

Meeting Minutes

City Council Micro Retreat

May 12, 2021 | 3:00 p.m.

Chandler Sunset Library, Monsoon Room
4930 W. Ray Rd., Chandler, AZ



Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Kevin Hartke at 3:05 p.m.

Roll Call

Council Attendance

Mayor Kevin Hartke
*Vice Mayor Mark Stewart
*Councilmember OD Harris
Councilmember Terry Roe
Councilmember René Lopez
Councilmember Christine Ellis
Councilmember Matt Orlando

Appointee Attendance

Josh Wright, Acting City Manager
Debra Stapleton, Assistant City Manager
Kelly Schwab, City Attorney
Dana DeLong, City Clerk

Staff in Attendance

Matt Burdick, Communications and Public Affairs Director
Ryan Peters, Governmental Relations and Policy Manager
John Knudson, Public Works and Utilities Director
Derek Horn, Development Services Director
Jason Crampton, Senior Transportation Planner
Dana Alvidrez, City Transportation Engineer
Alexis Apodaca, Governmental Relations Coordinator

*Vice Mayor Stewart arrived at 4:37pm, and Councilmember Harris arrived at 3:14 pm

Discussion

1. Presentation and discussion on Mobility: Proposition 400 Regional Sales Tax for Transportation Extension Overview, Transit Services and High Capacity Transit, Active Transportation and the Frye Road Protected Bike Lanes Design Concept.

MAYOR HARTKE introduced the discussion item and called for a staff presentation.

RYAN PETERS, Governmental Relations and Policy Manager, presented the following presentation.

- City Council Micro Retreat
 - Mobility: Multi Modal Transportation
- Overview
 - Proposition 400
 - Current Program
 - Extension
 - Transit
 - Existing Service and Funding Sources
 - Arizona Avenue Alternatives Analysis
 - Price Rd. Flexible Transit Study
 - Active Transportation
 - Projects and Studies
 - Frye Rd. Protected Bike Lanes
- Moving Toward Prop 400 Extension
 - Proposition 300
 - October 1985
 - 20-Year ½ Cent Sales Tax
 - 72% Voter Supported
 - 231 miles of new freeway
 - Proposition 400
 - November 2004
 - 20-Year ½ Cent Sales Tax
 - 57% Voter Supported
 - New freeway, arterial, and transit improvements
 - Proposition 400 Extension
 - 2025
 - Existing Proposition 400 expires in 2025
 - Sales tax extension is needed for future improvements
 - Revenues required to recoup from Great Recession
 - Opportunity to continue the expansion of the regional transportation system
- Proposition 400
 - Countywide ½ Cent Sales Tax
 - Effective January 1, 2006 – December 31, 2025
 - Funds Regional Transportation:
 - Freeways: 56.2%
 - Arterial Streets: 10.5%
 - Transit: 33.3%
 - Bus Operations and Capital: 20%

- Light Rail Capital: 13.3%
 - Transportation Policy Committee Oversight
- How Propositions 300 and 400 Have Shaped the Valley

COUNCILMEMBER LOPEZ asked if the light rail was only capital and not operations and maintenance.

MR. PETERS said that cities are responsible for the operations for the light rail, but in the overall program there are operational costs associated for bus services and freeways. The agreement with ADOT was that the Maricopa County Area would build the freeway and ADOT would have their responsibility through the HURF program.

COUNCILMEMBER LOPEZ asked about the operation and maintenance for the busses and the backup plan if the proposition does not pass.

MR. PETERS said the services would go away if this did not pass, but there are a lot of local services that would maintain those.

MR. PETERS continued the presentation.

- Prop 400 Arterial Projects Map
- Transit Map
- Prop 400 - Southeast Valley
 - New Freeways/ Widenings:
 - South Mountain 202
 - SR-24
 - Loop 101
 - Loop 202
 - I-10
 - US-60
 - Arterial Streets:
 - 99 Different Projects (30 in Chandler)
 - 30 Bus Routes: \$800 Million to East Valley (\$130 Million in Chandler)
 - Light Rail in Tempe and Mesa

COUNCILMEMBER ORLANDO asked what amount of money Chandler had put into this and what they had gotten back.

MR. PETERS said about \$640 million and they have gotten back about \$660 million in projects. Mr. Peters said they have to think of it regionally as residents benefit from this as they travel around the Valley outside of the City.

COUNCILMEMBER ORLANDO said they have roughly gotten the money back.

MAYOR HARTKE said this was a big question of his and did not think they would get the same equity out of the next proposition, so it is important to see how to move forward. They have major freeways and arterials done and the west Valley could easily take the entire 400 extension and put it into concrete. Mayor Hartke said there is a lot of conversations between cities on how to best position our cities, towns, and regions to minimize any City being a donor city.

MR. PETERS continued the presentation.

