



GRANT ROAD CORRIDOR PLANNING TASK FORCE

WEDNESDAY, May 1, 2019, at 5:30 p.m.

Donna R. Liggins Recreation Center

2160 North 6th Avenue

Tucson, Arizona 85705

Meeting Summary

[Note: This document was prepared using flip chart notes taken by the facilitator during meeting and an audio recording of meeting. The primary focus of this meeting was for updates on Phases 3&4 and 5&6.]

Ana Marrufo from the City Clerk’s office led the Task Force members in a Loyalty Oath at 5:30.

1. Welcome and Call to Order

Nanci Beizer Fink, acting as the meeting facilitator, called the meeting to order at 5:42 p.m. A quorum was established.

Citizen Task Force Members

Present		Absent
Dale Calvert	Linda Small	John Anderson
Roy Garcia	David Sunderman	Deirdre Brosnihan
James Hogan-arrived at 5:55pm	John Wakefield	Shannon McBride-Olson
Andrew Jones	Moon – Joe Yee-arrived at 5:45 pm	Robert Tait
Alice Roe		
Beverly Rutter		

The Task Force and the Project Team members introduced themselves. Project Team members present included:

- Diana Alarcon, TDOT
- David Burbank, TDOT
- Robin Raine, TDOT
- Dorothy Weideman, TDOT-Real Estate
- Ricardo Pargas, HDR
- Rebecca Ruopp, PDS
- Rick Ellis, RTA
- Jim Degrood, RTA
- Paki Rico, RTA
- Britton Dornquast, RTA MainStreet
- Joan Landers, Public Outreach

2. Agenda Overview

Facilitator, Nanci Beizer Fink briefly went over each agenda item.

3. Call to the Audience

No members of the public wished to address the Task Force.

4. Update on Task Force Configuration

Note: PowerPoint presentation can be found at:

http://www.grantroad.info/pdf/Grant_Road_Task_Force_Presentation_May_1_2019.pdf

Joan Landers, Community Outreach, explained how the Task Force composition was completed based on members' consensus and Mayor and Council extended the term of service to April 10, 2021.

5. Approval of June 13, 2018, Legal Action Report and Meeting Summary

Meeting Summary (action taken): Task Force members approved the Draft June 13, 2018 Meeting Summary.

6. Land Use Planning Update

Note: For this item discussion was held; no action taken. PowerPoint presentation can be found here:

http://www.grantroad.info/pdf/Grant_Road_Task_Force_Presentation_May_1_2019.pdf

Rebecca Ruopp with PDSD presented a Grant Rd. Investment District Grid and Urban Overlay District (UOD) sheet and the process to develop using the GRID. Ms. Ruopp continued to explain that the UOD went to zoning and was examined on July 7, 2018; it moved to Mayor and Council on September 5, 2018 and was adopted and in effect on October 5, 2018.

Task Force Member James Hogan asked if real estate had information on the price of properties sold. He questioned if they were sold at market price and wanted to know about appraisals.

Dorothy Weideman with TDOT-Real Estate answered that she did not have the information on hand, but said that the properties follow a process; people bid on properties and the City of Tucson goes with the highest bidder.

Task Force Member David Sunderman asked if a parcel on the southwest corner of First and Grant Rd. has been sold or if it was City-owned?

Rebecca Ruopp with PDSD answered that there was an access issue with this parcel.

Task Force Member James Hogan asked what is happening with the Bookman's parcel.

Robin Raine with TDOT answered that it is being used as a park for the time being. It is not blocked off and people can walk through it.

Task Force Member Roy Garcia asked what happens with the proceeds from remnant parcels.

Robin Raine with TDOT said the money is put back into the project through the RTA and if the project is over, the money goes into another project.

7. Phase 3 & 4

Note: For this item discussion was held; no action taken. PowerPoint presentation can be found here: http://www.grantroad.info/pdf/Grant_Road_Task_Force_Presentation_May_1_2019.pdf

Robin Raine with TDOT explained that the proposed Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for 2020-2024 will be approved on May 23, 2019 and it shows that there are enough funds to finish Phases 3 & 4. There are no specific dates that the utilities will relocate, which is why she cannot give a solid date.

Task Force Member Andrew Jones mentioned that several of his neighbors are getting information about this project from Ward offices and several people are leaving the Alvernon area due to the construction delay.

Robin Raine with TDOT proceeded to say that the construction is going to start as early as 2021. The City is currently going through acquisitions.

