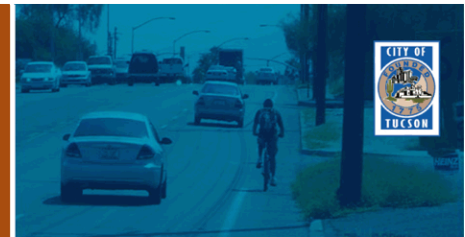




# GRANT ROAD

## Improvement Plan



www.grantroad.info



This project is managed by the City of Tucson.

For more information please visit [www.grantroad.info](http://www.grantroad.info) or call the project hotline at 624-4727.

### GRANT ROAD IMPROVEMENT PLAN TASK FORCE

February 26, 2013

Tucson Association of Realtors, 2445 North Tucson Boulevard, Tucson Arizona 85716

5:30 P.M.

MEETING RESULTS – **DRAFT**

**UNAPPROVED**

#### MEETING TOPICS

- Project Updates
- Status of Safe Harbor Program
- Update on Urban Overlay District
- Role of Design Team

#### PRESENTATIONS

- Status of Safe Harbor Program
- Update on Urban Overlay District
- Role of Design Team Zoning Progress and Status Report

#### TASK FORCE PARTICIPANTS

Susan Alexander	Roy Garcia	Linda Marie Small
Barbara Bird	Jim Hogan	Robert Tait
Tom Bush	Joseph Maher	Moon Joe Yee
Dale Calvert	Alice Roe	
P. Wayne Cullop	Beverly Rutter	

#### TASK FORCE MEMBERS NOT IN ATTENDANCE

- Sarah Evans
- Michael Midkiff
- Jay Young

#### Welcome, Agenda Review, Project Updates

Nanci Beizer called the meeting to order, reviewed the agenda, and alerted the Task Force that Sarah Evans had resigned from the Task Force. She asked for and received approval of the October 16, 2012 Draft Task Force Meeting Summary. There was no Call to the Audience as no audience members indicated that they wanted to address the Task Force. Mike Holder gave a brief update for the Grant-Oracle intersection and Grant-Stone to Park segment.

#### Task Force members had the following questions regarding the project updates:

Has the acquisition process for Stone –Park started yet? When will the City make offers? Hector Martinez, City of Tucson Real Estate, explained: Advanced acquisitions have been acquired; nothing new has been acquired for about a year. There have been numerous requests to acquire but the City has not taken action. If funds are available and it is a full

This is a project of the Regional Transportation Authority.

The voter-approved, \$2.1 billion RTA plan will be implemented through 2026. Details about the full plan are available at [www.RTAmobility.com](http://www.RTAmobility.com).

The Regional Transportation Authority has a nine-member board with representatives from local, state and tribal governments.

This project will be managed by the City of Tucson.

acquisition, the City can consider moving forward. If the property has a partial acquisition, the City will move forward when design is at 60%.

**Task Force questions regarding the project updates continued:**

- With the start of construction on the Grant-Oracle segment, has there been any unanticipated fall-out for businesses? Mike Holder responded that Family Dollar closing. The project team will investigate and provide follow-up data.
- Is the RTA's MainStreet Business Program involved with Grant-Oracle? Mike responded that MainStreet is involved.
- Is Psomas Engineering a local firm? Mike responded that Psomas is a national firm with a local office.

**Status of Safe Harbor Program**

Britton Dornquast, RTA's MainStreet Business Program, provided an overview of the Safe Harbor Program including its history, scope, schedule, and deliverables.

**Task Force members had the following questions and comments:**

- Can you provide three concrete examples of low hanging fruit? Britton Dornquast responded: 1) blue business access signs provided on initiation of construction, 2) allowance of additional signage that meets codes without added costs, 3) scenic corridors – allow banners & A- frame signs during construction.
- From cyclists' perspective, the signs in middle of bike lanes are dangerous; move them to the side.
- Where did the term "safe harbor" come from? Britton Dornquast explained that originally the term was brought to Mayor and Council in reference to a particular aspect of development service code. It became an adopted term. City attorneys looked at process and limited it. In reality the program is business assistance tools.
- Has anybody been helped on Grant Road? Have any property owners taken advantage of this? Most important thing is that businesses are left on Grant after construction. MainStreet has been out on Grant Rd. since hired five years ago. Several businesses have benefited. Have yet to close a single business that has worked with MainStreet program. Britton responded: the four key components of what MainStreet does include: information liaison, construction support, direct consulting, and resources.