- Prop 400 – Chandler’s Projects Map
- Proposition 400 Extension
- Extension Considerations
 - Regional Balance
 - Legacy Projects
 - Sales Tax Rate
 - Extension Length
 - Performance-Based Projects
 - Continuity of Existing Service
 - Transportation Policy Committee Oversight
- Proposition 400 Extension
 - Sales Tax Half Cent
 - Projected Revenue \$14.9 B
 - Ongoing Commitment \$3.3 B
 - Remaining Amount \$11.6 B
 - ADOT HURF
 - Projected Revenue \$2.0 B
 - Ongoing Commitment 0
 - Remaining Amount \$2.0 B
 - MAG FHWA Funds
 - Projected Revenue \$2.9 B
 - Ongoing Commitment \$0.3 B
 - Remaining Amount \$2.6 B
 - MAG FTA Funds
 - Projected Revenue \$2.3 B
 - Ongoing Commitment \$2.2 B
 - Remaining Amount \$0.1 B
 - ADOT FHWA Funds
 - Projected Revenue \$6.1 B
 - Ongoing Commitment 0
 - Remaining Amount \$6.1 B
 - Total
 - Projected Revenue \$28.2 B
 - Ongoing Commitment \$5.7 B

- Remaining Amount \$22.5 B
- Summary of Regional Need
 - Ongoing Commitments
 - 20 Year Cost Estimate \$5.7 B
 - Freeway
 - 20 Year Cost Estimate \$35.8 B
 - Arterial
 - 20 Year Cost Estimate \$14.2 B
 - Transit
 - 20 Year Cost Estimate \$35.3 B
 - Other
 - 20 Year Cost Estimate \$13.3 B
 - Total Need
 - 20 Year Cost Estimate \$104.3 B
 - Projected Funding Available
 - 20 Year Cost Estimate \$28.2 B

COUNCILMEMBER LOPEZ asked if that was for the extension.

MR. PETERS said it assumes the region picks up the cost of our needs.

MAYOR HARTKE said the \$100 Billion is a large wish list from all cities.

MR. PETERS said that was correct. Mr. Peters said MAG has a difficult job of evaluating the needs that exist today and then screening out the projects that would be best for the future.

MR. PETERS continued the presentation.

- Half-Cent – New Capacity Scenario
- Half-Cent – System Optimization Scenario
- Full Cent – New Capacity Scenario
- Full Cent – System Optimization Scenario
- Scenarios Summary
- Next Steps
 - Establish Consensus on Scenario –
 - MAG TPC Vote in Summer 2021
 - Air Quality Conformity Process – July – November 2021
 - MAG Regional Council Formal Approval – December 2021
 - State Legislature Authorization – Spring 2022
 - Election – November 2022

MAYOR HARTKE said for the entire region to reach that large number they would have to do a \$0.06 tax and it is hard to tell what money would be coming in from different sources. Mayor

Hartke said a half cent does one thing and one cent does another and there is no conversation about any tax higher than that. The City is still competing with everyone else and there is no wish list where everyone gets what they want. Mayor Hartke said they are not making any decisions today but wanted Council's thoughts on the rate and asked Mr. Peters if there was a 25-year scenario.

MR. PETERS said there is a 25-year regional planning scenario.

MAYOR HARTKE said to go beyond a half cent, there needs to be work with legislatures and let the County do this.

COUNCILMEMBER ORLANDO said some cities are using the American Recovery Act dollars for infrastructure and asked if that comes off the table for this. Councilmember Orlando said he recently had a conference call for the National League of Cities Transportation Subcommittee and the driving factor for Arizona was bridges and roads. Councilmember Orlando asked how projects come off the list.

MR. PETERS said Maricopa County has done a really good job taking care of our roads. Mr. Peters said they have asked the US Department of Transportation to take special consideration for cities and regions who have taken it upon themselves to invest. Mr. Peters said we have to hold up our end of the bargain and continue to invest. Mr. Peters said the regional transportation plan is administered by MAG and should a federal grant come in for a project, that money could be shifted over to something in a capital improvement program.

COUNCILMEMBER ORLANDO asked about operating and maintenance dollars and asked if the MAG plan allowed for higher operating and maintenance dollars instead of new items.

MR. PETERS said they have argued that they need to maintain what they build but in the region there is so much demand for new items. There is a need to have the State pay the maintenance of the freeways and the localities do what they can. The City uses the General Fund to pay for their needs. A city should not be able to freeload off the region. Mr. Peters said to get some funds from the State there has to be a maintenance component in there. Mr. Peters said there is a lot of political positioning but they need to not let the legislators off the hook and honor their commitments.

MAYOR HARTKE said if they build it then ADOT was to maintain it so there is a lot of conversation about this as infrastructure reaches the end of its life.

COUNCILMEMBER LOPEZ asked about the half cent tax and asked if other counties are restricted to a cent.

MR. PETERS said other counties are restricted to a cent.

MAYOR HARTKE asked if Pinal County was still struggling with that.

MR. PETERS said a full cent tax was authorized but it was being challenged in court, so they are waiting for that to be released. Pinal County cities are represented in MAG and there are Pinal dollars that go to support the overall system because of the planning area.

COUNCILMEMBER ROE said he was grateful for what Prop 400 has done.

MR. PETERS said because of staff's work they are able to take advantage of federal funding opportunities because the City is properly planned. Mr. Peters said there are plans but there is some maneuverability to advance some projects and those rules may apply in the future as well. Mr. Peters said there is also a debate on who gets funded first and scope creep.

MAYOR HARTKE said there is plans for housing by the 303 in the west Valley, but they have not acquired land yet. This is not just freeway but also land as well. There could be a lot of factors in these projects.

