

**DOWNTOWN LINKS CITIZEN ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
MEETING SUMMARY**

Monday, November 18, 2013

*Accepted and Approved by the Downtown Links CAC on January 20, 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  
Daniela Diamente, Dunbar Spring Neighborhood Association  
John A. Sedwick, Fourth Avenue Merchants Association  
Kylie Walzak, Tucson-Pima Bicycle Advisory Committee  
Gail Ryser, Barrio Anita Neighborhood Association  
Kristi Frank, El Presidio Neighborhood Association  
Richard Mayers, West University Neighborhood Association  
Korey Kruckmeyer, Pie Allen Neighborhood Association  
Mary Ellen Wooten, Tucson-Pima Arts Council  
Carlos Lozano, Tucson - Pima County Historical Commission  
Susan Marshall, Citizen Transportation Advisory Committee

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:**

Susan Gamble, Warehouse Arts Management Association  
Erika Mitnik, Iron Horse Neighborhood Association  
Michael Keith, Downtown Tucson Partnership

**PROJECT TEAM PRESENT:**

Sam Credio, City of Tucson Department of Transportation (TDOT)  
Tom Fisher, City of Tucson Department of Transportation (TDOT)  
Michael Bertram, HDR Engineering, Inc.  
Brent Kirkman, HDR Engineering, Inc.  
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. Chair, Gene Caywood called the meeting to order at 5:32 p.m.

**2. Introduction of Committee Members and Staff**

CAC and Project Team Members introduced themselves.

**3. Approval of Meeting Minutes**

Motion to approve the minutes of September 9, 2013 with changes was passed by a voice vote of 12 to 0. Changes to show that Gail Ryser, representative of Barrio Anita, joined the meeting after roll-call and the comment made by Daniela Diamente that she was the only representative of a neighborhood in attendance and a request by John Burr to clarify the scope of work regarding Stone Avenue connectivity to the multi-use path.

#### **4. Announcements**

- **Daniela Diamente** announced that a lot of activities were planned for the Dunbar Spring neighborhood this coming weekend. A Porch Fest and Mesquite Bean milling to name a couple. She invited everyone to come and participate.

#### **5. Staff Reports and Presentations to DLCAC**

**Purpose of the Project** – In response to questions from area neighborhoods and CAC members, **Tom Fisher, TDOT Project Manager** reviewed the main goals of the Downtown Links project, they are;

1. Improved multi-modal capacity, connectivity and safety. **Tom F.** examined the planned design upgrades that contribute to the multi-modal capacity, connectivity and safety of the project. They include a new alternate east-west roadway connector; on street bike lanes (Tucson is one of the top cycling communities in the nation), ADA compliant sidewalks and a separate multi use path; new intersections with ADA compliant access, crosswalks, lighting and modern signals; a new underpass at 6<sup>th</sup> Street and the Union pacific Railroad crossing (in its current condition, this crossing is one of the most dangerous at grade crossings in southern Arizona); Four railroad crossing upgrades to help establish the no whistle zone eligibility; and the 6<sup>th</sup> Street/6<sup>th</sup> Avenue signal upgrade for two-way traffic into/out of the downtown area.
2. Improved cross drainage system to reduce flooding. These upgrades include new double-barrel culvert for Tucson Arroyo from 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue to 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue; new drainage culverts for St. Mary's Road from 7<sup>th</sup> Street and other local area streets; and new drainage for the high School Wash connection that will be built by the Army Corp. of Engineers.
3. Improving the aesthetics/image of the corridor. The corridor serves as a gateway to Downtown and the University of Arizona, so aesthetic improvements is essential. When complete, the Downtown Links corridor will include the 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue Deck Plaza for bike/pedestrian access and safety, public space and provide neighborhood connectivity; native desert landscaping and passive water harvesting; recycled materials will be used in the hardscape; and public art will be included all along the corridor.
4. Encourage good land use redevelopment. This is the most challenging and creates the biggest conflict for the project goals. **Tom F.** said they are doing the very best they can to preserve historic structures and are voluntarily complying with section 106 mandates. They are documenting everything and seeking acceptance from the State Historic Preservation Office along with the Feds. The documentation (which is more than 400 pages) will soon be available for review on line.; creation of an Urban Overlay District to encourage infill projects, which is still being worked on with the Streetcar Overlay and Infill Incentive District; and environmental clean-up of industrial properties. **Tom F.** also emphasized that though they will not remove properties until necessary, they must also prepare the corridor for construction. They cannot expect the contractor to complete the demolition process and possibly discover conditions that weren't in the plans.

