



22nd Street Corridor

Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) Meeting #3 Summary

August 11, 2009

COT 4th Floor Conference Room

The third meeting of the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) took place at 10:00 am in the fourth floor conference room of the Public Works Building at 201 N. Stone Avenue.

TAC members in attendance: Janice Cuaron, Don Freeman, Jonathon Mabry, Walker Smith, Peg Weber, Alex Arevalo, Artie Valenzuela, Chris Kaselemis, David Barraza, Emily Dawson, Fred Gray, Joe Bidwell, Sgt. John Buckley, Pat Quinn, Jose Ortiz, Marcus Jones, Thomas Threlkeld, Mick Jensen, Gary Gonzalez, Ron Lee, and Pat Terry.

Team and staff in attendance: Jay Van Echo, Jesse Soto, Abe Marques, Alicia Calamorro, Priscilla Fernandez, Ximena Zamora, Jeremy Palmer, Felipe Ladron de Guevara, Justin Smith, and Freda Johnson.

1. **Sign-in**
2. **Welcome and introductions**

Janice Cuaron, City of Tucson Project Manager, and Jay Van Echo of AECOM welcomed everyone to the meeting and each person in attendance introduced themselves. Jay reviewed the materials provided to everyone during the meeting including, meeting minutes from previous Citizen Oversight Committee (COC) meetings, preliminary cost estimates, cross sections, and District Maps.

3. **Project update**
 - i. General update

Jay provided the TAC with a brief overview of the project to date. He explained the project had been underway for two years. The initial phase of the project was a listening phase where the City reached out to residents, neighborhoods and businesses along the Corridor. The City began the second phase of the project in November of 2008 and at that point engaged with the COC to plan the Corridor.

Jay added that this was the third meeting of the TAC and was very appreciative of everyone's participation on the team. He noted that the TAC serves an important role in the process of planning and developing the 22nd Street Corridor. He explained that the team needed everyone's input in order to ensure that the project meets the needs of the neighborhoods and traveling community. He strongly encouraged members of the TAC to attend future COC meetings and open houses for the project.



ii. Technical Memorandums

Justin Smith of AECOM provided the team with a brief summary of the status of the Technical Memorandums (TM). He explained that AECOM had distributed a summary describing the scope of each TM at the June meeting. He noted that the project team had a few copies of the previous meeting documents available. Justin explained that:

- TM#1 – Existing Conditions and Data Collection was complete.
- TM #2 – Traffic Analysis had an initial draft submitted to the City and the City had reviewed and commented on the report. The final draft of TM#2 would be submitted following the selection of an alignment.
- TM#3 – Drainage Analysis had an initial submittal that documented existing watershed conditions. The City had reviewed the report and comments had been received. The second part of TM#3 will document existing hydrology and hydraulics. Justin explained that AECOM was reviewing the report and planned to make a formal submittal to the City in late August. In addition to TM#3, the consultant team would be submitting a contract modification to the City to formulate storm water management alternatives for the Corridor.
- TM#5 – Opportunities and Constraints Maps are complete and were distributed to the TAC at the June meeting.
- All other TM's would be completed as the project progressed and an alignment had been selected.

iii. Grade Separation at UPRR/Nogales Tracks – Environmental Update

Justin explained that as part of the grade separation analysis, AECOM had been working with the City of Tucson Environmental Services Department to perform a preliminary Phase I investigation within the limits of the grade separation. He explained that the purpose of the Phase I was to identify any fatal flaws with a possible railroad underpass. A preliminary draft of the findings had been completed and was provided to the City and AECOM for review and comment.

Justin noted that several potential issues had been identified; however no fatal flaws were noted at this time. Justin explained several of the potential issues identified which included the recycling facility and several parcels that had been used for automotive services such as the old Budget rental resale car site.

Justin explained that the preliminary cost estimates included an environmental mitigation line item. This line item included a preliminary estimate for environmental costs associated with general testing and remediation of structures that were required to be removed. He noted that the preliminary cost estimates did not include any costs for mitigating contaminated soil. Dave Barraza of the City of Tucson Environmental Services Department noted that there could be significant costs associated with mitigating contaminated soil excavated for an underpass. He added that these costs could not be identified until exploratory borings were conducted.



iv. Citizen Oversight Committee Update

Jay explained that the project team had conducted 7 meetings to-date with the COC. He provided the team with a brief summary of the dynamics and challenges faced with the COC.