COUNCILMEMBER ELLIS asked if there was a way to do both of these plans so they can take care of what they have and build what is needed.

MR. PETERS said yes, this is not an either/or scenario. MAG had to create some assumptions in order for cities to react. Mr. Peters said the region would likely settle on optimization and capacity. Mr. Peters said Chandler has paid attention to technology and setting aside funds to take advantage of opportunities.

MAYOR HARTKE said there is work at the legislature to allow the County to go up to a cent regardless of whether or not they actually go up to the full cent. Mayor Hartke asked if Council was in agreement with working to have the State treat Maricopa County like the other Arizona counties.

COUNCIL agreed.

MAYOR HARTKE asked how Council felt on a half cent or a cent.

MR. PETERS said they also have to have the voters agree to this as well and see what their level of interest is. Mr. Peters said this would be on the ballot in 2022.

COUNCILMEMBER ELLIS asked if staff has already asked voters.

MR. PETERS said there was a recent survey that showed interest depending on what would be done. Mr. Peters said they did not break it down by city but by region.

COUNCILMEMBER ORLANDO said if they go for a cent but if it fails then it is that much harder to go back for a half cent. Councilmember Orlando said he was fine going for a cent as long as they are confident it is going to pass.

MAYOR HARTKE said they are looking at 2022 for that reason.

COUNCILMEMBER ORLANDO said if they go for a cent the projects would be done faster.

COUNCILMEMBER LOPEZ asked when the mass transit survey was done, was this question asked.

JASON CRAMPTON, Senior Transportation Planner, said they did not specifically ask if they wanted to pay more. Mr. Crampton said they have done a number of surveys five years ago with some questions about transportation. Mr. Crampton said there was support investing in transit, but they did not ask if people would be willing to pay more.

COUNCILMEMBER LOPEZ said if it barely passed last time then it may be a hard sell during this time.

COUNCILMEMBER ROE talked about extra gas tax. Councilmember Roe said if the half cent has the best chance of passing and then they could use some of the General Fund.

MAYOR HARTKE said there is general consensus for a half cent and if the voters would vote for more, then Council would be in support of that.

COUNCIL agreed.

COUNCILMEMBER ORLANDO said they need to ask the citizens that question directly to see where people are at.

COUNCILMEMBER ROE asked if they could get some feedback.

MAYOR HARTKE said yes, and the last time the transportation tax was attempted it was a very close election. Mayor Hartke asked about the 20 year versus a permanent tax.

COUNCILMEMBER ELLIS said 20 years.

COUNCILMEMBER ORLANDO said voters like to hear sunset numbers, so 20 years.

COUNCILMEMBER LOPEZ said 20 years. Councilmember Lopez asked if there could be two separate propositions for splitting out the operations and maintenance and capital.

MAYOR HARTKE said they are trying to get ADOT to maintain those instead of the County because that was the agreement.

COUNCILMEMBER ROE said 20 years was better, but the problem is people are going to want more money in 30 years and to maybe have a stepped approach to the sunset.

MR. PETERS said regional transportation plans are on a 20-year plan.

COUNCILMEMBER ROE said maybe a longer term but not permanent.

MAYOR HARTKE said no one had an appetite to tax forever.

COUNCILMEMBER LOPEZ said if they did two half cent taxes that may be a better selling point.

COUNCILMEMBER HARRIS said they do not know what transportation is going to look like in the future especially with self-driving cars which may require electrical circuits. Councilmember Harris said 20 years is such a long time especially as they enter the artificial intelligence era. Councilmember Harris said 10 years seemed better because they cannot predict that far in advanced. Councilmember Harris said he would agree to 20 but preferred 10 especially given how Chandler embraces innovation.

MAYOR HARTKE said transportation is going to change and the roads and signals may change. Mayor Hartke said Council agreed on a limited time and to allow the County to make their decisions and reach out to the voters.

MR. CRAMPTON continued the presentation.

- Transit Services in Chandler
- Fixed Route Bus
 - 11 Local Bus Routes
 - 950,000 Annual Boardings (FY2019)
 - 2 Express Routes
 - 60,000 Annual Boardings (FY 2019)
 - Programmed Improvements on:
 - Chandler Blvd.
 - Arizona Ave.
 - About 70% of Chandler users of fixed route are transit dependent*
 - *Source: Valley Metro Origins and Destinations Study
- Transit Facilities
 - Park and Ride
 - Transit Center
 - 370 Bus Stops
 - 250 Advertising Shelters

- Bus Ridership Data
 - Fixed Route Bus Boardings
- Fixed Route Bus Funding Sources
- First-Mile, Last-Mile Program
 - 1-Year Agreement with Lyft
 - \$50,000 cap
 - Sept. 2020 – Sept. 2021
 - Residents get 50% off the cost of Lyft trips to and from bus stops in service area
- First-Mile, Last-Mile Program
- Paratransit
 - Service for people with disabilities
 - Federally mandated within ¾ mile of bus routes
 - Chandler goes beyond federal mandate by providing Citywide service
 - City cost = \$45/ trip
 - Resident fare = \$4/ trip
 - 50,000 Trips/ Year

COUNCILMEMBER ROE asked if this program was within Chandler and if it stays in Chandler.

