Project Manager Tom Fisher

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Chair, Eugene W. Caywood, Old Pueblo Trolley
Vice Chair, John Burr, Armory Park Neighborhood Association
John A. Sedwick, Fourth Avenue Merchants Association
Kylie Walzak, Tucson-Pima Bicycle Advisory Committee
Gail Ryser, Barrio Anita Neighborhood Association
Richard Mayers, West University Neighborhood Association
Mary Ellen Wooten, Tucson-Pima Arts Council
Carlos Lozano, Tucson - Pima County Historical Commission
Susan Gamble, Warehouse Arts Management Association
Michael Keith, Downtown Tucson Partnership
Korey Kruckmeyer, Pie Allen Neighborhood Association
Susan Marshall, Citizen Transportation Advisory Committee

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:

VACANT, Iron Horse Neighborhood Association
Daniela Diamente, Dunbar Spring Neighborhood Association
Kristi Frank, El Presidio Neighborhood Association

PROJECT TEAM PRESENT:

Sam Credio, City of Tucson Department of Transportation (TDOT)
Tom Fisher, City of Tucson Department of Transportation (TDOT)
Brent Kirkman, HDR Engineering
Kathy Jirschele, Kaneen Advertising and Public Relations
Joan Beckim, Kaneen Advertising and Public Relations
Laura Mielcarek, Wheat Scharf Associates

1. Meeting Called to Order

Quorum confirmed. John Burr called the meeting to order at 5:38 p.m. (Gene Caywood, Chair arrived shortly after call to order and resumed the regular responsibilities as Chair of the committee.)

2. Introduction of Committee Members and Staff

CAC and Project Team Members introduced themselves.

3. Approval of Meeting Minutes

The minutes of January 27, 2014 were unanimously approved with changes. (*Changes will show that John Burr abstained from a show of hands indicating concurrence with item A*)

4. Announcements

- **Tom Fisher** announced that mayor and Council had voted to name the section of new roadway from 6th Street to Broadway the Maclavio Barraza Parkway. This section of roadway will be created by Phase 3 of the Downtown Links Project. Tom also noted that Mayor and Council also voted to rename Barraza-Aviation Highway, between Broadway and Alvernon Way, the Maclavio Barraza

Parkway. However, this section is an ADOT facility and ADOT must **approve the renaming of the roadway**. **John Burr** mentioned that he saw the PowerPoint that was presented to Mayor and Council and he wished that the reasons the Downtown Links CAC did not agree with the renaming of the roadway had been included. There was further discussion regarding TDOT's presentation to Mayor and Council. **Mary Ellen Wooten** added that there was discussion regarding the cost of re-signing the roadways for the name change. **Tom F.** said the costs for re-signing will not come out of the Downtown Links project budget.

- **Sam Credio** updated the members on the progress of the St. Mary's construction project. Temporary striping has been placed and landscaping is being installed. Final paving will occur the end of February. Members had questions related to some of the final configurations of the St. Mary's turn-signals, bike lanes, HAWK crossing and landscaping.

5. Reports and Presentations

- LeeAnn Dickson, Federal Rail Administration, gave a presentation on the regulations that govern the use of locomotive horns at highway-rail grade crossing (Train Horn Rule). (**PP presentation can be viewed at www.downtownlinks.info**) **LD** explained that the Federal Rail Administration (FRA) promotes safe, environmentally sound, successful railroad transportation to meet current and future needs of all customers. They encourage policies and investment in infrastructure and technology to enable rail to realize its full potential. **LD** reviewed the Train Horn Rule that went into effect on June 24, 2005 and explained what the rule does related to trains approaching public crossings, exceptions to the use of the horn and how it enable communities to establish quiet zone. The locomotive horn use pattern is; 2 long, 1 short, 1 long and is repeated or prolonged where crossings are close together. The horn typically is not sounded more than ¼ mile from a crossing. Engineers blow the horn for several reasons;

1. It's the law
2. To warn pedestrians/motorists a train is approaching
3. It is their job
4. They could be held criminally liable
5. They could lose their job, and
6. They could be sued.

