

**DOWNTOWN LINKS CITIZEN ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
MEETING SUMMARY**

Monday, January 21, 2013

*Accepted and Approved by the Downtown Links CAC on February 11, 2013*

**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  
Susan Marshall, Citizen Transportation Advisory Committee  
Richard Mayers, West University Neighborhood Association  
Erika Mitnik, Iron Horse Neighborhood Association  
John A. Sedwick, Fourth Avenue Merchants Association  
Kylie Walzak, Tucson-Pima Bicycle Advisory Committee  
Gail Ryser, Barrio Anita Neighborhood Association  
Korey Kruckmeyer, Pie Allen Neighborhood Association  
Christopher Carroll, El Presidio Neighborhood Association  
Carlos Lozano, Tucson - Pima County Historical Commission (non-voting member)

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:**

Susan Gamble, Warehouse Arts Management Association  
Michael Keith, Downtown Tucson Partnership  
Mary Ellen Wooten, Tucson-Pima Arts Council

**PROJECT TEAM PRESENT:**

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  
Steve Taylor/MainStreet Business Assistance Program

**1. Meeting Called to Order**

Quorum confirmed. Chair, Gene Caywood called the meeting to order at 5:34 PM at Inn Suites Tucson City Center, 475 N. Granada Avenue, Tucson, AZ

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

CAC and Project Team Members introduced themselves.

**3. Approval of Meeting Minutes of October 8, 2012**

Motion to approve the minutes of October 8, 2012, with correction was passed by a voice vote of 11 to 0.

**The minutes will be corrected to show that Erica Mitnik is a voting member of the CAC**

**4. Announcements**

- Gene Caywood introduced Carlos Lozano who will be the new representative for the

Tucson - Pima County Historic Commission on the Downtown Links CAC. Mr. Lozano has not been approved by Mayor and Council or taken his oath yet.

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

Tom Fisher of TDOT provided a brief update of the entire project. Phase I, 8th Street Drainage Project, is complete. Phase II, St. Mary's Road, from I-10 to Church is currently under construction. A four-way stop has been installed at the intersection of Church Avenue and Franklin Street. 6th Avenue, from 6th Street north to Drachman will be converted to two-way travel in about 4 months. Right now we are at a critical point in the design phase. HDR Engineering has been tasked with bringing plans for the final two phases of the Downtown Links to 75% design completion by this summer.

**John Burr** questioned the length of the CAC meetings, and suggested that they not be limited to 2 hours. It was discussed whether length of meetings or frequency of meetings would be more beneficial. CAC chair determined the members should think about it and they would make a decision would be made when they discussed item 6 of the agenda (Future meeting dates and format).

- **RTA Value Analysis review**

Mike Bertram provided a spreadsheet of the RTA Value Analysis Proposal Summary Table along with maps corresponding to several of the Power point presentation slides (The complete PowerPoint presentation can be reviewed on the Downtown Links web site [www.downtownlinks.info](http://www.downtownlinks.info))

Mike detailed the items he would address in his presentation; 30% design overview, 9th Avenue Pedestrian Bridge and Deck Park, meeting with Union Pacific Railroad and the RTA Value Analysis (VA).

### 30% Design Overview

6th Street and Links Avenue - Mike reviewed detailed information regarding the roadway section, horizontal and vertical alignment, structures, and pedestrian and bicycle facility design features of the project,

John Burr asked why the lanes were designed at 12 feet when the committee had voted for them to be 11 feet and the VA recommended them to be 11 feet? Mike responded that the lanes will be striped for 11 feet, the inside lane has an extra foot offset from the curb.

Other Amenities- Mike reviewed detailed information regarding the additional amenities that are featured in the design, including landscaping, irrigation, lighting, the Tucson Arroyo box culvert and the multi-use path.

**John Sedwick** asked if the box culvert would be constructed prior to the roadway. Mike answered that generally speaking, utilities and sub-surface infrastructure are the first order of work during construction.

**Gail Ryser** asked about flooding issues. Mike explained that the drainage improvements within the project limits would remove the project area from the 100-year floodplain. Tom Fisher clarified that a portion of the flooding issues in Barrio Anita Neighborhood would be addressed with the Downtown Links drainage improvements, but that the northern half of the neighborhood is a separate issue and would be addressed through other projects.

Mike Bertram briefly explained that the purpose and goal of the RTA VA was to find ways to make up a \$6 million projected budget shortfall. The summary shows whether the proposed VA modification has been initially accepted, declined or under consideration.

There are two types of proposals, ones that are intended to reduce cost (P) and ones that provide added benefit yet increase the cost of the project (SR).