MR. CRAMPTON said it was regional and of those trips maybe 20,000 stay in Chandler.

COUNCILMEMBER ROE said the \$45 fee could go to Phoenix.

MR. CRAMPTON said it could go to Phoenix, but we only pay for Chandler residents.

COUNCILMEMBER LOPEZ said it was based on residency and they could go around the Valley.

MR. CRAMPTON said yes.

MR. PETERS said this was a regional decision a couple years ago because of service. Before people would get dropped off at the borders and then wait for the other city's route to pick them up.

COUNCILMEMBER ROE asked if Gilbert made a big change regarding this.

MR. PETERS said they attempted to but received backlash.

MR. CRAMPTON continued the presentation.

- RideChoice
 - Alternative Service for People with Disabilities
 - Also Offered to Seniors (65+)
 - More Convenient Service
 - Does not Meet Federal ADA Requirements

- City Cost = \$19/ Trip
- Resident Fare = \$3
- 12,000 trips per year
- Non-ADA Trips to RideChoice
 - Oct. 10, 2019 – City Council Directed Staff to Move Non-ADA Paratransit Users to RideChoice
 - April, 2020 – Change Became Effective
 - 3,000 Annual Trips Transitioned
 - 184 Residents Moved to RideChoice (1 Complaint)
- Ridership Data
 - Paratransit and Ride Choice

COUNCILMEMBER ORLANDO said this was still about 60,000 riders.

MR. CRAMPTON said yes.

MR. CRAMPTON continued the presentation.

- RideChoice
 - Increased Trip Cap Transfer from Paratransit
- Paratransit
 - Non-ADA Users Moved to RideChoice/ Covid-19 Ridership impact
- Transit Funding
 - Regional Funding: \$8.1M in FY2020
 - Proposition 400 – ½ cent sales tax for transportation
 - State Lottery Proceeds: \$670,000 in FY2020
 - Funding for transit required as a part of state's Air Quality Plan
 - Local Funding: \$1.8M in FY2020
 - Advertising Revenue: \$150K - \$200K per year
- Transit Funding: Regional
 - Proposition 400 – ½ Cent Sales Tax For Transportation
 - 33% Goes to Transit
 - 9.59% of Transit Funding Allocated to Chandler (\$8.1M in FY2020)
 - Transit Funds Must be Used for:
 - Local Bus Routes in Regional Transportation Plan
 - Express Bus Routes in Regional Transportation Plan
 - ADA Paratransit
 - Regional Expenses
 - Regional Public Transit Authority Board
- Transit Funding: State Lottery
 - Arizona Lottery Funds (Powerball Proceeds)
 - Funding for transit required as a part of state's Air Quality Plan
 - Funds Must be Used for Transit

- Funds Distributed Based on Population
- Chandler's Share: \$670,000 in FY2020
 - Bus: \$300,000
 - Paratransit: \$250,000
 - Bus Stop Maintenance: \$50,000
 - Valley Metro Rail Membership: \$50,000
 - Miscellaneous: \$20,000
- Transit Funding: Local
 - Bus Stop Advertising Revenue
 - \$150,000 - \$200,000 Annually
 - Advertising Contractor Also Regularly Cleans Bus Stops and Performs Light Maintenance
 - Funds Used for Bus Stop Maintenance and New Bus Shelters
 - General Fund (FY 2021 Budgeted Amounts)
 - Bus: \$1,506,790
 - Paratransit: \$420,000
 - RideChoice: \$244,000
 - First-Mile, Last-Mile: \$50,000
- Comparison of Transit Funding in Valley Cities for FY 18-19
- Transportation Master Plans Survey Results
 - Current mode of travel?
 - 92% Personal Vehicle
 - 3% Bike
 - 2% Transit
 - What mode of travel should the City invest in?
 - 44% Transit
 - 35% Auto
 - 10% Bike/Scooter
 - Expected primary mode of travel in 20 years?
 - 33% Auto,
 - 28% Driverless Auto,
 - 11% Shared Auto
 - 18% Transit
 - 5% Bike

COUNCILMEMBER HARRIS said with the increase of so many people coming from the Midwest and the East Coast it is more customary for people to ride public transportation, so it makes sense as the City changes.

MR. CRAMPTON continued the presentation.

- Why Are Citizens Interested in Transit?
 - Residents Rely on Transit

- In Chandler, over 3,100 bus boardings occur each weekday
- Opportunity
 - 77% of bus Valley Metro bus riders are employed and 16% are students
 - Over 50% of trips on Valley Metro are to or from work or school
- Congestion Mitigation
- Express bus takes over 5,000 cars off Valley freeways each day.
 - Local bus reduces congestion on arterial roadways.
- Economic Impact
 - Every \$1 invested in public transportation generates \$5 in economic returns¹
- Air Quality
 - Valley Metro transit operations results in an annual reduction of 9.8 million pounds of air pollution

COUNCILMEMBER ROE asked if the express routes were taken out, how many boardings would there be.

MR. CRAMPTON said on a yearly basis there are 950,000 and express boardings are 60,000.

COUNCILMEMBER LOPEZ said there are two express routes and asked about the yellow line.

MR. CRAMPTON said that was a local bus route and that represents the heaviest use ones.

COUNCILMEMBER ORLANDO asked which route was the quickest growing one.