Task Force Member Dale Calvert asked about the Right-of Way (ROW) process; how much has been acquired, how many completed acquisitions?

Dorothy Weideman with TDOT-Real Estate explained that full acquisitions are in effect, some have already been acquired or made offers and they are currently waiting on appraisals and partial acquisitions.

Task Force Member Jim Hogan mentioned that Catalina Coin is moving at the end of the month and will make the building vacant. Mr. Hogan asked when this building will be demolished, so it will not become a place for the homeless. Mr. Hogan also asked about security issues with these vacant buildings and if there is budget for security of these vacant areas/buildings.

Robin Raine with TDOT answered that the City is not rushing people to leave their acquired buildings, since construction won't start until 2021.

Dorothy Weideman with TDOT-Real Estate said that they are encouraging owners to stay as long as they need to and people who choose to move beforehand, the City will look to demolish those buildings as soon as possible.

Task Force Member Jim Hogan asked if there is a timeline for vacant buildings to be demolished.

Robin Raine with TDOT answered that it takes a couple of months for demolition and the acquisition of a permit. It all depends on the condition of the building so the timelines can vary.

Task Force Member Roy Garcia asked if the construction would start in calendar or fiscal year of 2021.

Robin Raine with TDOT answered it would be fiscal year, but could fall into the calendar year 2021 because of the schedule of utilities.

Task Force Member Linda Small asked if they have the budgeted funds for Phases 3 & 4 and Phases 5 & 6.

Robin Raine with TDOT said that the TIP shows funds for Phases 3 & 4, but the TIP only shows up until 2024. The TIP does not go past 2024 at the moment, which is why she cannot see the funds for Phases 5 & 6.

Task Force Member David Sunderman asked if there is one bid out for each phase of Phases 3 & 4 or if it is one bid for both phases.

Robin Raine with TDOT answered that there is only one bid for the two phases.

Task Force Member James Hogan asked what the City is doing to secure the vacant buildings.

David Burbank with TDOT answered that they hired security to physically go into these properties.

Task Force Member John Wakefield asked about 4324 E. Grant Rd. and wanted to know when it was going to be demolished.

David Burbank with TDOT answered that properties are being tested for hazardous issues before they are demolished. Mr. Burbank proceeded to explain how there is a process in testing before demoing any building.

Task Force Member Jim Hogan asked if there is an amount of money set aside by the RTA to secure these vacant buildings, so other businesses and buildings will not be affected by issues that come with the vacancy. This was a problem in Phases 1 & 2 and continues to be a problem. He encouraged the City to make a proactive, concerted effort to address this in Phases 3 & 4.

Dorothy Weideman with TDOT-Real Estate explained that there are several different tactics for protecting vacant lots but each circumstance varies.

Robin Raine with TDOT said that some of these security and violence issues involve TPD more so than the city and if there are situations where people are in real danger, they should be contacting the police. GS4 is the security team that is currently working to ensure the safety of these buildings in addition to police participation.

Facilitator Nanci Beizer Fink suggested that if any Task Force members or members' constituents have problems with their property, they should contact the City.

Task Force Member Andrew Jones noted that Grant Rd. and Alvernon is the site of massive issues with vacancies and theft. The Walgreens looks like an urban war zone. The public and businesses are hearing rumors about project acquisitions. There needs to be better communication.

Robin Raine with TDOT asked Andrew how the City can more effectively disseminate information to businesses and homeowners so there is clarification regarding property acquisitions and project concerns in general.

Task Force Member Andrew Jones said that many businesses and homeowners are on NextDoor. He asked that more updates be posted to NextDoor. He also made a statement that more people should come to these Task Force meetings.

Task Force Member Roy Garcia noted traffic volume indicators are up 22% and asked about traffic safety indicators and if there has been any studies or information regarding traffic accident decrease due to the indirect left turns.

David Burbank with TDOT said they haven't measured an increase or decrease of accidents and that they've only gone out and done traffic counts.

Task Force Member Roy Garcia asked if there is any way they can get that information.

David Burbank with TDOT will look into getting the information during the second half of the traffic count.

a. Schedule Update

David Burbank with TDOT: The final design plans for Phases 3 & 4 are expected to be done by July of 2019. TDOT is currently in real-estate acquisitions which will take two years. There is internal coordination with utility companies to make sure utilities are being properly managed during construction of the roadway. They are currently trying to get the project into construction by Fall 2021 or early calendar year 2022, although this timeline is dependent on the relocation of utilities.