**Update on the Urban Overlay District**

Mike Holder, Project Manager and Hector Martinez, City of Tucson Real Estate, provided an update on the Urban Overlay District and reviewed the Segmenting Fact Sheet handout. The Fact Sheet overviewed the following:

Update on Urban Overlay District (UOD) Progress

- Six Segments and accompanying RTA Funding Period
- Diversity of Grant Road Corridor
- Coordination of UOD Re-Development and Roadway Design
- Administration of UOD
- Administrative Cost
- Segmenting
- Schedule
- Coordination of Re-development Between Properties
- Right of Way Cost
- Public Outreach

**Task Force members had the following questions and comments regarding the Urban Overlay Update and Segmenting Fact Sheet:**

- Swan-Grant is very congested. Bulb build up may help. They are planning a HAWK at N. Grant/Swan at bike blvd. Concerned this may be too much.
- Can you buy an easement on an adjacent property to provide (the property owner) a better ingress/ egress? If I have two pieces of property and you take one for an easement, I should be compensated. Hector Martinez explained: The City can't condemn for easement. Each parcel has to be taken on its own merit. The City looks at how the roadway project is going to affect that parcel. Once it is established what the City owes the property owner based on roadway project, an offer is made. The property owner would be compensated on the appraisal process which looks at damages to remainder of property.
- Regarding Right of Way costs after the completion of the UOD, if we assume Grant Road is successfully redeveloped, isn't the same thing going to happen in segment 3, 4? Those properties will become more valuable and drive up Right of Way costs. This will happen if we segment or not. Item 8 (Segmenting Fact Sheet) does not make sense; the project budget won't support the cost of Right of Way. Concerned there will not be enough money to complete the project. Do the Right of Way instead of waiting; the roadway (alignment) is approved.
- Is the 30% design not accurate? Why islands of unknown development?
- What is the background of the Vice Mayor, councilwoman to suggest such a debauchee?
- Bitterly disappointed; everyone is waiting. My roadway is not scheduled for 10+ years; already blank storefronts, nothing will be better. What are we going to do – this is a corridor planning process; where is that? Down the tubes. Why are we are spending our time? I am deeply sorry.
- Our sense of frustration is logical; we are concerned about the delay and not knowing what will happen. The 30% plan does not address exact development, dealing with probability. 100 million allocated contingent on how much incremental tax. Roadway scheduled for 2016; can't predict future, do we have money to buy it?
- The RTA has the money for alignment; we need to take advantage of this economy, these prices; this (segmenting) does the opposite. We pushed for alignment so these decisions could be made. Money has nothing to do with this; rather, politics. Will bring this up at CART committee meeting.
- What does segmenting mean to me, my property, (and the character along Grant Road)? I purchased my home as an investment for my retirement and the property has been declining. Today, next door to me manufacturing is going on including noise, traffic, and manufacturing waste being put in community dumpsters. There are empty rentals, and evidence of camping. Segmenting the Overlay Zone would mean property owners, like myself, would have to wait until their segment came up for widening. For my property that is 15-20 years out.
- Can't make up mind- meanwhile, destroying property. Need a general plan, such as designated as mixed use, so segments can be redeveloped.
- This adds up to greater uncertainty for businesses. Thought I heard, "we will see what happens at Oracle with ILT, if don't like, may change." Sounds like politicians pandering to constituents. Prospective national tenant looking to buy Wendy's Restaurant, needs to be assured that 5 yrs from now they can use the drive-through. This is key to preventing slums. Need certainty – concerned about this segmented process and ILT comment.
- Isn't something wrong with acquiring property for less than its true value? Seems not equitable to people. If someone buys three parcels – would they be compensated at that?
- We are disappointed by the segment approach; yet we can't shove the UOD down the throats of neighborhoods all along the roadway. It comes down to either no overlay or chuck the project completely. Need a compromise to make the project happen. If the overlay was in

place when my property acquired, I would have gotten more money. If I got more, taxpayers may not have had the money. I don't know what I am going to do with my property 10-20 years from now, even if the overlay happens. Can't pay for what may happen someday to properties. I see both sides of this issue.