LD indicated that the horn will sound in or out of a quiet zone if crossing devices are not functioning, in emergency situations; for worker protection and as dictated by the Railroad Operating Rules. **LD** gave some examples of emergency situations. **LD** explained that a Quiet Zone is a rail corridor at least one half mile in length, containing one or more public highway-rail grade crossings, within which blowing of train horns is prohibited, except in certain circumstances. The Tucson Quiet Zone is;

- Main Avenue
- Fifth Street
- 6th Street/9th Avenue, and
- 7th Avenue

LD showed several options for at-grade pedestrian crossing. **Kylie W.** asked about other communities in Arizona that have quiet zones, and wondered if the rules had changed in the last couple years for obtaining quiet zones. **LD** said the rules have not changed. How the crossing is treated is determined by a commission that includes Arizona Corporation Commission, State Department of Transportation, Rail Road and the City Planners. **John Burr** asked if there are federal grants available for quiet zones. **LD** said there are none available specifically for quiet zones. **Susan Gamble** asked if gates are needed no matter what. **John B.** asked if there was a threshold wherein, if train traffic increased the quiet zone could go away. **LD** said yes, that could happen, and said she encourages communities

to include in the application what they think the train traffic will be in the future then they don't have to worry about not qualifying for the quiet zone if the train traffic increases. **John B.** also asked if there were pedestrian thresholds to consider. No, there are not. **Gail Ryser** asked if **LD** had any knowledge of increased tracks through Tucson. **LD** said she has no knowledge of more tracks being laid. **Tom Fisher** asked who it is that decides when an area becomes a quiet zone. **LD** said railroad makes recommendations for at grade crossing improvements. The city issues a Notice of Intent (NOI) to all the interested parties (i.e. Railroad and ACC). There is a 60 day comment period when recommendations for improvements are submitted to the city. After the improvements are installed, the city issues a Notice of Establishment (NOE). This is a 20 day notice to the railroad to educate their engineers to not blow the horn at particular crossing. **Susan G.** asked if the improvements could be phased in. **LD** said yes, but the no whistle zone could not be established until all the improvements were completed. **Gene Caywood** opened the floor to the audience to ask questions if they had any. There were no questions from the audience. **Kylie** asked if some of the improvements could go in sooner. **Sam** said there may be a possibility of completing the channelization at 5th Street and Main Avenue, but the main component of establishing the quiet zone is the underpass. So even if all the other improvements were complete, they would not be able to file the Notice of Establishment until the underpass is complete. **Kylie** asked if all the crossing improvements except 6th Street were completed, and traffic was using the new 6th Street underpass, could they submit their Notice of Establishment (NOE). **Sam** said he thought that may be a possibility, but that we would probably have to go back to the diagnostic team, show them what improvements were in place, and ask if we could move forward with the NOE, so that we wouldn't have to wait the full 2 years while the rest of construction was completed. An audience member asked what the time frame was for the establishment of the quiet zone. **LD** explained that she didn't have the answer to his questions. Each case is individual, and it also depends on when the improvements are completed. **Tom F.** asked **LD** to talk about the relationship the city has with Union Pacific. **LD** said that UP does their best to be a good neighbor and that safety is a value in the railroad industry. They will always err on the safe side and we are talking about taking away the train horn, which is the trains warning device! This is very important to the railroad. Audience member asked about how much of the track will be fenced within the quiet zone. **LD** said fencing is not a requirement of the quiet zone. Fencing is a decision for the city to make. **Sam C** stated that fencing is part of this project. **Gail R.** asked about train speeds. **LD** said that statistics show that the slower a train is moving, the more incidents there are. **Gail** also asked if there are speed limits for trains. **LD** said there are not. **Kylie** asked about the crossings at Main Ave. and at 5th Street. She was wondering if there was some way to get the neighborhoods some relief from the horns. **LD** said that if those were done separately, then we'd have to start the process over again with the other crossings. **Sam** also pointed out that even if they were done separately and ahead of the rest, the engineers would likely have to blow their horn at 5th Street as prior warning for the 6th Street crossing.

- **City of Tucson Review of Proposed Bicycle/Pedestrian Facilities – Sam Credio** began with a review of the Bicycle/Pedestrian Facility concerns discussed at the prior CAC meeting and the resolutions of each
 - a) Conversion of the westbound bus lane on Broadway under the UPRR with a cycle track connecting to Aviation bikeway – Concur
 - b) MUP connection at the Snake Bridge and west of Stevens Avenue – Concur
 - c) MUP ramp connection to the 4th Avenue pocket park – Concur
 - d) MUP narrowing at MSF – Concur
 - e) MUP crossing at the 8th Street spur – Concur
 - f) MUP north/south transition at 6th Avenue – Tabled
 - g) MUP crossing at 7th Avenue/UPRR – Concur
 - h) MUP crossing at 6th Street/Links Avenue intersection and connection to 7th Avenue – Tabled
 - i) Stone Avenue/6th Street intersection configuration – Tabled