**Tom F.** reviewed the project schedule and addressed the concern of some neighborhoods and CAC members that properties would be acquired and demolished months or possibly years before construction started. **Tom F.** stated that that is not the intent of the project team or the City. (A representative from Tierra Right-of-Way will speak on the subject/process of ROW acquisition later in the meeting.) **Tom F.** stated that per the 2006 RTA plan, the entire project will be constructed between 2012 and 2021. Phase 1 – the 8<sup>th</sup> Street Drainage Improvements were completed in May 2012. Phase II – the St. Mary's Road, I-10 to Church Avenue improvements are currently under

construction and “substantial completion” is expected by the end of January, 2014. Phase III – 6<sup>th</sup> Street/Links Avenue from Church Avenue to Broadway is currently in design which is expected to be completed by January, 2015. Construction of this portion of the corridor is expected to begin by late 2015 or early 2016, with construction completed in 2017/2018.

**Tom F.** reviewed the project budget and included information on the RTA and non-RTA revenues; expenditures to date and discussed whether the project is within budget.

Budget

- \$76.134 million in RTA Project budget
- \$8.54 million in Committed non-RTA revenues (HURF/state gas tax revenues)
- \$84.674 million Total

Expenditures

- \$25 million in RTA funds
- \$2 million in regional HURF funds (state gas taxes)
- \$27 million Total

**Tom F.** stated that the current engineers estimate for Phase III, including the 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue Deck Plaza is within budget. **Tom F.** also said that TDOT plans to submit a PAG TIP request for \$7 million in HURF funds for Phase III. He also reminded the members that the contractor and construction bids will determine the final cost of construction.

*(A copy of the PowerPoint of this presentation can be found here [www.downtownlinks.info](http://www.downtownlinks.info))*

**John Sedwick** asked how much of Phase III will be included in the bid package. **Michael Bertram** said that now that they have submitted their 75% plans, they know more about the conditions both above and below ground, and their numbers suggest that they are compliant with the RTA budget for the overall project which includes the re-alignment of 6<sup>th</sup> Street to the north to accommodate the railroad undercrossing and Links Avenue from 6<sup>th</sup> Street to Broadway. **Gene C.** stated that he, along with other members of the CAC had concerns that because of the slow economy, monies are not coming into the RTA at the rate they had planned, so in six months or a year, will the RTA be in a position to fund the \$76 million needed for this project. **Tom F.** answered that yes, the RTA is committed to funding the projects that have already begun. **John S.** asked if the team has an estimate of how long the construction would take. **Michael B.** estimates the project to take 18 – 24 months to complete, but ultimately it depends on the contractor’s schedule. Additionally, above and below ground utility relocations, right-of-way acquisitions and permitting from the Corp of Engineers to work in the wash and from the UPRR to work in their right-of-way all contribute to the construction schedule. The goal is to have most of that work accomplished before the contractor arrives. **John Burr** stated that since most of the work is off line – or out of traffic, impacts will be substantially less. **Michael B** said that it all depends on the contractors schedule and phasing, but that yes, most work should not affect the traveling public. The biggest impacts will be at the “tie-in” points. **John B.** asked if there are other Value Analysis assessments that need to be reviewed. **Michael B.** said that the subcommittee will need to meet again to finalize the RTA VA. **John B** commented on Jim Degroods letter, and also asked about the re-use of bridge girders. **Michael B.** said they will probably not use them. **Daniela Diamente** asked for clarification of the numbers contained in the PowerPoint and numbers in the RTA letter which don’t seem to correspond. It was discussed and explained that some of the dollar figures represent money that has been appropriated, but not spent. Additionally, the dollar figures represent monies for the entire project. It is not broken into phases.