Task Force Member Jim Hogan asked what efforts and discussions have taken place with TEP and other electric companies about getting electrical lines moved as soon as possible.

David Burbank with TDOT explained that each utility company needs time to look at the proposed roadway and see how much they will be impacted. They also go through their own design process. He explained that 2014 was when they started coordinating with utilities for Phase 3 & 4. There are also quite a few utilities along this corridor; therefore, they need to be diligent and accurate.

Task Force Member David Sunderman asked if there was an issue during Phase 2 where utilities tried to postpone the construction.

David Burbank with TDOT said it wasn't postponed but that it was slowed down.

Task Force Member Jim Hogan asked if the traffic count increases were what was projected. Expected?

David Burbank with TDOT said not to his knowledge and they had projected to 2030.

b. 90% Plans

Ricardo Parqas with HDR said everyone was provided with a handout that contains the 90% plans design for the corridor. The project limits are Palo Verde Blvd. to Venice Pl. The existing roadway is five lanes and it will be widened to six lanes, three 11-foot lanes in each direction, 17-foot medians and 5-foot bike lanes with a 2-foot buffer between the bike lanes and the vehicle lanes.

The entire corridor will have sidewalks on both sides of the roadway. Some unique aspects of the roadway will be a TOUCAN (Two GroUps CAN cross) crossing, which allows bicyclists and pedestrians to cross in the middle of the median. That same configuration will be seen at Dodge.

Similar to Phase 1 & 2, this phase will have indirect lefts. One on the west side of Alvernon and one near Sycamore on the east. Columbus will remain a traditional intersection.

He invited the Task Force to come up and see the map of the proposed construction.

Task Force Member Andrew Jones said that the map provided makes it look like Phase 3 & 4 extend further than they were originally supposed to. He asks why it reaches to Edith St.

Ricardo Pargas with HDR explained that it's a temporary section. Everything west of there is a transition.

Task Force Member Andrew Jones asked if there will be sidewalks all the way west of Edith and if the width of sidewalks will be 5-8 feet?

Ricardo Pargas with HDR said there will be sidewalks that will vary in width all the way from 5ft to 8ft. The lowest possible width will be 4ft to minimize business impact.

Task Force Member John Wakefield asked if having these elaborate crosswalks is more important than having north and south traffic.

Ricardo Pargas with HDR explained he wasn't a part of making the decision regarding the different types of crosswalks throughout the phases. There were many areas within the City that promoted the bike boulevard.

Task Force Member Alice Roe asked if there will be a pedestrian activated HAWK crossing at Dodge.

Ricardo Pargas with HDR said that yes there would be a HAWK pedestrian/cyclist crossing.

Task Force Member Roy Garcia said you can't even cross the intersection at Grant Rd. and Palo Verde anyways because of the traffic volume that is currently on the road. He adds you can only get across Palo Verde if the HAWK crossing is activated.

Task Force Member David Sunderman asked if the retention basin is still scheduled at Dodge.

Ricardo Pargas with HDR directed his attention to an area of the map and explained where the retention basin will be.

Task Force Member Andrew Jones asked what will happen with the water flow on Dodge because it becomes flooded.

Ricardo Pargas with HDR said that Pima County Flood Control is working on a plan for Christmas Wash. He explains that Grant Rd. is in a very large watershed and everyone is doing their part to take water out of the natural system so that the roads don't flood as much. Mr. Pargas explained that there will be siphon structures to help control flooding, especially south of Sparkman Blvd. Without the siphon structures, a big storm could cause massive flooding.

Task Force Member Jim Hogan asked what happens to the water when the siphons fill up and if they will overflow and add to the water already running down the north side of the street.

Ricardo Parqas with HDR said that it will not add to the flow. Therefore, the way the siphons operate is they will fill up and then flow out to low flow drains that connect to storm drains in the area.

Task Force Member Jim Hogan asked if with all these changes, what happens if a storm causes damage to a home because of poor drainage design.

Ricardo Parqas with HDR explained that if a substantial amount of flow comes from the south side part of it breaks into the wash and the rest of it goes down Walnut Ave. He said they've put in the siphon structure that will capture some flow as well as a pipe that is attached to a drain at Sycamore. As a designer, the goal is not to increase flood or damage to property.