4. Review Corridor design concepts to be presented to the COC

Prior to presenting the options for the Corridor, Jay gave the TAC some background on how the project team had arrived at this point. Justin explained that as the project team looked at the Corridor, they noted that the Corridor was defined by different land uses and activities. The team broke these distinct places into three planning districts which provided the frame work for the planning of the Corridor. The TAC was provided a map which outlined the districts.

The first district is referred to as the Neighborhood Commerce District which is bounded by Interstate 10 to the west and 6th Avenue to the east. The district includes Drachman School and the Santa Cruz Church. In looking at this area the team noted it was a mixture of residential and neighborhood scale businesses. The team felt that this area needed to be pedestrian friendly, specifically adjacent to and across from the Drachman School. Furthermore, the district needed to provide future opportunities for small business to relocate and develop, as well as provide connections to amenities such as the Southwestern and El Paso Greenway adjacent to the Downtown Airport Wash.

Justin explained that the second district was the Park District, which is bounded by 6th Avenue to the west and Park Avenue to the east. This district is defined by open space and residential areas. The most significant feature is the Santa Rita Park. This district encouraged the team to strive to enhance/preserve neighborhoods along the Corridor. This district also would be the future location of the UPRR grade separation and it was critical that the team look for opportunities to maintain connections and access to the park through the limits of the grade separation. The park and open space also presented a significant opportunity to the team in terms of helping mitigate existing drainage challenges.

The final district is called the Commerce/Mixed Use district, which is bounded by Park Avenue to the west and Kino Parkway to the east. This area is defined predominately by commercial and industrial development. Within the district, several vacant parcels, such as the old Watson Chevrolet Site provided opportunities to plan for the development of retail and mixed-use development.

Peg Weber of the City of Tucson's Parks and Recreation Department noted that the districts map referred to the Drachman Elementary School as the Santa Rosa Park. Justin noted that early in the project this mistake was noted and has been revised on all new maps, unfortunately these district maps dated back to before the change in name.



Jay explained to the team that there were three variables for the Corridor; cross sections, horizontal alignment and the grade separation at the UPRR tracks.

Cross Sections: Jay explained to the team that the project team had developed 3 cross sections for the Corridor (Minimum, Medium, and Maximum). He explained that the minimum cross section utilized 11' lanes, a 7' bike lane, and an 8' pedestrian area. This section represented the smallest section that the project team felt could be implemented along the Corridor. Jay added that this cross section left little opportunities for pedestrian amenities or landscaping along the Corridor.

The medium cross section was originally based on the City of Tucson Major Streets and Routes; however was later changed to match the cross section used on the Kino Parkway/22nd Street intersection project. The cross section utilized 11' lanes, 6' bike lanes, and 9' pedestrian areas. This cross section also provided an option for the addition of a frontage road option.

The maximum cross section was based on the cross section for Grant Road and the project team was directed by Mayor and Council to look at this cross section for the Corridor. This section utilizes 11' travel lanes, 7' bike lanes, and a 20' pedestrian area. This option also provided for a frontage road option.

A TAC member asked Jay where the frontage roads would be used along the Corridor. Jay noted that frontage roads were used on the Corridor in areas where residential homes fronted the Corridor. Therefore, in various locations along the south right-of-way (ROW) line.

Jay explained that the project team did not use a single cross section along the entire Corridor, but, instead, varied the cross sections along the Corridor. Designers located cross sections and frontage roads based on each district and the needs of the Corridor. He added these sections were not final and could/would be refined following selection of an alignment.

Horizontal Alignment: Jay then walked the TAC through the options for the horizontal alignment and the team was presented with large scroll maps illustrating the options. Jay explained that in the June COC meeting, the COC directed staff to hold the south ROW line and widen the roadway to the north. This option would be referred to as the Straight Option.

He added that this would be a traditional approach and accomplished many of the goals along the Corridor such as avoiding impacts to the Santa Cruz Church and Borton Elementary School. Furthermore, it protected homes along the south ROW line and minimized impacts to adjacent properties such as the Santa Rita Park. He added that it posed challenges such as drainage/constructability issues and the elimination of access to Euclid Avenue.



