

PIMA COUNTY DEVELOPMENT SERVICES DEPARTMENT - PLANNING DIVISION
STAFF REPORT TO THE PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION

HEARING May 28, 2014

DISTRICTS 2 & 3

CASE Co14-14-01 SONORAN CORRIDOR MAJOR STREETS AND SCENIC
ROUTES PLAN AMENDMENT

REQUEST Amendments to the Major Streets and Scenic Routes Plan to accommodate
an auxiliary highway linking Interstate 10 and Interstate 19 and a link to it
from the soon to be constructed Aerospace Parkway.

APPLICANT Pima County

INITIATION Pima County Board of Supervisors May 6, 2014.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends **APPROVAL** of the proposed amendment to the Major Streets and Scenic Routes Plan (MS&SRP). The amendment is an initial step toward establishment of the "Sonoran Corridor," an auxiliary interstate highway connection between Interstates 19 and 10.

STAFF REPORT

Proposal

The majority of the new Auxiliary Interstate Highway route is proposed within the City of Tucson which will also need to amend its Major Streets and Routes Plan, but there are segments that lie within unincorporated Pima County that are the subject of the proposed amendment as shown on the attached map. (A separate map attachment shows the overall proposed highway alignment.) There is also a segment within the Tohono O'odham Nation, San Xavier District, nearest to I-19, north of Pima Mine Road.

The amendment will add major route segments within the County's jurisdiction for the new highway route and also increase planned right-of-way for a segment of Old Vail Connection Road, an existing major route, as part of the proposed highway alignment. In addition, a major route linkage to the highway route is proposed from the planned relocation of Hughes Access Road a half-mile south of its current location. The relocated road will be named Aerospace Parkway. Designation of these routes in the MS&SRP is critical to preserving the alignments and protecting planned rights-of-way from encroachment as further in-depth planning and analysis proceeds.

Specifically, the following is proposed for the Pima County Major Streets and Scenic Routes Plan amendment:

Designate as Major Routes:

- 1) a new 3-mile long section of the proposed Sonoran Corridor, a 400-foot-wide planned right-of-way interstate route, from the Tohono O'odham Nation, San Xavier District, boundary east to the City of Tucson boundary in Sections 28, 29, and 30, T16S R13E.
- 2) a new 300-foot-wide planned right-of-way route along the City of Tucson/Pima County jurisdictional boundary connecting the planned realignment of E. Hughes Access Road to E. Old Vail Connection Road in Section 33, T15S R14E; and
- 3) a new 400-foot-wide planned right-of-way connecting spandrel to/from Old Vail Connection Road in the NW4NW4 of Section 3, T16S R14E.

Amendment of the planned right-of-way for E. Old Vail Connection Road from 150 feet in width to 400 feet in Sections 34 and 35, T15S R14E and Sections 02 and 03, T16S R14E.

Background

The County and other jurisdictions have been actively working to plan a subregional highway between Interstates 19 and 10 for nearly 30 years, but recent efforts related to the relocation of Hughes Access Road and economic development planning in its vicinity have yielded a viable route that connects to I-19 north of Pima Mine Road and I-10 at Rita Road.

Placing the proposed major routes on the MS&SRP is a necessary authorizing element for formal study and eventual funding of the proposed auxiliary highway with Federal and State assistance. The formal studies, including environmental assessments and engineering and design analysis, could lead to changes in the preliminary alignment, but staff does not anticipate significant changes.

The proposed alignment of new highway will provide labor force access to existing residential communities with affordable housing in southeast Tucson and Sahuarita. It will serve existing economic assets in the area, including Tucson International Airport, Raytheon Missile Systems, The University Science and Tech Park, and The Port of Tucson. It will be a catalyst for additional economic development of land identified, planned, and zoned for commercial and industrial development in the vicinity of the highway, including the future Aerospace/Defense Research and Business Park south of the Raytheon site. The new highway will also serve to relieve projected increases in traffic volumes for segments of the existing interstate highways from its proposed connection to I-19 near Pima Mine Road north to I-10 at Rita Road west while saving commercial trucks

time and fuel expense by reducing trips by 10.8 miles which also correlates to emissions reductions.