**John S.** expressed concern regarding prior comments by team members that they don’t control the contractors schedule or phasing. He explained that the streetcar project was a nightmare because no one expected the impact construction would have on the neighborhoods, businesses, and people’s lives. **John S.** urged the team to plan ahead and include special provisions that take into consideration residents, businesses, bicyclist and pedestrians during construction. **Gene C.** agreed that the

Streetcar project left a bad taste in everyone's mouth and asked if it would be beneficial if a subcommittee was formed to approach Daryl Cole (TDOT Director) to make a specific request that the TDOT project managers have more control over the contractor than in the past. There was discussion about different methods that could be used such as incentives/disincentives and special provisions.

**Sam Credio** stated that the time to prepare the special provisions is after the 100% plans are submitted and before it goes out for bid. **Sam C.** says that after the plans are 100%, the City will refine the special provisions, outlining what, when where and how we want the contractor to complete the work. That is also the time to incorporate incentives/disincentives into the contract. **Gene C.** stated that the CAC would like an opportunity to review the special provisions in addition to the plans. **Michael B.** stated that their job is to make sure the project can be completed as conceived and that the Special Provisions will outline the prescriptive measures in which they would like the contractor to go about their business. The 8<sup>th</sup> Street Drainage and the St. Mary's project had very robust special provisions that the contractor had to abide by and their intent is to have the same level of measures for Phase III of the project. He would like to convey in the Special Provisions the concerns of the residents and businesses so that the contractor can bid and plan appropriately. **Gene C.** added that if need be they could form a subcommittee that could review and weigh in on the special provisions.

**Construction and Design Progress Report** – **Sam Credio** updated the members on the 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue two-way conversion which is essentially complete. **Daniela D.** asked about the signal controls at the intersection at Toole/Alameda/6<sup>th</sup> Avenue, and when the intersection would be changed from a 6-way stop. **Sam C.** said that the design is complete and the goal of the city is to put it out for bid after the GEM Show. **John Burr** asked what the speed limit on 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue, from 6<sup>th</sup> Street to Speedway was. Sam said it remained the same as it was before the conversion and that it was 25 or 30 mph. there was additional discussion regarding the speed limits. **Sam C.** then updated the members on Phase II, the St. Mary's Road construction project giving a summary of improvements, both under and above ground, including storm drain, sewer pipe, water lines, access ramps, street lighting, concrete curb sidewalks and tonnage of asphalt placed. He then reviewed the activity expected to occur by the end of January, 2014. **Sam C.** advised the members that the intent of the contractor was to achieve substantial completion by the end of January and to be essentially off the road by the time GEM Show starts. Rubberized asphalt will be placed in March, 2014. **John Burr** asked about possible issues with rubberized asphalt, **Sam C.** responded that most issues with rubberized asphalt seem to be in turn radiuses. Fortunately most of our project is a straight-away, but that the road would be maintained. John Burr then asked what the cost of Phase II was. **Sam C.** responded that the contract price was \$7.2 million and that it was currently under budget. **Richard Mayers** stated that the roadways seem to fail in the area where bicyclist ride and asked what the surface life was. There was additional conversation about rubberized asphalt. **Kylie Walzak** asked if the roadway would be striped before the final layer of pavement was placed, **Sam C.** responded that they would place temporary striping. **Gail R.** asked for a review of access points into Barrio Anita. **Sam C.** indicated that Davis Street, at St. Mary's Road has been permanently closed to vehicular traffic, but is still open for pedestrians and cyclist. Other than that, access remains the same by using Hughes Street or Brady Avenue from St. Mary's and Anita Avenue or Davis Street from Granada Avenue. There was additional conversations regarding Davis Street and pedestrian and bicycle movements through the area. **Sam C.** showed photos of some of the upgrades throughout the St. Mary's project. **Gail R.** asked about water harvesting at the north/west corner of Granada and St. Mary's. **Sam C.** confirmed that there is a water harvesting feature in that area.