Jay then explained that, as the team considered the Corridor and all the opportunities and constraints, the team came up with an outside-the-box approach, referred to as the Curved Option. The Curved Option curved 22nd Street to the north between 4th Avenue and Park Avenue. He explained that everyone's initial reaction to the Curved Option was skeptical; however, after discussion and thought, everyone began to realize the potential benefits of the option. Jay talked about benefits to the homes south of Santa Rita Park. He noted benefits to noise and air pollution by pulling the roadway away from the residential areas. Jay added that the option provided additional park land, brought open space to the residents south of 22nd Street and provided additional drainage opportunities by providing detention capacity upstream of 22nd Street. Lastly, the option simplified constructability and provided connectivity to Euclid Avenue. Downsides included increased ROW impacts and increased park mitigation costs.

Over/Under the UPRR: Lastly, the RTA mandated a grade separation at the UPRR Nogales tracks that left the project with the option to either go under the railroad or over the railroad. Jay explained going under the UPRR presented many challenges including added drainage costs, increased structural costs, and added coordination time with UPRR. A TAC member asked if the general public wanted a specific option. Jay answered that generally speaking the public wanted an underpass. Tucson Fire noted that pumping and flooding were significant concerns with an underpass. They also noted that they were concerned about their truck-access with either option and that an overpass would block views.

Jay concluded by saying that combining the available options presented four distinct options for the Corridor: Straight Road Under the UPRR, Straight Road Over the UPRR, Curved Road Under the UPRR, and Curved Road Over the UPRR.

Regarding the four options, the members of the TAC provided the following comments. Walker Smith of South Tucson asked about access across 22nd Street at 8th Avenue. Justin informed the TAC that 8th Avenue is currently depicted to have a median cut and would allow left turn movements.

Abe Marques asked Jay to explain the benefits regarding drainage detention in the park. Jay explained that by providing storage volume upstream of the roadway, the design team could reduce the peak flow and meter it out over time. Without the storage volume, the design team will work to convey the peak flow across the Corridor, but the improvements would have little or no drainage benefit downstream. Don Freeman followed the question by asking how water would be conveyed from the east of Borton School to the park. Justin responded that the team is anticipating installing a large storm drainage system, likely box culverts under the pavement, to convey the water to the park where it can be detained.

Peg noted that reconstructing the park amenities provided the team with an opportunity to do something good for the surrounding community. Don then asked the original land use for the Park expressing concerns that the soil underneath may be contaminated from past uses. Bob Vint and Peg explained that the Santa Rita Park was originally



platted as a Park back in the early 1900's. Prior to being a Park, the land was used for grazing cattle. Abe noted that the baseball fields are sentimental to the community and that several major league baseball players have come from the area and used these fields in their early years.

Walker asked about connectivity across 22nd Street in each option. Jay explained that pedestrian bridges and underpasses illustrated on the plans are conceptual and the final size and location of the pedestrian connection will be determined after an alignment is selected. Justin added that the cost estimates provided do include budget numbers for the construction of a connection point. A TAC member added that maintaining good connectivity is important. Don suggested that overall the costs for each alternative are somewhat comparable and ultimately this will be a decision for the community.

Tucson Fire noted that the circulation that was currently shown for the three parcels east of the restaurant at 4th Ave and 22nd Street failed to provide adequate fire access. Jay noted the circulation provided was just one possible configuration and the team would look into the issue. Tucson Fire also pointed out that the Curved Options minimize construction impacts to traffic and fire service because the road can be built offline while maintaining 22nd Street open. Jay followed up the comment by noting the constructability benefits for building the grade separation.

Jeremy Palmer then presented the team with a 3-D Sketch-up rendering and model of each option.

5. Open Discussion

Following the Sketch-up Model presentation, Jay opened the floor up for final comments or suggestions. Walker expressed concerns about the size of some of the cross sections that were used along the Corridor and noted South Tucson's concern of being isolated from the rest of the City. Jay noted that currently the project team is only anticipating closing 2nd Avenue and Euclid Avenue and that is due to grade differentials at either an overpass or underpass required at the UPRR Nogales tracks. He reminded the team that in the Curved options access to Euclid Avenue could be regained. A TAC member noted the clearances needed for a railroad versus a truck. Walker followed up by asking if the pedestrian underpass would be depressed in order to obtain clearance. Justin answered saying that that depended on the final location of the underpass and the height of the underpass opening, but depressing the crossing such as along Speedway Boulevard near the University of Arizona is an option. The TAC also discussed the impacts to views of an overpass, noting that a Curved Over option provided better views than a Straight Over option.



6. Future Scheduling/Meeting Dates

Janice and Jay concluded by expressing their appreciation to the TAC for their participation in the process and commitment to the project. He added that the next meeting will be held in September.