Mike began reviewing the VA Proposals:

### 9th Avenue Pedestrian Bridge and Deck Park

RTA VA PO1-011 proposes to narrow (42' to 20') and modify the 9th Avenue Pedestrian Bridge superstructure (a \$665,000 savings). The city has decided not to move forward with this recommendation.

Mike then explained that the RTA VA did not evaluate a deck park as part of the project, but that adding one is now being considered by TDOT. Mike reviewed the elements of the structural feasibility report that will identify preliminary design features, quantities and costs for both 9th Avenue Pedestrian and a Deck Park structures and prepare three dimensional renderings for both alternatives. The projected cost for the deck park exceeds \$2,000,000.

**John Burr** asked about using the Sahuarita Bridge structure, as suggested by Jim DeGroot in the last meeting, in order to save costs. Mike Bertram said this possibility has been reviewed and for numerous reasons, there are more risks than benefits in using the Sahuarita bridge structure. Tom Fisher agreed that information provided to him indicated there were too many unknowns in using those girders.

Mike reviewed the Deck Park renderings provided by Wheat Scharf Associates.

**John Burr** wanted to know how many people can fit on the deck weight wise.

Mike said there is no problem with the amount of people the deck could hold, but if dirt, landscaping and trees are added to the deck, the cost of the structure would increase.

Mike asked the CAC, for \$2,000,000 or more, what the Deck Park's form and function was, and if there are other areas within the area that could serve the same purpose.

**Daniela Diamente** said that the intended purpose of the Deck Park was to reconnect neighborhoods, but also to minimize the impact of the roadway on the surrounding neighborhoods and recreate the vibrancy of the area.

**Gene Caywood** said that somehow the original concept of the Deck Park that the Committee agreed to has been lost in these renderings: A continuously covered roadway from east of 9th Ave to the right of way of the railroad and the purpose was to mitigate roadway noise into the neighborhoods. This rendering breaks it up into 3 separate areas, a railroad bridge, a 9th avenue bridge and a separate bridge for the deck park. An opening between allows roadway noise to come up into the neighborhood, and also destroys the park-like atmosphere.

**Gene** said to get rid of the walls in the park that separate the areas.

**Daniela Diamente** what happened to the ideas of the amphitheater?

**Chris Carroll** said that we need to consider the pieces of land added by moving 6th Street. The abandoned 6th Street north of the railroad. We need to consider what it will look like from the south. The connections between are enormously important and we need to think of it as a connector.

**John Burr** reminded the new members of the CAC that four neighborhoods could not agree on the alignment of the roadway without this Deck Park. Also, the committee was looking at different locations for parking that could be converted into event locations. The committee looked at the area between Ironhorse Neighborhood and Broadway/4th Avenue. Now Federal regulations, (Homeland Security) have mandated that no public processions can cross the Streetcar tracks. As a result there needs to be some place that is not roadway impacted where events can take place and connect with downtown.

Mike asked the committee to take time to think about the Deck Park ideas because what was being presented was initial and that the committee would have ample time to provide input and comments on its features.

**Gene Caywood** is extremely upset with the Homeland Security regulations being placed on the Streetcar.

**Susan Marshall** said the committee has already "thought about" what they want.

**Daniela Diamente** said that the committee does NOT believe the Deck Park is an Amenity.

John Burr reminded the Team that the alignment would not have been approved without the Deck Park, and that it was a key piece to the compromise of the neighborhoods in approving the alignment.

**Gene Caywood** said the committee is committed to the Park, however they would be remiss to the

public and the expenditure of public funds if they didn't take into consideration, or were not open to other options of ways to construct that accomplish the same purpose that was agreed to by the committee.

**John Sedwick** feels like this is reminiscent of what 4th Avenue went through with the Modern Streetcar. During design they were given promises but when it came time to construct the City wouldn't do it. He does not want the same thing to happen on this project.

**Gene Caywood**, the City has no credibility and they need to get it back.

**John Burr made a motion that the CAC take an extensive look at the Deck park based on the intentions of the CAC and the engineering department's plans in good faith to make it most cost effective. The CAC will consider material changes but not changes to the width. The motion was seconded by John Sedwick and passed unanimously.**

Tom Fisher suggested a subcommittee be formed in order to meet with Wheat Scharf, the teams Architectural Firm, to discuss what features will become part of the Deck Park design.

A voice vote was taken and approved unanimously.