- j) MUP crossing at 9th Avenue/UPRR – Tabled
- k) Church Avenue eastbound channelized right turn – not discussed at last meeting
- l) Church Avenue north/south cross walk – not discussed at last meeting
- m) Main Avenue crossing – not discussed at last meeting
- n) Physical barrier between bike lanes and vehicle lanes - Concur

Sam addressed the request from a CAC member at a prior meeting in regards to the Stone Avenue intersection and how the size of it compares to other intersections around town. The north/south legs are approximately 90' wide and the east/west legs are approximately 70' wide. **Kylie** had questions about the size of the medians.

k) **Church Avenue eastbound free right turn.** Sam C explained that they investigated the option of reconfiguring this intersection into a traditional “T” intersection, but that it would require additional property acquisitions and will also produce a major change in the cross slopes at the sidewalk. Currently there are no cross walks at this intersection, but the new designs provides an east west crossing. There was additional conversation regarding the “T” intersection, requirements for ADA compliant sidewalks and where additional acquisition would occur. Kylie asked why there needs to be 2 northbound lanes at Church Avenue and 6th Street. **Sam C** said that was what traffic volumes dictate. Kylie asked if they could suspend traffic volume requirements. **Sam C** said they would take a look at it. Kylie also asked about installing a speed table at the free right onto Church Avenue. **Sam C** said they were still looking at that possibility. John Burr asked about installing a *Yield to Pedestrians* sign or a flashing light to bring attention to the crossing at that intersection. **Sam C** said they would certainly look at it. **Sam C** said they are also working with the traffic department on the striping plans for that intersection. John Burr asked that the renderings of this intersection include the traffic signals and poles and cross walk markings. **A show of hands indicated the CAC members CONCUR with tabling this item until they can see a rendering.**

l) **Church Avenue north/south cross walk.** Sam C. explained that they have to provide access to the USA Building parking lot from 6th street. There are 2 retaining walls along the north side of the street in this location; one along the roadway and one back of curb. Additionally the slopes are greater than 5% so a north/south cross walk would not be ADA compliant. There was discussion regarding the location of a north/south cross walk if one could be placed. **Kylie** asked about a modified Pelican. Sam said he is challenging the design team to see what they can do at this intersection. Can they put in a north/south cross walk? Will it be ADA compliant? Will it be safe? **Gene C.** asked about the 5% slope. **Sam C** explained that longitudinal grade of the cross walk is greater than 5% cross slope, but the roadway cross slope is 2% with crown. **Gene C.** said he would like to see them figure out some way to put a cross walk at this location. **A show of hands indicated the CAC members CONCUR with tabling this item until they can see a rendering.**

m) **Main Avenue Crossing.** Sam C said that TDOT has made accommodations for future signalization at Main Avenue by including median openings, and installing conduit, pull boxes and other infrastructure during the St. Mary’s construction project. However, the traffic department is not in favor of installing a HAWK at this location, mainly because of the signal spacing. It’s only 320 feet to the Granada signal and 400 feet to the future Church Avenue signal. The minimum requirement is 600 feet. John Burr said the problem is that you have to go from Granada to the Deck park, approximately 1300 feet to cross 6th Street if you’re in a wheel chair. There was some discussion regarding marked and unmarked crossings. **Tom Fisher** said they are looking to find a crossing point between Stone and Granada. **John B** mentioned the potential of housing being built nearby. There was additional discussion regarding a north/south crossing at some location between Granada Avenue and the Deck Plaza or Stone Avenue. **Kylie** stated that people with handicaps are paying sales tax and we’re not designing this for them. Sam said he understands, but when they design a crossing for a street, they have to follow federal guidelines. **Kylie** asked what type of shading was planned for this stretch of roadway. Tom said they will try to make the walls look greener with landscaping. **A show of hands indicated the CAC members CONCUR with tabling this item until they can see a rendering and resolve the nearby intersection issues.**