As shown on the attached map, the proposed auxiliary highway route traverses several Important Riparian Areas within the Maeveen Marie Behan Conservation Lands System (CLS), but does not otherwise directly affect CLS lands. The area of economic development that is anticipated to be generated in the vicinity of the highway is not within the CLS.

Description of the Proposed Auxiliary Interstate

Southern Section: Interstate 19 to Alvernon Way - length approximately 5 miles

The proposed Auxiliary Interstate intersects I-19 north of Pima Mine Road at what would become a new interchange north of the Desert Diamond Casino. The current Pima Mine Road interchange does not meet current Arizona Department of Transportation standards and would be relocated with this project. From there, the route travels east through Tohono O'odham San Xavier District lands and curves south toward Pima Mine Road where it runs parallel to and north of Pima Mine Road, crossing Asarco Inc. property until Nogales Highway. This alignment minimized impacts to the Santa Cruz River, cultural resources, and the Central Arizona Project Pima Mine Road Recharge basins. The route then crosses over Nogales Highway and the Union Pacific railroad line before crossing an Asarco surface mine pit and then traverses undeveloped Asarco and Cyprus mining properties. The route continues east through undeveloped State Land and then gradually curves north to follow the section line that would be aligned with Alvernon Way.

Middle Section: Alvernon Way to Old Vail Connection Road - length approximately 5 miles

From Pima Mine Road to Old Vail Connection Road, the route runs north through primarily undeveloped State Land along section lines that would be aligned with Alvernon Way. The route generally follows the boundary of the City of Tucson and unincorporated limits and also passes along the western boundary of the Swan Southlands (Verano) planned development. As the route nears Old Vail Connection Road, it passes through undeveloped Tucson Airport Authority land, including surface mining sites. The route gradually curves east to follow the Old Vail Connection Road alignment. Most of the Old Vail Connection Road alignment is an unimproved dirt road.

Northern Section: Old Vail Connection Road to Rita Road Interchange - length approximately 6.3 miles

From Alvernon Way, the route runs east along the current Old Vail Connection Road and eventually connects to the Rita Road interchange at I-10. The route passes through mostly undeveloped parcels owned by Tucson Airport Authority and also mining property owned by Cemex and Granite. Beyond the Craycroft Road alignment, the route passes in between the federal prison to the north and the state prison to the south. East of Wilmot Road, the route traverses mostly undeveloped State Land but Unisource Energy

Corporation owns adjacent property just west of Rita Road.

Connection to Aerospace Parkway (Realigned Hughes Access Road)

This proposal also would create a major route to extend the Aerospace Parkway east of Alvernon Way and intersect the Auxiliary Interstate. The county is relocating the existing Hughes Access Road approximately a half-mile south of its present location to give Raytheon additional buffer zones and to facilitate the development of the Aerospace/Defense Research and Business Park. This new road will be named the Aerospace Parkway and will connect to Alvernon Way. The proposed major route would fill in the gap between Alvernon Way and the proposed Auxiliary Interstate.

Stakeholder Outreach

The County has met with numerous stakeholders including the Tohono O'odham Nation, Tucson Airport Authority, City of Tucson, Town of Sahuarita, and Pima Association of Governments to discuss this new route proposal. There is general consensus on the route and a desire to move forward with planning activities. However, despite past outreach, the State Land Department has expressed concerns about exclusion from recent stakeholders meetings and about lack of information pertaining to existing constraints and possible alternatives. As of this writing, a meeting between County staff and local State Land Department staff has been scheduled.

Public Comment

To date, staff has not received any written public comment. Public notice, including for the Board of Supervisors' hearing scheduled for June 17, 2014, has been provided in the form of a notification by mail to property owners within 1,000 feet of the County jurisdiction portions of the amendment, the posting of notices of public hearing in the vicinity of the proposed amendments, and an eighth-page display ad has been published in The Daily Territorial and the Green Valley News. Additionally, the proposed amendments have been transmitted to major stakeholders for comments, most of which have not provided written comments as of the writing of this report.