**Gene Caywood** appointed **Daniela Diamente, Kylie Walzak and Chris Carroll** to the subcommittee.

#### Meeting with the Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR)

Mike gave a brief summary of the results from the meeting with UPRR on November 7, 2012.; UPRR requires that the structure must accommodate four rail lines, their current design standards require steel superstructures, and in order for a *no whistle* zone to be declared, all crossings must be deemed "public" by the Arizona Corporation Commission (ACC). The 9th and 7th Avenue crossings have high numbers of documented incidents. UPRR considers closure (or grade separation) as the best mitigation. UPRR is unlikely to define this area as a *no whistle* zone. Mike added that it is TDOT's intention to construct *no whistle* zone improvements regardless at the 9th and 7th Avenue crossings in order to enhance safety.

He also explained that HDR intends to approach

**John Burr** asked if the rules have changed in the last year or so regarding the *no whistle* zone because Armory Park has applied to the ACC for a safety study. Mike said what has changed is the makeup of the ACC board and the UPRR design standards have been modified. Mike will report back on the issue.

**John Burr** asked if it would impact how things are laid out – like the shoofly. Mike said that the configuration of the bridge and placement of the shoofly will be assessed as part of the bridge selection report that must be approved by the UPRR.

**Richard Meyer** asked if 6th Street would be affected by the width of the bridge. Mike said no.

#### RTA Value Analysis Update

**"All Motions made regarding the RTA VA, are CAC recommendations of rejections of proposals made by the RTA VA and in agreement with TDOT decisions to also reject/decline those recommendations."**

Brent Kirkman reviewed RTA VA P03-007 - The relocation of the 9th Avenue Pedestrian Bridge west of the UPRR , which was declined by TDOT

**Daniela Diamente** asked that, as a time savings effort, why we needed to hear all the details if it was declined by TDOT.

**Gene Caywood** took a straw poll of the committee asking if they wanted to get a brief summary of the details and then move on.

**John Burr** said he wanted to hear everything in order to have an opportunity to weigh in.

**Gene Caywood** said if we are going to weigh in on every one of them, then they would need time to look at them and come back at another meeting

**Chris Carroll** agrees with John Burr that it is important to review also.

**John Burr made a Motion to agree with the Tucson Department of Transportation's (TDOT) decision to decline the RTA VA recommendation to relocate the 9th Avenue Pedestrian Bridge**

**west of UPRR. The Motion was seconded by Daniela Diamente and passed unanimously.**

Mike reviewed RTA VA P01-042 - Reroute Pedestrians and Bicycle Path west of 7th Avenue. Bicyclists and pedestrians would have to cross at grade of the southern approach to the Stone and Sixth intersection

**Tom Fisher** interjected that one of the reasons TDOT was considering this proposal was because there is some cost savings and also the potential to free up some property for future land use.

**Daniela Diamente** wants to know how the signaling would work at 6th Street and Stone Ave. Mike said it would be an integrated phase so pedestrian and bicycles have an opportunity to cross, but it would not be a segregated TUCAN.

**Kylie Walzak** asked if this was under consideration because of the land use concerns. Tom said yes it was.

There was conversation regarding future land use of properties that may become available.

Mike explained that this particular proposal was not time sensitive and that it would be fine to come back to it at another time.

**John Burr** said he would be interested in hearing what Corky Posters input was on the future land use.

**Daniela Diamente** said that building the path right next to the building was to bring vibrancy to that area.

**Richard Meyer** said the Aviation bike lanes have no escape route either.

**Gene Caywood Table RTA VA P01-042 for another time.**

Mike Bertram reviewed RTA VA P01-003 - Revise Links Avenue Typical Roadway Section.

**John Burr** said Jim Campbell is working on a similar plan and is having a hard time getting it approved.

**Kylie Walzak** asked if Ann Chaneka had been consulted on this. Tom said he thought she had weighed in on it when she was still at PAG.

**John Burr made a Motion to agree with TDOT's decision to decline the RTA VA recommendation to revise the Links Avenue typical roadway section (P01-003). The Motion was seconded by Daniela Diamente and passed unanimously.**

Mike Bertram reviewed RTA VA P01-013 – Revise 6th Street Typical Roadway Section at UPRR. The City has agreed to accept the recommendation with modifications. The modification is to move the abutments in and use the extra money elsewhere in the project. Exhibit 5A (30% design) Exhibit 5D (VA Design) and Exhibit 5E (Proposed Design) we presented. There was conversation regarding comparable underpass structures. Mike reminded the committee that often they are asked to construct roadways under railroad bridges to its fullest capacity since you only have one chance to build it.

**Gene Caywood** said the CAC rejected 6 lanes under the underpass

**Kylie Walzak** asked for clarification of which exhibit they were proposing and the cost savings of Exhibit 5E. She also proposed concrete barrier to protect cyclists. Mike said introducing jersey structures is certainly feasible.

There was a conversation regarding bike lane widths with and without different types of barrier.