**Task Force comments on Urban Overlay District Update Continued:**

- Can't make an appraisal based upon what might happen- can you? Hector responded "no".
- Regarding administrative costs, Phil Erickson is now off the project; how close are we to what we agreed upon with the initial submission of the draft plan from Phil? Concerned we spent time developing plan, got public input – are we abandoning this? Are we living up to a similar model? Concerned that what is delivered will be nowhere near the Vision and Goals. In my view, implementing goals is the deliverable. John Beal, City of Tucson Development Services, responded: we have draft, all will be relooked at for specifics as move down corridor; will still follow plan, Goals, guidelines yet adapt to the situation, neighborhoods.
- Regarding appraisal for a parcel not developable in and of itself within overlay district but it can be assembled with other parcels; won't get full impact of parcel if assembled because not assembled – fair statement? Hector Martinez responded "yes".
- Someone on first segment may consider relocating to another segment if the overlay was in place.
- Concerned about our desire for continuity: identify elements to strike consistency in zones (segments). Offer a pallet of elements that are immovable and things neighborhoods can work with. We are not going to get agreement to one Overlay zone throughout. Need both a consistent concept and to accommodate neighborhoods with problems.
- Lincoln said "Should not allow people to vote on things that can cause them harm" Notion of Vision, improvement/better than today is lost. Measure against consistent vision; no talk about that. This is not what we spent five years doing. This is what we were all concerned about to begin with; the people (politicians) would decide and they have.
- Thought the segments would be congruent and worked on at the same time. I will be delivering newsletters to blank storefronts on Treat Avenue. The plan was to stay consistent yet develop segment by segment. Country Club & Alvernon Antiques District would love to redevelop now; yet can't. The property owners will be 80 before segment reaches them. Really sad.
- The point of redevelopment is to let people know what they can do. I own two pieces of property on Grant. Without certainty, my buildings will stay the same, can't tell anything. If a redevelopment plan that is firm – now property could be redeveloped. If I wanted to sell, sure I could not today. If district does not want the overlay – OK. How about firming it up for those districts that do want the overlay.
- Is the implementation of the overlay dependent on what the segment schedule will be? Mike responded, "yes"
- The Task Force is greatly concerned about the delay in implementation. This segmenting approach is taking off the table the possibility of properties to be developed – it is freezing things in place.
- The crux of problem is 30%. Can't tell for certain what will happen; can't promise a drive-through to Wendy's potential tenant because do not know. Need document with general guidelines for developers to buy properties and then they can work with the City.
- Don't need general plan for Wendy's example, this is about curb code – can be decided.
- Three properties acquired and in the midst of construction. When can we expect overlay to be adopted in the Oracle segment? Mike responded that with segmenting, it would be closer than if needed buy-in for the entire corridor.

- What is Safe Harbor going to do about the blight, graffiti, homeless situation, which will happen more; no one is looking to rent. Mike suggested speaking with Safe Harbor.
- Between now and 2026, how much change will people see along 5 miles in those 13 years? Will construction occur concurrently in segments? Mike responded, “no”. If add segments together, how many years will construction be occurring? (9 out of 13?)

### **Role of Design Team**

Mike Holder indicated that the project was transitioning from the design phase to the implementation phase; therefore the design team would not be moving forward. The Stone to Park Design Segment would continue under the management of Psomas Engineering. He indicated that there would be a role for the Task Force in the next phase of the project Grant-Stone to Park and encouraged them to continue.

### **Task Force Roundtable**

Nanci Beizer conducted the roundtable and Task Force members had the following questions and comments:

- Feel ripped off, what good has been done? Feel like we were puppets, a marketing device. Feel used. Deeply disappointed, elegance and continuity, vision taken out of the project due to segmenting. Why didn't we get to say goodbye to Phil Erickson?
- Initially, when I came to the project, I thought we would fight due to the diverse personalities on GRIP Task Force; however, saw diverse interests and compromises on maps, and with neighborhoods. Compromised individual concerns for the greater good, the whole. This is a model for the City. Disappointed for TF members, have done job faithfully. City can't kibosh a program due to the wants of a few; yet this is Tucson's history.
- Disappointed with presentation as it was general with high-level opinions. Need facts (always relied on facts to take emotion out), supplemental materials. Things said then retracted. Appreciated that Mike stayed neutral and responded well.
- The strong message that staff, council offices needs to hear is that continuity is important. We do not support a development freeze. Communicate this. Have been many pluses – bike paths, design of roadway, build a lot of good into the plan. Part of the continuity is being concerned about Jefferson Park and making those adjustments.
- Hope Tom stays on the Task Force. Agree with Dale's statement about communicating a strong message about continuity. Six-seven years work negated by political decision. Have staff come back to us with strong statement as to why, give us a chance to “yell at them” one more time.
- Learned about our compassion and commitment tonight. The meeting was worth my energy, heard we feel what we did the last 6 years was wasted. Suggest the effort we put in, the road design/access will be carried out. In 15 years there will be uncertainty; that is the way it is. If we want what we intended, we need to lobby for what we want. Mike acted professionally, kept emotion to himself. Some do not want overlay and got to their council members who are elected to serve them. Give them the benefit of the doubt. Put the Task Force into hibernation; when the time is right, call us to be assembled and make recommendations.
- From Neighborhood Association President: Listed to Campbell as #6 and Country Club #5. What date was that schedule changed and who decided? Mike Holder explained that this information came from the DCR. The project team would review materials to confirm.

- Initially, saw a diverse group of people; have come to respect all of you. Hope we will have a chance to reinforce our unity in the future. Want to say thank you. Think we can work through this – the vision of the roadway is still there; can still be inspired.
- Have enjoyed working with people; most concerned about overlays and postponements. We have had vision together – hope to see it happen. Worried about what else might happen when it is time for construction. This is our gift to the future.
- Some of the best consultants and staff I have ever worked with on the project.

**Call to the Audience**

Two audience members addressed the Task Force, Judith Anderson and Bob Schlanger.

Nanci Beizer adjourned the meeting at 8:30pm.