TOWN OF SAHUARITA REPORT

In general, we support the proposal as consistent with the Town's future land use and transportation plans. We do have a few specific comments:

1. There appears to be no connection to Nogales Highway (south). Please show a proposed connection with this regional corridor.

The Town of Sahuarita is developing a conceptual plan for areas east of the Town. Please show a connection to the future "Andrada Road" connection as reflected on the attached concept maps.

ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION (ADOT) COMMENTS

The following contains ADOT's comments and Pima County's responses (in bolded italics) to issues and questions raised:

1. The County MS&R proposal is using the labels "Auxiliary Interstate" and "SR 510". Is the intent for this to be an ADOT facility or a PCDOT facility?
The intent is for this route to ultimately be an ADOT facility when funded.
2. The proposed alignment parallels Pima Mine Road which may create geometry issues particularly near major intersections like Nogales Highway (which also has a parallel railroad alignment).
The intent would be to close the Pima Mine Rd TI (or at least some ramps) and reconstruct a new TI north of the Casino. Pima Mine Road would remain as a local arterial. Pima County can provide conceptual drawings of how the new TI and roadway access could look.
3. The parallel alignment to Pima Mine Road may restrict private property access to Pima Mine Road.
We would retain or provide new private property access. Pima Mine Road would remain as a local arterial.
4. There is a "relatively" sharp curve in the alignment near a realigned Hughes Access Road. This may be adequate but the MS&R proposal does not state the radius or design speed of the facility.
This curve would be more gentle than currently shown and we can be sure to revise for our final MS&R map if approved. Our intent would be for this curve to comply with current standards. We have not designed this roadway or this curve so we do not yet have geometry or a design speed. We are beginning the process to preserve right of way through the MS&SRP.
5. The proposed connection to I-19 is too close to the existing Pima Mine Road interchange. Would this new interchange replace the Pima Mine Road interchange?
Yes, the new interchange would replace the existing TI. Again, Pima County can provide a conceptual design.
6. The Town of Sahuarita and ADOT finalized a study last year identifying a similar I-19 to I-10 corridor through the Town of Sahuarita. This "El Toro" alignment is being worked into some of their Master Planning of developments. Does the region need both facilities connecting I-19 and I-10? Does the County consider the Sonoran Corridor and the El Toro Corridor as mutually exclusive options for the foreseeable future?

It is doubted that traffic demand would warrant two interstate facilities for the foreseeable future, but the County's facility would provide direct access to the county's Aerospace Business Park, Tucson International Airport, future annexation lands east of current Sahuarita town limits, and it would also function as an interstate bypass to I-10. It seems like the El Toro Corridor might serve slightly different purposes, but we don't see them as being mutually exclusive.

TUCSON AIRPORT AUTHORITY (TAA) REPORT

TAA continues to support the proposed Sonoran Corridor and specifically, TAA supports approval of Co14-14-01 (amendment of the Major Streets and Routes Plan). TAA finds the proposed plan amendment will facilitate positive community outcomes related to regional economic development (e.g., opportunities for new employment centers and enhanced access to TIA and the surrounding employers) and environmental and safety enhancements (e.g., reduced congestion at the current I-10/I-19 merger and better routing of freight traffic through the region). As previously discussed throughout the planning of this route over the last several months, TAA support assumes certain program regulatory components related to FAA compliance for portions on or affecting TIA (i.e., Part 77 surface adherence, NEPA clearance, release and disposal adherence) as well as appropriate siting of interchanges with surface streets in the vicinity of TIA to ensure regional economic benefits are maximized.

