

Summary

Ward VI Council Conversation, November 29, 2007

Council Member Trasoff: "What I heard you say ..." – Summary after feedback from table conversations and mapping activity.

- Listening from the public has to start NOW.
- Transition and technical assistance for businesses and homeowners, residents need to start NOW.
- Push up the timetable for construction to before 2013.
- We don't want to lose what makes Grant Rd. special such as local businesses ... "anchors Tucson's sense of place".
- Drainage issues need to be addressed.
- Pedestrian issues need to be addressed, particularly at Country Club Rd. and Alvernon Way.
- Do it smart in ways to improve traffic flow.
- It's important to plan for our long-term future and involve not only the technical experts but the public as experts.

Feedback from Table 1 Conversations (4-5 key points from their map/recorded comments)

- There is heavy pedestrian traffic already at Grant Rd. and Alvernon Way.
- Lots of small businesses along Grant Rd. that have affordable leases and rents.
- Commercial enterprises in historical buildings.
- Turn lanes, limit medians to pedestrian islands.
- Need more low-income housing.
- As price of gas may go up, people will drive less; therefore, alternate modes of traffic may be used.
- There should be mixed-use establishments, no more than three stories, and compatible with historical architecture.
- Small businesses will be forced out.
- Reduced congestion.
- Thoughtful urban planning to preserve businesses and neighborhoods.

Feedback from Table 2 Conversations (4-5 key points from their map/recorded comments)

- Drainage is needed.
- Make Grant Rd. pedestrian friendly.
- Remain business friendly, varied and small – no chain stores.
- Preserve residential property values.
- Improve traffic flow without creating a de facto freeway.

Feedback from Table 3 Conversations (4-5 key points from their map/recorded comments)

- Need clarification of what will happen.
- Need better traffic flow, especially from Stone Ave. to Campbell Ave.
- Keep neighborhood feel – improved, mixed use, pedestrians, bikes.
- Better lighting for safety vs. “dark sky” for the observatory.
- Large, wide sidewalks.
- Continue to have and need to keep locally owned businesses.
- Our input is valuable.

Feedback from Table 4 Conversations (4-5 key points from their map/recorded comments)

- There is no way to widen to 20 feet without taking the businesses.
- Limit noise (natural/landscaping buffers, lower speed limits).
- Put utilities underground.
- Concerned about property values.
- Like the idea of raised medians but will they really be safer?

Recorded Comments from Table Mapping Activity

Question 1: What do we already know about Grant Road?

- Heavy traffic at Swan Rd. and Grant Rd. with no left/right turn lane in the center, very narrow lanes.
- Heavy traffic at Grant Rd. and Campbell Ave. and the noise factor will get worse with more traffic.
- Difficult to make a left turn onto Grant Rd. from Campbell Ave.
- Traffic lights are coordinated between Campbell Ave. to 1st Ave.
- Oracle Rd. to 1st Ave. is a high crime area.
- Residences, shopping centers, and businesses are along Grant Rd.
- Residential areas between Tucson Blvd., Norris Ave. and Park Ave.
- Around Norris Ave. there are commercial properties with very little parking in front.

- Could stand to lose Goldberg and Osbourne (at Campbell Ave. and Grant Rd.).
- There is a park at Campbell Ave. and Grant Rd.
- It's hard to cross; signals are too short.
- It is not "inviting" into town/old barrio look.
- No side of road/mixed businesses.
- Between 1st Ave. and Park Ave. is an inviting area.
- Streets currently aren't laid out for existing growth – "they didn't look into the future enough."
- 2220 E. Grant Rd. has historic designation.
- Grant Road Lumber is a 1950's building.
- At Stone Ave. and Campbell Ave., the road is narrow with lots of left and right turning cars.
- Heavy usage at Grant Rd. and 1st Ave./Fry's shopping center.
- Some parking can be shaved off.
- No parking in front of businesses east of Campbell Ave.
- There is a bank at Park Ave. and 1st Ave.
- Commercial area; parking could be shaved off a bit but not totally destroyed.
- Some historical buildings around Norris Ave.
- Lots of pedestrian traffic around Alvernon Way; timing of lights is difficult for pedestrians.

