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### GRANT ROAD IMPROVEMENT PLAN TASK FORCE July 28, 2009

#### MEETING RESULTS

##### MEETING TOPICS

- Progress Update
- June Character Segment Workshops Summary
- Roadway Matrix Review
- Next Steps

##### PRESENTATIONS

- Progress Update
- June Character Segment Workshops Summary and Preliminary Analysis
- Roadway Matrix Review for Early Project Initiative
- Reconstruction Phasing Recommendations
- Next Steps

##### DISCUSSION AND WORK SESSION OUTCOMES

###### Introductory Remarks

Nanci Beizer called the meeting to order, reviewed the agenda and initiated the first call to the audience. There were no audience questions or comments at this time.

###### Progress Update

Melissa Antol presented an update on the activities that had occurred since the May 7<sup>th</sup> Task Force meeting, including: Neighborhood Conversations (summary notes were mailed to the Task Force), Community Character Segment Workshops, TAC review of geometric alignment, City staff technical review of initial geometric alignment, TAC meeting scheduled August 4<sup>th</sup>, RTA and elected officials briefing, and Public Art Master Plan. Melissa reported that Phase 2 is on-schedule for completing 15% design/draft DRC and draft Community Character & Vitality Plan.

###### Character Segment Workshops Summary and Preliminary Analysis

Phil Erickson overviewed the Phase 2 Schedule and Task Force Role to provide a context for the Character Segment Workshop Summary. The summary and preliminary analysis of the June Character Segment Workshops began with an overview of workshop input from 22 small groups and over 800 individual comments. Major themes for all segments included: landscape and water harvesting, safety, benefits and protection based upon segment and neighborhood goals, intensity and type of new development, economic and social vitality, and uses for properties remaining after right of way acquisitions. Phil reviewed a flow chart demonstrating how the Grant Road Improvement Plan Vision and Guiding Principles can be enhanced and made more specific with the addition of Planning Objectives. The planning objectives and guiding principles will help shape the

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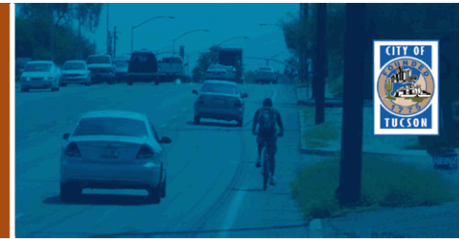
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small group exercises of the public Character Segment Workshops scheduled for later this year. Phil reviewed results from the Western, Central and Eastern Segment Workshops, focusing first on overarching themes and then focusing on comments related to Centers and Districts. Next, Phil overviewed how the Character Segment Workshops comments and the Grant Road Improvement Plan Guiding Principles can be enhanced and made more specific with the addition of draft planning objectives to guide design decisions. The Task Force was presented with 40 potential planning objectives to review. Task Force members raised a number of issues including:

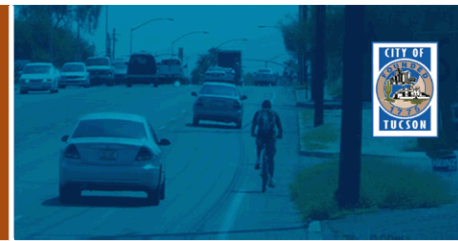
- How recommendations will be addressed if the buildings are privately owned (such as recommendations for building height). Phil explained that existing zoning regulations will not be changed; however, they can be further defined with design guidelines and alternative visions for future development can be defined through the Grant Road Community Character & Vitality Plan. Using neighborhood plans as a resource, the Task Force can suggest development alternatives as the Grant Road Community Character & Vitality Plan is prepared over the next months.
- The challenge of balancing the desire for landscaping and open/green space with commercial zoning and development. It was suggested that providing examples to illustrate potential design concepts in future public workshops would be helpful.
- The importance of considering the issue of landscape and open space maintenance in the planning phase. Often projects start out well and deteriorate due to ineffective maintenance.
- The need for strong leadership to support and promote opportunities for business clusters and joint-marketing. Several benefits were noted, such as shared resources, joint-marketing, networking and reduced costs.
- The need to balance increased congestion with access management and traffic management. Projected future traffic levels are factored into planning and design of the roadway and its intersections.
- Noise levels and noise mitigation was an area of concern. Kimley Horn will conduct a traffic noise study when the University of Arizona is back in session. A request for an explanation of state standards for noise will be provided for future discussions to determine the impact on residences and businesses near or on Grant Road. Ideas for noise mitigation will be included in the Centers and District Workshop and shared with the public. Several examples included: new buildings, walls, landscaping, rubberized pavement, walled or semi-walled courtyards and a 35mph speed limit. A related concern was the need to address the public perception of a “sound wall canyon” from Oracle to Swan. It was also noted that issues revolving around safety and environmental impact/pollution go hand-in-hand with noise issues.