- **Bicycle Pedestrian Review Subcommittee Report from February 4, 2014** – **Kylie Walzak** said that the subcommittee members agree that moving the MUP to the east side of Links Avenue at 7th Street was a good design suggestion. There are still some issues that need to be resolved on how pedestrian and bicycle traffic will be able to cross at 6th Street. **The members generally concur with moving the MUP to the east side of the street with the caveat that the design has not fully resolved the 7th Avenue connection and the channelized right turns.** **Kylie** asked that her spread sheet be provided at the next CAC meeting. **John B.** asked that the current map be provided at the next meeting. **Gene C.** said that he does not want to leave unaddressed the issue from the Bicycle/Pedestrian Subcommittee that they do not think the project should move forward. He opened the floor for the CAC members who expressed reservations to reiterate their feelings and to see if the subsequent meetings have made them feel better or if they are still dissatisfied with the project. **Michael Keith** said that since the inception of the project transportation modes have changed. Densities have changed and he recommends re-thinking the non-vehicular modes of transportation. We need to make sure we are designing for the next 25 years, not the last 25 years. He said it's not about moving cars anymore. It's about quality of life. A lot of things have changed since this project began. The project will be enormously disruptive – right through the heart of everything. There is already exhaustion downtown (inaudible audio). **Gene C.** responded that there are a lot of benefits from this project way beyond the roadway. The drainage improvements take the whole downtown area out of the 100 year flood plain. There's always disruption with construction, but it will be fairly minimal in this case because most of the construction will be out of traffic. Tie-in points at Stone and 6th will be the worst. He said that this project has come a long way from the total car oriented thinking of an 8 lane freeway 20 years ago, to a 4 lane arterial today. This design takes out 15 structures, the state planned to take out 43, plus all the historic underpasses. The state provided no acceptable roadway access for pedestrians, bicycles or trolleys except for a bridge 20-feet in the air over the railroad tracks with a zig-zag ramp for pedestrians. The whole ADOT plan was a disaster. The community came together to put a stop to it – but they also said we need a connection that helps remove traffic from downtown that doesn't need to be there. By building this roadway, we divert traffic from Congress and Broadway, so we can create a more pedestrian friendly downtown. **Gene C.** said he sees enough benefits from the project to allow it to move forward. **Richard Mayers** said that geographically, Tucson has the smallest downtown of any city of its population in the United States. The neighborhood to the north of downtown can access downtown to support the businesses. **Richard** said that the difficulty he has with the project is that the roadway severs the connection for the neighborhoods to the north of downtown and does not adequately re-instate them. In looking at what the city has done with La Placita and the court complex that cuts off Grosseta, which is a major access point for pedestrians and bicyclist, he feels like this project is just more of the same and has a difficult time accepting that. Now that Kylie has raised the issue again, he realizes he is deeply disturbed by it. **Gene C.** said he didn't think that the project changes any of the pedestrian access in and out of downtown. Certainly not eliminating any of them and most of them are improved. Because of the railroad, there are a limited number of access points in and out of downtown. This project puts a roadway next to the railroad, but maintains all of the crossing that we currently have, plus the deck park, which is a huge success. **Richard M.** said that 4th Avenue does not work. When you get to Congress you can't go anywhere. Pedestrians have to wait several light cycles, and bicyclist are crowded by the cars. He agrees that working through the issues have greatly improved the design, but he does not think it's good enough. **Susan Gamble** said that some of the traffic will be diverted from that intersection (Congress/4th Ave/Toole Ave) once the roadway is built. She said that for her, it's about maintaining and improving the connectivity we have and getting traffic out of downtown – specifically so we can improve the greater downtown pedestrian and bicycle (inaudible). This project will help that. **Susan** also said that challenging the designers to make the amenities better to use and not just provide them, in order to make a better project. **Gene C.** said that he agrees with what Richard said about 4th Avenue access into downtown. The reason for the dysfunction is because a developer came in and convinced the city to abandon the plan

without any meaningful input from the committee. He does not want to see that happen on this project. **John B** said that he attended the Bicycle/Pedestrian subcommittee meeting and realized that there were some problems that hadn't been addressed and he appreciates the effort the design team has made. Downtown is getting a lot more interactive. The people on the CAC committee live and work downtown, and he thinks the bicycle/pedestrian issues should be brought back to the full CAC. Problems should be nipped in the bud so that they don't become so big that members want to stop the project. The RTA can still build what they want, whether there is a CAC or not. He does not want the city to ever get to a point where they see the CAC input as invalid. We need to work together the best way that we can. **Carlos Lozano** said the main artery of the roadway is 7th Avenue and the railroad track, which goes through the 1860 national cemetery. We don't know what they're going to find there. When they began digging for the courts complex, they found over 1000 bodies and it cost \$15 million and set the project back 2 years. Perhaps by raising the roadway between 7th Avenue and 6th Street you would disrupt the graveyard much less. That would also open up the connectivity in the area.