Question 2: What characteristics along Grant Road should be preserved?

- Preserve our buildings and businesses.
- Keep the Grant Rd. and Swan Rd. intersection without bus stops.
- Keep the private access road between Norris Ave. and Wilson Ave.
- What's important in Tucson is the connection of different neighborhoods.
- Keep historically designated homes such as at 2220 E. Grant Rd.
- Residential character and people's homes.
- Keep restaurants such as: Luke's, The French Quarter, Las Margaritas, Fioritos, and Bobo's.
- Open the roadway – don't wall it in.
- Current sidewalks and bike lanes.
- Turn lanes, no medians, except for pedestrian islands.
- Businesses, such as antique shops, Bookman's.
- Public institutions, such as Doolen Middle School, The Boys and Girls Club, Fire Station.
- Public space.

Question 3: What do we think will change in the future? and

Question 4: How will these changes affect the area?

- More people will move into the middle of town, away from the suburbs.
- A light rail or other form of public transportation will be built – flexibility is important.
- Jobs are leaving and this means a loss of income and funding. RTA is so long-term it could be cancelled.
- Traffic will move faster and there will be more accidents.
- People will leave if characteristics of their neighborhood change.
- Gas will go up in price, people will drive less, wide arterials will not be used solely by motor vehicles, so we can install light rail.
- Growing population will create a hectic, congested area, no matter how many roads are widened.

Question 5: What characteristics along Grant Road should be changed?

- Increase pedestrian walkways.
- Add pedestrian overpasses at intersections.
- Add volume buffers on the medians.
- At Stone Ave. and Grant Rd.; people may want their buildings taken so they can start fresh/rejuvenation.
- Make sure drainage is better than on Speedway Blvd.
- There is a need for more sidewalk lights at night – moving north on Dodge Blvd. is a particular hazard, along with all side streets. More lighting would be nice in commercial/popular areas.
- Generally wider sidewalks with more promoted usage.
- Need a more practical way to travel. For example: by bus, scooters, and others.
- La Mirada is an eyesore and unprofitable.
- HAWK lights; they work great.
- Add better timing for lights.
- Add bus pullouts at 1st Ave. and Grant Rd.
- Mixed use but not more than 3 stories and need to be architecture that is historically compatible.
- Get rid of the trailer park (at Sparkman Blvd.) and replace it with low-income housing.
- Improved traffic lights such as at Country Club, the light changes too fast!
- Noise reduction without walls!
- Eliminate north entrance to Walgreen's (on Campbell Blvd.) for safety.
- Make the whole stretch more pedestrian friendly.
- To improve drainage, use water wisely – harvest it to water trees, plants and vegetable gardens.
- Relieve traffic congestion at Alvernon Way; improve access to the area.
- Need to coordinate traffic lights from Campbell Ave. to 1st Ave.

Question 6: What do we fear and hope for along Grant Road?

FEARS –

- People will go faster once it is widened.
- If you widen road too much there won't be any room for sidewalks.
- At Alvernon Way, there is a hazard with wheelchairs and through traffic.
- Heavy truck traffic.
- Going to get stream rolled into another Speedway Blvd.; gas will still be expensive.
- It will cost more than the planned budget.
- Destruction of homes and businesses.
- Grant Rd. will end up in people's back yard.
- Political boondoggle.
- The end product of the widening will be de facto "freeway-ization".
- Grade separate intersection – death for businesses!
- "If you build it, they will come." If it's easier to drive on Grant Rd. more people will do so and traffic will increase.
- All the small businesses will be forced out and be replaced by seven-story urban canyons.
- Pedestrian fatalities will increase.
- The City won't get it right the first time!

HOPES-

- Always better to put utilities underground.
- It would be wonderful if property values would go up.
- Bike lanes should be designed areas, not an added, painted lane.
- Creative land use to make the area livable and as inviting as possible – vary width of road, increase public space, cluster businesses, narrow lanes of traffic.
- Reduced traffic and congestion.
- Bus pullouts.
- Thoughtful urban planning to preserve neighborhoods and businesses—or allow relocation on an affordable basis.