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Phil overviewed the Planning Team's recommendations for Centers and Districts mapping to be used in the August 21<sup>st</sup> Task Force Workshop. Nanci Beizer asked for and received endorsement from the Task Force to:

- Post the Character Segment Workshops summary to the website
- Use the recommended approach for developing Planning Objectives in the August 21<sup>st</sup> Task Force Workshop and planning for the Fall Community Character & Vitality Workshop
- Use the recommended Centers and Districts mapping in the August 21<sup>st</sup> Task Force Workshop.

### Roadway Matrix Review

The roadway matrix review shifted the focus from the Community Character & Vitality phase of the project to the Preliminary Design phase, a total shift of focus into the technical and engineering realm. Dave Perkins explained that the Grant Road Improvement Project is now working to complete the 15% design level by the end of 2009 and questions such as a) where we start the reconstruction and b) how we proceed from there are usually at the 30% design level. The Early Intersection Project (EIP) concept, if given Task Force endorsement, will move into early design and right-of-way acquisition for 2010. At the same time, planning and 30% design for Grant Road and reconstruction for the EIP can begin in 2011—2 years ahead of scheduled 2013 RTA construction schedule. Dave reviewed the early project initiative, candidate projects, evaluation criteria, and staff recommendations for an EIP.

The Early Project Initiative: The early project initiative was a result of continuing interest for an early project from residents and businesses, Neighborhood Associations, elected officials, the police, the RTA and the Task Force. If an EIP were endorsed by the Task Force, the next steps would be to: evaluate and recommend early project and reconstruction phasing in Phase 2, request RTA funding for early project design and right-of-way acquisition, launch the early project design in late fall 2009, complete design and right-of-way acquisition by end 2010, request RTA funding for early project construction and begin construction in RTA FY 2011. Dave explained that the EIP would be an opportunity to showcase Grant Road innovative design features. Rick Kaneen clarified that Grant Road is the largest, most complex of the RTA plans, and the opportunity to do an early project is spectacular...a shining star example of how it can be done.

Candidate Projects: Features or objectives for potential early candidate projects: (1) an intersection improvement project, (2) indirect left-turn intersection, (3) minimizes throw-away (waste for temporary transition back to Grant Road), (4) illustrates innovative design features, (5) responds to identified needs (safety, congestion, pedestrian activity...).

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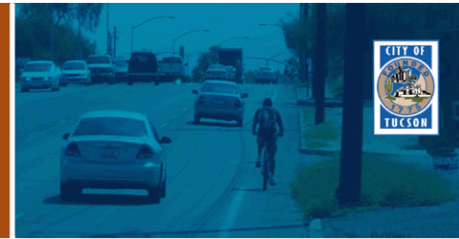
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**Candidates:** EIP candidates under consideration: Oracle Intersection, Stone intersection (eliminated due to transition waste), 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue intersection (eliminated due to transition waste), Campbell Intersection, Country Club Intersection, Alvernon Way Intersection (1), Alvernon Way Intersection (2) extension to Swan, Swan Intersection.

**EIP Evaluation Criteria:** The EIP recommended evaluation criteria for the project included: innovative concepts (drainage, utilities, alternative mode features); existing conditions for safety, congestion, pedestrian activity; number of properties impacted; right-of-way cost ranking; construction cost ranking; total project cost ranking; construction duration and community readiness to act ranking. The community readiness to act ranking was determined by a social capital analysis for each of the seven candidate intersections. Anita Fonte considered several factors, including a qualitative analysis, using data from the April/May Neighborhood Conversations and June Workshop and a quantitative analysis of the number of comments to determine an areas readiness for roadway change. Dave walked the Task Force through an Early Intersection Project Evaluation Matrix, a chart/grid listing each early project candidate intersection, their geographic project limits, and corresponding evaluation criteria.