MR. CRAMPTON said Arizona Avenue has increased activity and Ray Road has increased.

COUNCILMEMBER ORLANDO asked about Price Road.

MR. CRAMPTON said they only provide service to Price Road during peak hours, but he would talk more about that.

MR. CRAMPTON continued the presentation.

- Transit Recommendations (2020-2040)
 - Flexible transit service covers most of Chandler
 - Interconnected hierarchy of routes
 - High capacity transit
 - Express bus
 - Local bus
 - New/expanded transit centers and park-and-ride lots

COUNCILMEMBER LOPEZ said there are surveys done by the County and asked if the City gets data. Councilmember Lopez asked if they are developing pockets of where people are going and who would benefit.

MR. CRAMPTON said that does play a part. The transportation master plan does not go into that level of detail, but they do look at data on where to expand services.

MR. CRAMPTON continued the presentation.

- Flexible Transit (Micro-Transit)
- What is Micro-Transit?

MR. CRAMPTON said there are a number of options, such as a regional pass. Another option is that cities offer a free service because if it is not a large scale, collecting the fare could be very costly so they opt for it to be free. Mr. Crampton said some cities also opt for a lower fare.

COUNCILMEMBER ORLANDO asked if other cities are doing this now.

MR. CRAMPTON said Glendale piloted a program, but it was paused due to COVID-19.

COUNCILMEMBER ORLANDO asked if Chandler does this would be put in the sales tax.

MR. PETERS said they advocated for that but there was strong resistance to providing local service only using regional dollars. Mr. Peters said they argued that it would connect to the regional system.

COUNCILMEMBER ORLANDO said there was not support for that.

MR. PETERS said no.

COUNCILMEMBER ORLANDO asked if more cities do this, if the momentum would grow.

MR. PETERS said perhaps but the resistance is pretty strong from Phoenix, Mesa, and Tempe. They are having a hard time conceptualizing how it would work.

MAYOR HARTKE said it was part of the dollar amount since it would compete with everything else.

MR. CRAMPTON said one potential solution is a locally funded bus service which could compete for regional funding service.

COUNCILMEMBER LOPEZ asked if that would be short sighted.

MAYOR HARTKE said there are a lot of ideas and options out there.

MR. CRAMPTON continued the presentation.

- Price Road Flexible Transit Study
 - Study Recommendations:
 - 4-5 Vehicles
 - 15-minute maximum wait time
 - Supplement with Lyft/ Uber When Cost-Effective
 - Co-mingle ADA Paratransit Trips
 - Annual Cost Estimate: \$650,000 - \$800,000*
 - *Assumes \$200,000 Cost Savings from Reductions in Bus Route 96

COUNCILMEMBER LOPEZ asked if Mr. Crampton could expand on the start and end point.

MR. CRAMPTON said it would not follow any type of fixed route but would provide service within an area and respond to calls.

COUNCILMEMBER LOPEZ asked if the area would just be for pickups.

MR. CRAMPTON said pickups and drop-offs would have to be in this area. If someone wanted to go further they would need to get on a regional service.

MAYOR HARTKE said this study would determine what the demand would be and asked if there was an interest to do this.

COUNCILMEMBER LOPEZ said he questioned the borders and if this captured Chandler High School.

MR. CRAMPTON said there was a little area by Chandler Fashion Center which would cover the Center for the Arts and Chandler High School.

MR. PETERS said the service area needs to be small enough to be nimble but large enough to get riders.

MAYOR HARTKE asked for Council's thoughts. Mayor Harkte asked how long the pilot would be.

MR. CRAMPTON said they have not identified an endpoint but if they have the program and people are used to it, it is difficult to end.

COUNCILMEMBER LOPEZ asked how much the riders would pay.

MR. PETERS said staff still needs to work out the cost and thought this would be more of an efficient way to move people. Mr. Peters asked if this was an investment Council would consider as there are budget considerations that still have to be made.

MAYOR HARTKE said they are not allocating funds today but rather Council to provide direction on whether to direct staff continue working on developing this program.

COUNCILMEMBER ELLIS said based on interest of the citizens to look into it.

COUNCILMEMBER ORLANDO said they have gotten calls from the workforce and thought it was a great idea. Councilmember Orlando said if they try it and it does not work then they at least gathered great data to find a better solution. Councilmember Orlando said this would be convenient for riders.

COUNCILMEMBER HARRIS was in agreement.

COUNCILMEMBER ROE was in agreement.

MAYOR HARTKE said Council was in agreement to proceed.

Recess

The meeting was recessed at 4:45 p.m.

Reconvene

The meeting was reconvened at 4:51 p.m., all members present.

MR. PETERS continued the presentation.

- Arizona Avenue Alternatives Analysis

MR. CRAMPTON continued the presentation.