**John Burr** asked about the size of the bridge and what would happen if there was a disabled vehicle in the facility.

**Daniela Diamente** suggested a subcommittee to determine best use of the RTA VA P01-013. Tom Fisher thought it was a good idea to bring it to the Bicycle Advisory Committee to review and get feedback from them.

**Kylie Walzak** wants to give Ann Cheneka an opportunity to review. The BAC is meeting tomorrow Mike Bertram explained that a decision on this item is critical and he needs some kind of direction in two weeks so he can make his submission to the UPRR. **Mike proposed that what he would like to gather from the CAC is approval of the RTA VA P01-013 with possible modifications per direction provided by the Bicycle Advisory Committee regarding the bike lane dimensions. Mikes proposal was moved on and seconded and passed unanimously.**

Mike Bertram reviewed RTA VA P01-069 – Removes S-Curve in Box Culvert

**John Burr made a Motion to agree with TDOT’s decision to decline the RTA VA recommendation to remove the S-curve in Tucson Arroyo Box Culvert (P01-069). It was further stated that all the drainage should remain under public right-of-way The Motion was seconded and passed unanimously.**

Mike Bertram reviewed RTA VA SR03-001 – Grade Separate 9th Avenue at UPRR. This would add almost \$700,000 to the project cost. Narrow path and a very dominate structure.

**John Burr made a Motion to agree with TDOT’s decision to decline the RTA VA recommendation to Grade separate 9th Avenue at the UPRR (SR03-001). The Motion was seconded and passed unanimously.**

Mike Bertram reviewed the modified 30% Design plan. In addition to what was reviewed tonight, the Pima County Flood Control District will be accelerating the design and construction of the 8th Street Drainage further to the east

John Sedwick asked whose auspices the flood control improvements would be under. Mike answered that Pima County Flood Control would construct it and pay for it. It is a \$1.5 million savings to the project and is anticipated to be advertized for construction by the end of this year.

**John Burr** wants to make sure the CAC is adequately prepared to comment on all sections and requested that future meetings provide materials and information that keeps the CAC informed

**John Burr** said that RTA VA SR01-016, which increases the speed limit to 35 mph for the southern one-half mile of Stevens Alley, was accepted by the City. John said the 30 mph was agreed to and accepted by the CAC.

**John Burr made a Motion to reaffirm a previous vote of the CAC to limit the roadway speed for the entire Downtown Links project area to 30 MPH and reject the RTA VA recommendation of raising the speed limit/design criteria to 35 MPH in some sections (SR0-016). The Motion was seconded by Daniela Diamente and passed unanimously.**

**John Burr** wants to make sure all the RTA VA items are reviewed by the CAC, including the SR recommendations. Tom Fisher suggested forming a subcommittee.

**Gene Caywood** suggested a subcommittee with time limits and then to have the subcommittee come back with their recommendations.

**John Sedwick** asked that the City have complete candor with the committee. He expects them to be honest and forthright about how something will be designed and built. He does not want them to say yes to something when they know it is not possible or have no intention of building it the way the committee is asking. Mike Bertram promised that he would be more than candid with them.

**Gene Caywood** appointed **John Burr, Richard Meyer, Gail Ryder and Kylie Walzak** to the RTA VA review committee.

**Joan Beckim clarified that open meeting laws will be implemented at the subcommittee meetings.**

## **6. Next Steps**

### **Items for Future Meetings**

Recommendation from Subcommittee meetings; Deck Park and RTA VA review

### **Confirm Future Meeting Dates**

There was discussion on whether to meet monthly in order to get through all the material in a timely manner, or to meet more often, for a shorter meeting duration. Gene took a straw poll and it was decided that monthly meetings, on the 2nd Monday of each month, would be appropriate. John Burr asked that the CAC members

commit to being available to attend the meetings.

**7. Call to the Audience**

The following person addressed the Committee:

Les Pierson Arroyo Chico Neighborhood – She likes the idea of bike tracks, wants them dedicated, and please provide an escape for bicyclists. Regarding the two parcels north of the railroad track, she would like the city to provide bike trail accommodations adjacent to the roadway. An observation; she is very surprised that the Deck Park is not being considered part of the project.

Karen Green, Dunbar Spring Neighborhood – 1. Regarding the Deck Park, amenity vs. requirement. It is NOT an amenity, it is an absolute requirement.

2. She does not like riding with traffic if she doesn't have to.

3. Can the public be notified about the subcommittee meetings?

Natasha Winnick, Morgan/Dunbar Spring and a prior member of the CAC. The Deck park is not an amenity, it is a requirement of the project. She would also like to attend the Deck Park subcommittee meeting and she would like the bikes separated from the cars through the underpass.

**8. Adjournment** at 8:19 p.m.