**Staff Recommendations for EIP:** Dave reviewed the EIP recommendations to the RTA, beginning with the Alvernon 2 Intersection. Several Task Force members asked questions regarding flooding and expressed concerns about starting here; Dave and Bruce Beenken explained that extension of a storm drain to Palo Verde would not increase flooding in that area, because it would tie-in to an existing storm drain under Palo Verde. Dave explained the RTA supported the EIP concept, and in particular, either the Swan or Oracle Intersections. Oracle was recommended to the Task Force as the first priority and Swan as the second priority for an EIP. Both of these recommendations were reviewed. Oracle Intersection evaluation criteria features included: lower cost, complexity and construction duration; supported by RTA as EIP; investment in economically depressed area; Oracle Area Revitalization Project is established, ongoing and prepared to work with design team. Swan Intersection evaluation criteria features included: lower cost, complexity and duration; supported by RTA as EIP.

Task Force members were excited by the possibility of an early intersection project and raised a number of issues and concerns:

- Potential time delays between the start of the EIP and construction on other parts of Grant Road may lead people to believe there is insufficient budget for the remainder of the project.
- Need for overall project benchmarks (even if they do no work perfectly to keep projects on time), funding accountability and transparency to reassure sufficient budget for overall project completion.

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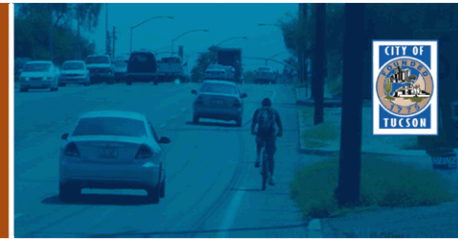
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- The EIP represented a wonderful opportunity to showcase the indirect left-turn intersection.
- Context Sensitive Solutions ties into what the Oracle Area Revitalization Plan is already doing.
- Consider how reconstruction phasing affects utilities- 15% design for entire corridor will address utilities in place today and how to move them.
- West end of Grant Road has been the most accepting of revitalization and re-development.

Dave overviewed the staff's recommendation for reconstruction phasing for Grant Road improvements to respond to inquiries from business owners and the community regarding when construction in their area would likely begin. The proposed reconstruction phasing was developed from an engineering standpoint, sensitive to existing construction projects and greatest return on investment. Task Force members had numerous questions and concerns regarding reconstruction phasing. Some questioned the ability to predict an accurate reconstruction phasing schedule for the project. The Task Force asked for more information and discussion time regarding reconstruction phasing.

Nanci asked for and received Task Force input and/or endorsement of the following:

- Acceptance that a reasonable candidates for an EIP have been identified
- Support of the selection criteria used to evaluate the candidates
- Endorsement of staff recommended EIP: Oracle Intersection. Several Task Force members indicated they would have preferred the Alvernon 2 intersection if the RTA would have considered it a viable option for funding

Nanci asked for and did not receive endorsement from the Task Force for the recommended reconstruction phasing for beyond the Oracle EIP. Task Force members requested the following for future discussion and action:

- A better understanding of the technical/engineering parameters, pluses and minuses for each phasing option
- A matrix for the five reconstruction phasing segments to enable a more comprehensive evaluation of decision criteria
- Alternative phasing approaches – ping/pong or consecutive from one end to the other end, etc.
- Continued transparency and communication with the public, put information on website
- Present phasing options to the public for reaction prior to final decision

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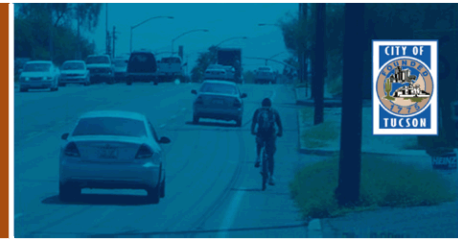
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### Next Steps

Melissa Antol reviewed the following next steps: August 4<sup>th</sup> Technical Advisory Committee meeting, August 6<sup>th</sup> Task Force Meeting, August 21<sup>st</sup> Task Force Workshop, Mobility and Access Workshops planned for late Fall, Community Character & Vitality Concept Alternative Development Workshops planned for November and 15% design/draft DCR and draft Community Character & Vitality Plan in December.

### Task Force Roundtable

Several members acknowledged the need for more information regarding reconstruction phasing, sharing reconstruction phasing schedules with the public to get their reaction, to continue to be transparent and seek public input.

### Call to the Audience

Nanci Beizer initiated the second call to the audience. There were no audience questions or comments.

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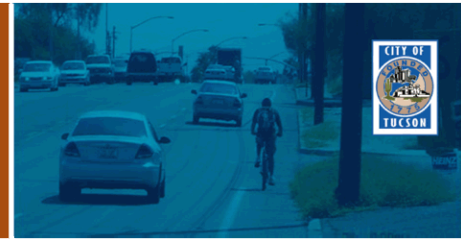
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