- Regional High Capacity Transit
 - Light Rail in Phoenix, Tempe and Mesa
 - Initial 20-mile line
 - Two Extensions in Mesa
 - Streetcar Under Construction in Tempe
 - Light Rail Extensions in Progress in Phoenix
- High Capacity Transit in Chandler
 - Current Study:
 - Arizona Avenue Alternatives Analysis
 - Previous Studies
 - Major Investment Study (2003)

- High Capacity Transit Feasibility Study (2012)
 - Fiesta Downtown Chandler Transit Corridor Study (2017)
- Study Area
 - The characteristics of the study area suggest strong future growth and travel demand that warrants a future investment in high-capacity transit (HCT) and other transit services.
 - 2040 Study Area Projections
 - 23% increase in population
 - 46% increase in employment
 - 11% increase in travel time by car between Chandler and Mesa
- High-Capacity Transit Types
 - Hybrid Light Rail/Streetcar
 - Speed - Moderate
 - Traffic Lanes – Dedicated or Shared
 - Cost to build - \$\$
 - Capacity – 135 per car
 - Average Cost to Operate - \$\$\$
 - Bus Rapid Transit
 - Speed – Higher to Moderate
 - Traffic Lanes – Dedicated or Shared
 - Cost to build- \$
 - Capacity – 80 per bus
 - Average Cost to Operate - \$\$
 - *Enhanced bus options may also be considered.
- Public Involvement
 - Community Outreach
 - 2 Key Stakeholder Workshops
 - 4 Public Meetings
 - Website and Social Media

VICE MAYOR STEWART asked when this was done.

MR. CRAMPTON said this was done with the Transportation Master Plan in 2019.

MR. CRAMPTON continued the presentation.

- Future Technology
 - Four scenarios were modeled to explore the change in the annual number of transit riders over the next 50 years (2020-2070).
 - Base Line
 - Continuation of existing service and conditions
 - 383,000 Riders
 - Scenario 1

- Personally owned AVs existing transit; no service Improvements
- -4%
- 366,000 Riders
- Scenario 2
 - Personal and shared AVs; some AV micro-transit
 - 14%
 - 437,000 Riders
- Scenario 3
 - Personal and shared AVs; AZ Ave HCT; AV buses; increase transit service
 - 35%
 - 515,000 Riders
- Project ridership in the study area based on MAG modeling forecasted population and employment growth.

COUNCILMEMBER LOPEZ asked if they could define 500,000 riders.

MR. CRAMPTON said these are service area boardings not people. Mr. Crampton said the typical model goes to 2040 this goes to 2070.

MR. CRAMPTON continued the presentation.

- Detailed Analysis Results
- Recommended Alternative
- Next Steps
 - Actions that can be taken to enhance HCT development along the recommend route, include:
 - Bike and pedestrian friendly connections
 - Transit supportive policies to encourage TOD
 - Limiting the amount of parking in the CBD
 - Enhance local bus network to feed into AZ Ave
 - Encourage decision making supportive of HCT

MAYOR HARTKE said Council would not make a decision on this as this is just a study to see where things could go.

COUNCILMEMBER LOPEZ talked about the reset with COVID-19 that everyone is trying to deal with, and people may not be coming back to work in the same way. This is going to have a major impact on transportation. Councilmember Lopez asked if they would also start looking at trending models to see what long term changes there are.

MR. CRAMPTON said the modeled scenarios did assume a reduction but the impact of working from home was not fully realized yet.

COUNCILMEMBER LOPEZ said he thought it was a great plan and a great place to start. Councilmember Lopez said to model work from home scenarios.

COUNCILMEMBER ROE asked about the Price Corridor and if that is given special consideration because people may have a vehicle and would not use mass transit unless it was superior.

MR. CRAMPTON said the focus for Price Corridor is the micro transit because it would provide convenience to go directly there and this would be more enticing.

MR. PETERS said in order for it to work it has to go somewhere. Tempe and Mesa have no investment plans and it is not going anywhere at the north end.

COUNCILMEMBER ORLANDO said when he looked at the early slides there was only a small dip in transit ridership which says those who are taking transit are not necessarily doing office jobs and they had to go to work and this was their mode of transportation.

MR. CRAMPTON said transit ridership did not go away as about 60% continued to ride and it is starting to rebound.

COUNCILMEMBER ORLANDO asked if there are still express routes from Chandler to Phoenix or other cities.

MR. CRAMPTON said it would be interesting to see how things rebound as those have rebounded the slowest.

VICE MAYOR STEWART said the Price Corridor was designed for people to drive. Vice Mayor Stewart said they do not have high-capacity transit in that area and asked if that was a hinderance to economic development.

MR. WRIGHT said that is not something that was studied in depth, but it depends on the company on what they are looking for. Some like having high density and transit near their buildings, others do not look at it as much as they are fine with parking garages.

COUNCILMEMBER LOPEZ talked about perspective of people who live in other cities where mass transit is relied on heavily. Some do not want to live in Arizona because everything is so spread out. Councilmember Lopez said they want to build something that is practical for our area.

VICE MAYOR STEWART said they built a city with infrastructure to move cars like having six lanes through neighborhoods. Having a mass transit system may not be optimal.

MR. PETERS said they try to balance, and people will take the most convenient option and that may change in the future. Mr. Peters said previous Councils and staff have not locked themselves into one decision and keep their options open which is why the study builds upon itself.

MR. PETERS continued the presentation.