- **Public Art Review Subcommittee Report from February 3, 2014.** **Mary Ellen Wooten** said the subcommittee met to consider the proposal from an artist who resides in Barrio Anita. The subcommittee reached the decision to make the recommendation to retain the art budget as allocated in October 2013, and approved and voted on by the full CAC in November 2013. Essentially, the subcommittee came to realize that receiving an unsolicited proposal does not fit within the value of an open competition, and without having made that same dollar value available as a potential proposal that any artist would make. They are retaining the budget as is, and hopes that this artist, if he's interested, will respond to other calls to artists as an emerging artist. John B asked if there was an element in the budget that covered small projects. Mary Ellen re-capped the allocation of funds.

Gene C. said that the subcommittees that have already been established will continue as necessary and finish the jobs they started. Maybe the Bicycle/Pedestrian should come back to the full CAC. Michael K. does not want to see the Bike/Ped subcommittee dissolved. Susan Gamble does not want to see it dissolved either. Gene said that maybe it would be best to have an item added to the agenda that gives the subcommittees an opportunity to report.

Michael Keith asked that it be noted that when he makes comments, he makes them as an individual, and not on behalf of the Tucson Downtown Partnership. In order for the Downtown Partnership to weigh-in, they have to have a full presentation, with input from all the members and they have to take a vote. So any comments he makes are personal comments.

6. Next Steps

Items for Future Meetings

- Renderings (Gene asked if they could be provided to the members prior to the CAC meeting)
- **John B.** asked for more information on the Corbett building right-of way. The Deck Plaza property acquisition/trade. Urban overlay update on anticipated development numbers. Options for 9th Avenue and 7th Avenue at grade crossings. More information on the MUP at 6th Avenue/7th Street
- **Richard M.** asked for information on free-right interactions with bicycles. Accident statistics at April meeting.
- Provide copies of the current maps
- Provide copies of Bicycle/Pedestrian subcommittee spreadsheet

Confirm Future Meeting Dates

- Next CAC meeting is April 14, 2014

7. Call to the Audience

The following people addressed the Committee:

Karen Green, Dunbar Spring resident. Richard asked about the east/west turn arrow at Granada. It was gone during construction, and it's nice to have it back again. Also, during construction, everyone drove slowly. Now it's a lovely wide open roadway and it's much harder to cross the road. Can we start ticketing people who are driving too fast? A friend of hers crosses 9th every day on a bike with a trailer on the back. The refuge is not large enough to accommodate the trailer. Karen hopes the one at Main will be larger to accommodate bikes with trailers on the back. Disingenuous to talk about how difficult a bike/pedestrian crossing for north/south Church and then use that crossing as a reason why you won't put a HAWK in at Main. Also, you won't get the numbers to warrant a crossing at Main because no-one uses it because it's too dangerous.

Natasha Winnick, Dunbar Spring neighborhood. I sat on this CAC for 5 years before I was no longer allowed to sit on the CAC, so I feel like I know the history pretty well. Totally disagrees with Gene when he says that every way that bikes and pedestrians can cross will be kept open, because that's not true. We are limiting the crossing of more pedestrians and bicycles from the north side of the city to downtown. We need to keep as many of those crossing open, we need to make them as safe as possible, and we need to have ways for people to get to downtown. All this road does is block people from getting to downtown. Having all the traffic go around downtown, won't support downtown and all the progress we've made. I think that's what Michael was trying to say, and it's interesting that each of you stated how you felt and then it was dropped. So it doesn't say if the CAC, in a uniform manner should go forward with this road. Does it say that the CAC should stop and think about things in a different way? All it did was have a few people state their opinions. Is that where we are? Because that doesn't say anything. It doesn't build consensus, it doesn't allow us as a community to decide what's best for our community. It does nothing except allow a few of you to state a few opinions. So if you're really going to look at whether this road is going to make a difference and do all the things that you think it's going to do on the huge list that Tom likes to present, then we need to go through and analyze them and look at them more closely, because I don't feel like the road, and a lot of my neighbors don't feel like the road is going to do all these wonderful things that we think it's going to do. I think it's going to be like the TCC. It's going to produce a lot of light and destroy parts of our community that can never be brought back.

Les Pierce, Arroyo Chico NA. I have a question about the HAWK at Main being too close to Church and too close to the other signal, because there's a HAWK signal at Norris Avenue, which appears to be less than 200 feet from the big ass crossing at Kino and Campbell and another HAWK crossing at 7th Street which is a block south of 6th on Euclid. How can those happen but not happen at Main?

8. Adjournment at 7:58 p.m.