**Michael Bertram** gave a brief update on the design plans, stating the 75% plans had been submitted to the city on October 18. TDOT will review the plans and give their comments back to HDR. The plans cannot be shared at this point because they are in review. There will be more detail available in February, 2014. **Michael B.** reminded the members that the High School Wash is no longer part of

this project, and that the improvements will be completed by the Corp of Engineers. Construction is expected to begin in January and should be complete by mid-summer, 2014. **Michael B.** also said that once the 75% review process is complete, they should be able to begin producing a 3D view.

**Property Acquisition Process – Myrlene Francis** from Tierra Right-of Way gave a presentation which can be seen here [www.downtownlinks.info](http://www.downtownlinks.info) **Carlos Lozano** compared the acquisition process to the Section 106 process, noting that the property acquisition process is how the property owner is compensated for the loss of property and the 106 process is how the community is compensated for the loss of a historic property. He wondered if the stakeholders or neighborhoods might want to form a subcommittee or in the least have Jonathan Mabry present to the CAC members. **John B.** asked how much has been spent on public acquisition. **Myrlene F.** said only 5 properties are currently in the appraisal process. She emphasized that the acquisition process should begin as soon as possible because it can take up to two years to complete. The process for demolition cannot begin until the property is already vacant. **Tom F.** reminded the members that there are several properties that are owned by ADOT which are scheduled for demolition next year. The tenants are fully aware of the timeframe. **Tom F.** also noted that when properties are left vacant for too long, they start to get mold, are vandalized and sometimes the homeless begin living in them. There was a fire in the Stone Transmission building before it was demolished. There was additional conversation regarding vacant properties, city owned properties and possible land swap opportunities. **Carlos L.** said that the section 106 process has been between the consultants and SHPPO, and the community hasn't been involved at all. Nobody on the CAC seems to be concerned. If this was a federal process, and they were employing eminent-domain to historic resources and then destroying them, they would need to mitigate that, for instance by improving some other historic resource within the community. The absolute minimum for mitigation of what they're proposing now is documentation (photos before demolition). They're also saying that the Downtown Links UOD is a form of mitigation. But there are other things we could get, but it hasn't been discussed. He is concerned but not sure what to do because it hasn't been discussed. **Carlos L.** said he would be happy to meet with Jonathan Mabry along other members of the CAC, or have Jonathan Mabry come to the CAC and explain the process. There was additional discussion and everyone agreed that it would be prudent to have Jonathan Mabry attend the next CAC to review the process with the members. **Kylie W.** asked what was the specific criteria was for buildings being impacted. **Myrlene F.** explained when and how the evaluation process takes place and also said that it is a property by property process. **Daniela D.** expressed concern that as the Chair of the Deck Plaza subcommittee, she wasn't aware of the land swap that took place until Tom F. mentioned it during his presentation.

**Public Art Review Subcommittee Report – Mary Ellen Wooten** recapped the subcommittees recommendation for the \$175,000 balance of the art budget;

- \$25,000 for design only to develop form liners and metal railing detail
- \$30,000 for multiple emerging artists with locations identified and worked through with design team and design team artist.
- \$80,000 for a child friendly interactive sculpture
- \$40,000 for Maclavio Barraza memorial

**Daniela D.** asked what the time frame was to develop the form liners. **Mary Ellen** said they needed to have the call to artists as soon as possible and one chosen by April. **Michael B.** said that the 90% plans will include the form liners, so they would need to be completed by then. **John B.** asked for clarification of where the \$175,000 budget came from. **Mary Ellen** explained that \$75,000 was the remaining balance of a previously chosen artist who passed away. \$100,000 is the balance of the art budget that was held back to be spent on emerging artists. **John B.** also asked if the discussion of naming one of the structures after Chris Carroll had come up during the Public Art Review subcommittee meeting. **Mary Ellen W.** replied that a specific conversation regarding that was not discussed at the subcommittee meeting. **Kory Kruckmeyer made a motion to approve the art**

budget distribution of funds as written, John Sedwick seconded the motion. The motion passed with a unanimous voice vote.