Task Force Member Dale Calvert clarified that the drainage system is designed to keep the flow at the same level.

Ricardo Parqas with HDR agreed that they want to keep water off the street by using siphons and underground pipes.

Task Force Member John Wakefield asked if there will be public art and shade structures on this particular stretch of road.

Ricardo Parqas with HDR said the amenities like shade structures and some other landscaping amenities will be present in this phase as they are in Phase 2.

Task Force Member Dale Calvert asked about the obstruction of water on Grant Rd. that keeps it from flowing and if that will be fixed. Will the road be raised?

Ricardo Parqas with HDR explained that underneath Grant Rd. there are three 180-inch pipes as well as a catchment basin. Grant Rd. will also be regraded evenly with roadway elevation.

Task Force Member Alice Roe reminded everyone that if they see something in one of these culverts that doesn't belong, to call the City and they will come clean it out.

Ricardo Parqas with HDR thanked everyone for their time and if they have any other questions, he will be available after the meeting.

c. Open House

David Burbank with TDOT said they have tentatively scheduled a meeting for the Open House on May 22, 2019 at the Donna Liggins Recreation Center from 5:30 to 7:00 p.m.* There will be a notification about the upcoming meeting via e-blast, flyer and an update on the website.

(After the meeting it was decided that the location of the Open House be held at the Northminster Presbyterian Church-Fellowship Hall at 2450 E. Ft. Lowell Rd.)

8. Phase 5 & 6

David Burbank with TDOT referenced the PowerPoint with information regarding internal meetings that the project team is having about funding for Phases 5 & 6 as well as property acquisitions. They are planning to start construction in 2026. The date for construction has not changed.

a. Schedule Update

Task Force Member Alice Roe asked if this plan will still work if there is no more funding after 2026.

David Burbank with TDOT said there is funding but it's simply a matter of following the proper steps internally.

Task Force Member Alice Roe said she asked this question because there was a lot of speculation surrounding the budget on this project and whether it would last until Phases 5 & 6.

Robin Raine with TDOT explained that they don't have funding programmed after 2024 but that doesn't mean that there is no money after 2024. Right now, they're just looking at the four years that are within the current program.

Diana Alarcon with TDOT said when the programming is done for a project it is done in five-year increments, which is why you don't see any funding up to 2026. As the project moves forward, they will see the money start to come in.

Facilitator Nanci Beizer Fink asked if there are any other questions regarding Phases 5 & 6. The Task Force had no more questions.

9. Next Steps

Joan Beckim Landers, Community Outreach, said the next big step is the Open House that will take place on May 22, 2019 at the Donna Liggins Recreation Center.* There will be broad outreach as well as encouraging Task Force members to communicate with the groups they represent about the upcoming meeting.

(After the meeting it was decided that the location of the Open House be held at the Northminster Presbyterian Church-Fellowship Hall at 2450 E. Ft. Lowell Rd.)

The 90% plans will be a key focus at the Open House. On the agenda under next steps is new business, this was put on the agenda to see if there was anything to add to new business and if the Task Force had any comments regarding that.

a. New Business

The Task Force had no comments surrounding new business.

10. Roundtable

Facilitator Nanci Beizer Fink started the process of Roundtable and asked that any comment the Task Force members would like to make, now was the time to do so.

Task Force Member Roy Garcia chose not to make a comment.

Task Force Member Alice Roe thanked everyone for being at the meeting and that she is looking forward to a completed project.

Task Force Member Joe Moon Yee chose not to make a comment.

Task Force Member Andrew Jones chose not to make a comment.

Task Force Member Jim Hogan asked about a construction project where curbs are sticking out into the street. He commented on how this could make cycling more dangerous and wondered if that was an RTA project.

Diana Alarcon from TDOT responded that it is a federally funded Department of Transportation enhancement plan and that she will gather the details about the project and bring them to the next Task Force meeting.

Task Force Member Beverly Rutter said it has been an honor to get to know everyone and she appreciates that the City was here to answer questions.

Task Force Member Dale Calvert said it's great to see 90% plans.

Task Force Member John Wakefield commented that he observes increased traffic volume and congestion on Grant Rd. Widening the road will allow for more congestion.

Task Force Member David Sunderman chose not to make a comment.

Task Force Member Linda Small said that it was a delightful meeting and that she is thankful to everyone for being here and for their hard work.

11. Adjourn

Facilitator Nanci Beizer Fink adjourned the meeting at 7 p.m.