- Active Transportation
- Why Active Transportation?
 - Growth in Active Transportation
 - Since 2005 states have seen, on average, a 46% increase in the share of people commuting by bike.
 - 27.6% drive less than five miles to work/school
 - Commute to Work by Car
 - 90% Baby Boomers
 - 92 Generation X
 - 77% Millennials
 - Public Health
 - 1 in 4 Adults in Maricopa County are Obese
 - 13 pounds average weight lost in the first year of biking to work
 - Cycling just 20 miles a week can reduce the risk of cardiovascular heart disease by 50 percent

MR. CRAMPTON continued the presentation.

- Active Transportation Today
 - Bike Lanes
 - 350 Miles
 - Shared Use Paths
 - 17 Miles Paved
 - 24 Miles Unpaved
- Bicycle/ Pedestrian Recommendations (2020-2040)
 - Bike lanes on all arterials
 - Shared use path signalized crossings at all arterial roads (if warranted)
 - Add new shared use paths and separated bike lanes
 - Interconnected network of on-street and off-street facilities
- Plans and Studies
 - Price/Ocotillo Shared Use Path – 2020-21
 - Frye Rd. Protected Bike Lanes – 2020-21
 - Highline Canal – 2021
 - Hunt Highway – 2021
 - Future Studies as Grant Funding Permits
 - Kyrene Branch Canal
 - Ashley Trail/ Paseo Trail Connection
- Grants

- Kyrene/McClintock Bike Lanes - \$4.6 Million
- Chandler Blvd. Bike Lanes - \$1.0 Million
- Frye Rd. Protected Bike Lanes - \$3.7 Million
- Price Road/Ocotillo Shared Use Path - \$75,000
- Hunt Highway Separated Bike Lanes/ Traffic Calming - \$70,000
- Highline Canal - \$35,000
- Wall St. Alley Activation - \$70,000

MR. PETERS continued the presentation.

- Frye Road Protected Bike Lanes
 - Preliminary Design Study Conducted in Partnership With Chandler, Maricopa Association of Governments, and Y2K Engineering.

MR. CRAMPTON continued the presentation.

- Project Description
 - Build Physical Separation for Bike Lanes on Frye Road
 - Project Limits:
 - Frye Road from Paseo Trail to ½ Mile West of Arizona Avenue
 - Project Benefits
 - Comfort and Safety of Cyclists
 - Enhanced Connections to Downtown, Paseo Trail, Schools and Parks
 - Develop Sense of Place for Downtown Chandler
- Building Blocks of a Protected Bike Lane
 - Horizontal Buffer
 - Vertical Element
 - High visibility markings of conflict areas
- Protected Bike Lane Examples
 - Quick Build
 - Raised Median with Landscaping
 - Pre-cast Modular
 - Parking protected
- Benefits of Protected Bike Lanes
 - Reduce/eliminate dooring issues
 - Reduce/eliminate parking and loading conflicts
 - Reduce conflicts/ slow turning vehicles
 - Provide space for all roadway users, reducing stress for all
 - Benefits of PBLs over conventional bike lanes
 - Safety
 - Comfort
 - Ridership
 - Shifted trips
- Project Limits

MR. WRIGHT talked about a future park site that would kick off soon as they are just waiting on the federal grant funds to come through. That park already has a parking lot that connects to Paseo Trail and a school. There is part of the site that was tentatively designed to have a bike hub.

MR. CRAMPTON continued the presentation.

- Existing Conditions
 - Arizona Ave Intersection
 - West of Arizona Ave
 - East of Arizona Ave
- Existing Conditions
 - McQueen Rd Intersection
 - West of McQueen Rd
 - East of McQueen Rd
- Public Engagement
 - Project Webpage: www.tinyurl.com/fryerroad
 - Input period: 1/15/21 – 1/30/21
 - Advertised through social media and temporary signs near the corridor
 - 115 survey responses received
 - 57 additional comments through social media
 - During the two-week period:
 - 320 website views (unique visitors)
 - 169 views of the informational video
- What We Heard from the Public
 - 64% bicycle at least once a week primarily for recreation, social activities, and dining.
 - Perceived lack of safety for pedestrians and bicyclists.
 - Majority of positive response for improved/protected bike lanes.
 - Additional requests for landscaping, connections to bicycle network, and detection at intersections
 - 3.6 out of 10 for how comfortable Frye Rd is to ride today.
 - Parents indicated they would allow their child to bike to and from school without an adult in 5th grade with protected bike lanes versus 7th grade as it is.
- Additional Considerations
 - Design Considerations:
 - Drainage
 - Consistency for drivers and bicyclists
 - Parking/ Transit Stops
 - Operations Considerations:
 - Maintenance of debris
 - Resources for ongoing maintenance
 - Traffic operations at intersections
 - Coordination with other projects

- Draft Separation Concepts
 - Landscaped Bioswale
 - Patterned Paver
 - Pre-cast Modular
- Draft Recommended Alternative 1
 - Within existing curb to curb width
 - Keeps on-street parking & loading
 - Consistent travel lanes
- Draft Recommended Alternative 2
- Draft Recommended Alternative 3

MAYOR HARTKE said they could put in a rumble strip.

MR. CRAMPTON said yes, there are also railings as well that could be put as a barrier so there are vertical features for drivers to see.

MR. CRAMPTON continued the presentation.