- **Presentation by representatives of the Barraza family regarding their proposal to rename Barraza-Aviation Parkway to Maclavio Barraza Parkway** – **Gene C.** asked for clarification of which section of the roadway the Barraza family was referring to. **Frank Barraza** introduced himself as the son of Maclavio Barraza, and then gave a brief historical update of Maclavio Barraza. He said that in 1195 the City Council honored his father by naming State Highway 210 the Barraza-Aviation Parkway. However, the family and members of the Hispanic community did not think it was quite the honor it should have been because they appended the Barraza name with Aviation. He stated that the purpose of his presentation tonight is to garner the support of the Downtown Links CAC in a proposal they intend to make to the City Council in February, which is to rename Barraza-Aviation in its entirety, including the new alignment that will be created through the Downtown Links Project. **Frank B.** then presented a short video of the life of Maclavio Barraza. **Daniela D.** asked Mr. Barraza what he was looking for from them. **Mr. Barraza** said he would like them to either pass a motion of support for the renaming of the roadway, or to provide a letter to Mayor and Council in support of changing the name. **John Burr** voiced his reluctance to rename the entire length of roadway. He said that Downtown Links has spent more than nine-years making it a different project than the ADOT SH 210. **Frank Barraza** said they view the entire length as one highway, and think it should have one name. **Gene C.** stated that the CAC needed to discuss amongst themselves and decide if they wish to support what the Barraza family is requesting. **Gene C.** began the discussion with his comments which included the history and significance of *Aviation Highway* including the 1927 naming of the roadway by Charles Lindbergh. **Gene C.** also stated that he recognizes the significant historic value of Maclavio Barraza and said that in 1995 the Mayor and Council compromised by not pitting one historic feature above another by naming the roadway Barraza-Aviation, thus retaining the value of both. **Gene C.** said he could not support the Barraza families request because of the significant historic value of Aviation Highway. **Gail Ryser** said her comments do not have anything to do with politics, but rather with how to tell people to get to her neighborhood, but that after Gene C. history update, she didn't know how she felt. **Kristi Frank** wondered if any portion of the roadway should be named in memory of Chris Carroll. **Gene C.** said he would support naming an element of the project in memory of Chris Carroll. **Daniela D.** said that she would like the opportunity to digest all the information they had just been presented with. **Gene C.** agreed and suggested the item be put on the next CAC agenda for discussion and action. **Susan Marshall** asked if there was any official name for the new roadway being created by the Downtown Links project. **Tom F.** said there was no official name. **Gene C.** said there are really two issues to consider. Does the roadway get re-named, and what portion of the roadway is renamed. **Richard Mayers** asked about the history of the Maclavio Barraza artwork that was damaged. **Mary Ellen Wooten** updated the members on the piece of artwork.

## **6. Next Steps**

### **Items for Future Meetings**

- **Historic process**
- **UOD update**
- **Call to Artist update**
- **Bicycle/pedestrian subcommittee update**

**Confirm Future Meeting Dates**

The next Downtown Links CAC meeting is set for January 13, 2014

**7. Call to the Audience**

The following people addressed the Committee:

Daniela D. read a statement from Karen Green, Dunbar Springs Neighborhood Association, said she would like to take back her recommendation to read the book Talk Up Tucson, by Anita Fonte.

Frank Barraza, said he is happy to provide any further information and provided his business card with his contact information.

**8. Adjournment at 7:55 p.m.**