- Draft Recommended Alternative 4
- Draft Recommended Alternative 5
- Draft Recommended Alternative 6
- Draft Concept
- Next Steps
 - Current Preliminary Design Study – Complete June 2021
 - Final Design – Programmed for FY2021-22
 - Construction – Programmed for FY2022-23
 - All Three Phases are Funded with Federal Grants
 - 5.7% local match required for design and construction

MR. PETERS said when staff met with the consultant there were some design features that were left out because of cost. Mr. Peters said they need to determine if they are staying within the federal grant amount or if there are other combinations of funds. Mr. Peters said they also need to consider ease of maintenance and if they want to sacrifice some design elements to make it easier to maintain.

COUNCILMEMBER HARRIS said he liked the design and once drivers get familiar with the certain areas of the City that have separation that would create a pattern of safety. Councilmember Harris said with the flat paver maybe it could be raised a bit to deter skateboarders taking over the lane.

COUNCILMEMBER ELLIS said safety is number one and liked the design element. Councilmember Ellis said she liked the parents being more comfortable sending the kids to school on their bikes and this was a great project.

COUNCILMEMBER ORLANDO said he was good with it. Councilmember Orlando said they really need a physical barrier to show the clear path. Councilmember Orlando said he liked the idea of floral desert landscaping and dissipate some of the heat. Councilmember Orlando how much more it would cost to take it up to Chandler High School and if it was worth doing.

MR. PETERS said that would be a new study because that is a unique area. Mr. Peters said they have thought about downtown and the downtown is a pedestrian oriented development. Mr. Peters said they hope to see where they could expand in the future.

COUNCILMEMBER ORLANDO said they did not have the money to do it now and asked how much more it would cost.

COUNCILMEMBER LOPEZ said this is what they were hoping for and it is needed. Councilmember Lopez asked about the option where street parking protected the bike lane and asked why this wasn't used in the area.

MR. CRAMPTON said they had design options that showed parking protecting the bike lane and it was being considered in front of Willis Junior High. Mr. Crampton said because of the traffic activity it may not be safe as there are a lot of activity at certain points during the day.

COUNCILMEMBER LOPEZ said they could experiment with it on the west side.

MR. CRAMPTON said it would not work because the parking is designed as cut out parking.

COUNCILMEMBER LOPEZ asked where people would park their bikes downtown.

MR. CRAMPTON said they are working with downtown staff on bike parking availability.

COUNCILMEMBER LOPEZ said they also need to look at securing the bikes.

MR. PETERS said some of the design elements really include more concrete and could save on paving costs. Mr. Peters stated that the situation would be do they spend more money that is easier to maintain from a pavement standpoint, or are they bounded by the \$3.7 million. Staff will be looking for more guidance as they move to the next phase which is final design.

COUNCILMEMBER LOPEZ said this being Council's initial review and thought it should be enticing and welcoming and part of the downtown experience. Councilmember Lopez said they should go little bit above to make it appealing as this is what citizens are asking for and are wanting.

COUNCILMEMBER ROE said this was a grant and there are quite a few bike lanes that need work.

MAYOR HARTKE said those were already being done.

COUNCILMEMBER ROE said at the school parents line up all the way down the road and that could cause issues. Councilmember Roe asked if they do something really nice what would the cost be to replace it. It looks great and they should be prepared to do it throughout the City.

VICE MAYOR STEWART was interested in what the maintenance cost would be. Vice Mayor Stewart said this was great and would like to see them do modular option to see how many residents would use it. Vice Mayor Stewart asked if the federal government is giving money for cities to do trials because people are going to want it and they need to consider the ongoing maintenance.

MR. CRAMPTON said there is an ongoing cost and that depends on which option they choose and if there are any damages. Mr. Crampton said the cost is small in comparison to transit dollars. Mr. Crampton said going west is a bit of a challenge because there is less space for bike lanes, but they could look at railing options. Mr. Crampton said the project did compete well and federal funding is anticipated to be available through Prop 400. When Prop 400 ends there would be other opportunities to move forward without the City funding 100% of the project.

VICE MAYOR STEWART said it did not seem cost prohibitive and thought it was an innovative project.

MAYOR HARTKE said he was in support of it. Mayor Hartke said he would rather spend more onetime dollars up front than the ongoing cost and make it more durable. Mayor Hartke said he liked the raised area and the rumble strips. Mayor Hartke was concerned about the rails and a distracted driver hitting those. Mayor Hartke said this was a saleable feature for Downtown and this could also connect to downtown Gilbert as well. Mayor Hartke said this would connect a lot of Chandler and wanted the options to be durable and have longevity.

COUNCILMEMBER ORLANDO talked about the boys and girls club location and said this was a good project for bicycle riding.

MAYOR HARTKE said he liked Washington Street to connect to that area. Mayor Hartke thanked Council for their discussion.

MR. WRIGHT thanked Council for their time.

MR. PETERS thanked Council's for their input and thanked staff for their work on the Family Bike Ride.

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 5:51 p.m.

ATTEST: Jarica Zarba
acting City Clerk

Kevin Kautz
Mayor

Approval Date of Minutes: May 27, 2021

Certification

I hereby certify that the foregoing minutes are a true and correct copy of the minutes of the Special Meeting - Micro Retreat of the City Council of Chandler, Arizona, held on the 12th day of May 2021. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held and that a quorum was present.

DATED this 27 day of May, 2021.



Jarica Zarba
Acting City Clerk