Respectfully Submitted,

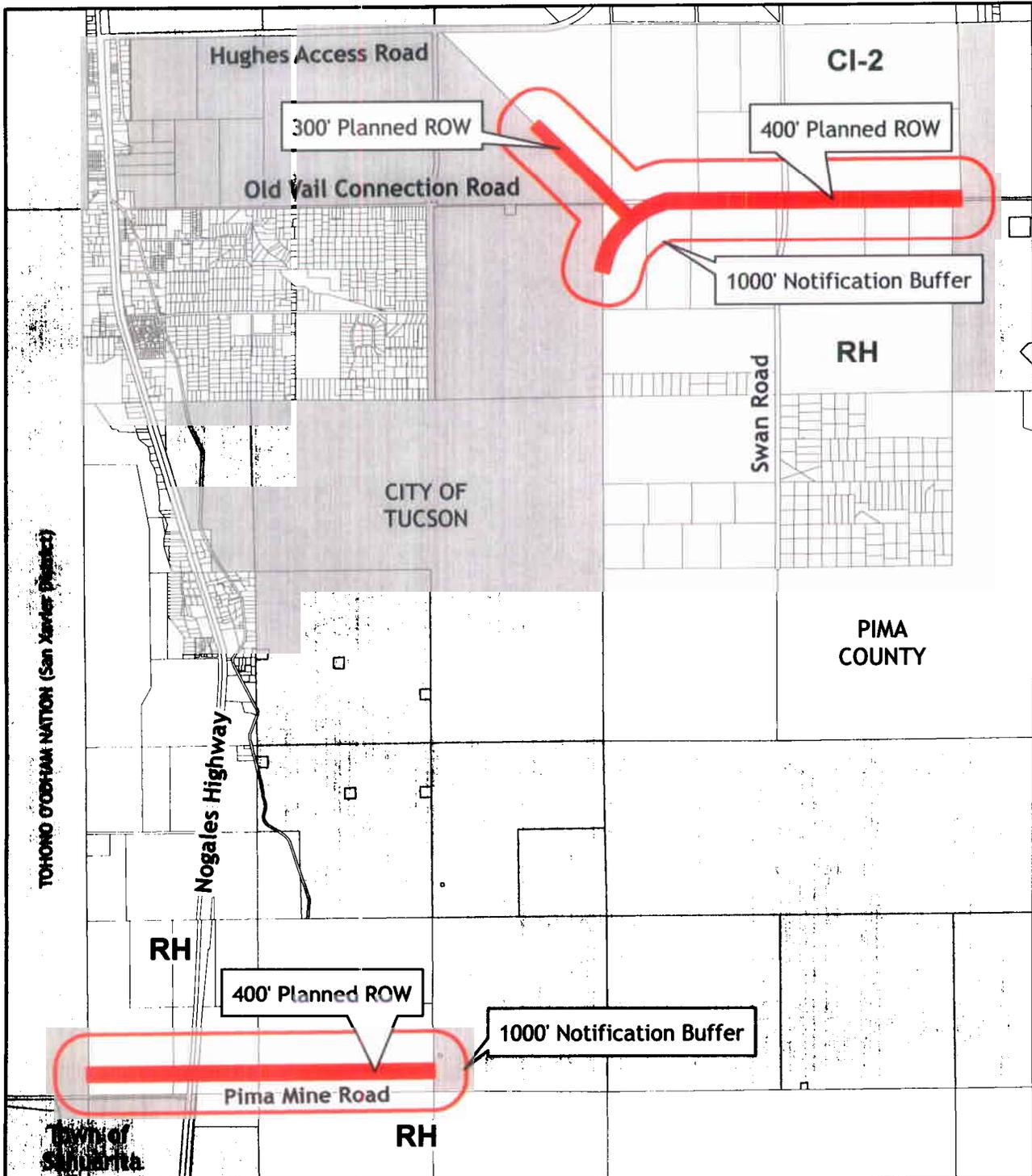


David Petersen, AICP
Senior Planner

DP

Attachments

Notice Map (Unincorporated Segments)

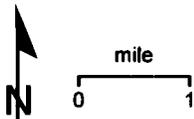


Case Number: Co14-14-01

Case Name: Sonoran Corridor Major Streets & Scenic Routes Plan Amendment

Tax Numbers: Multiple

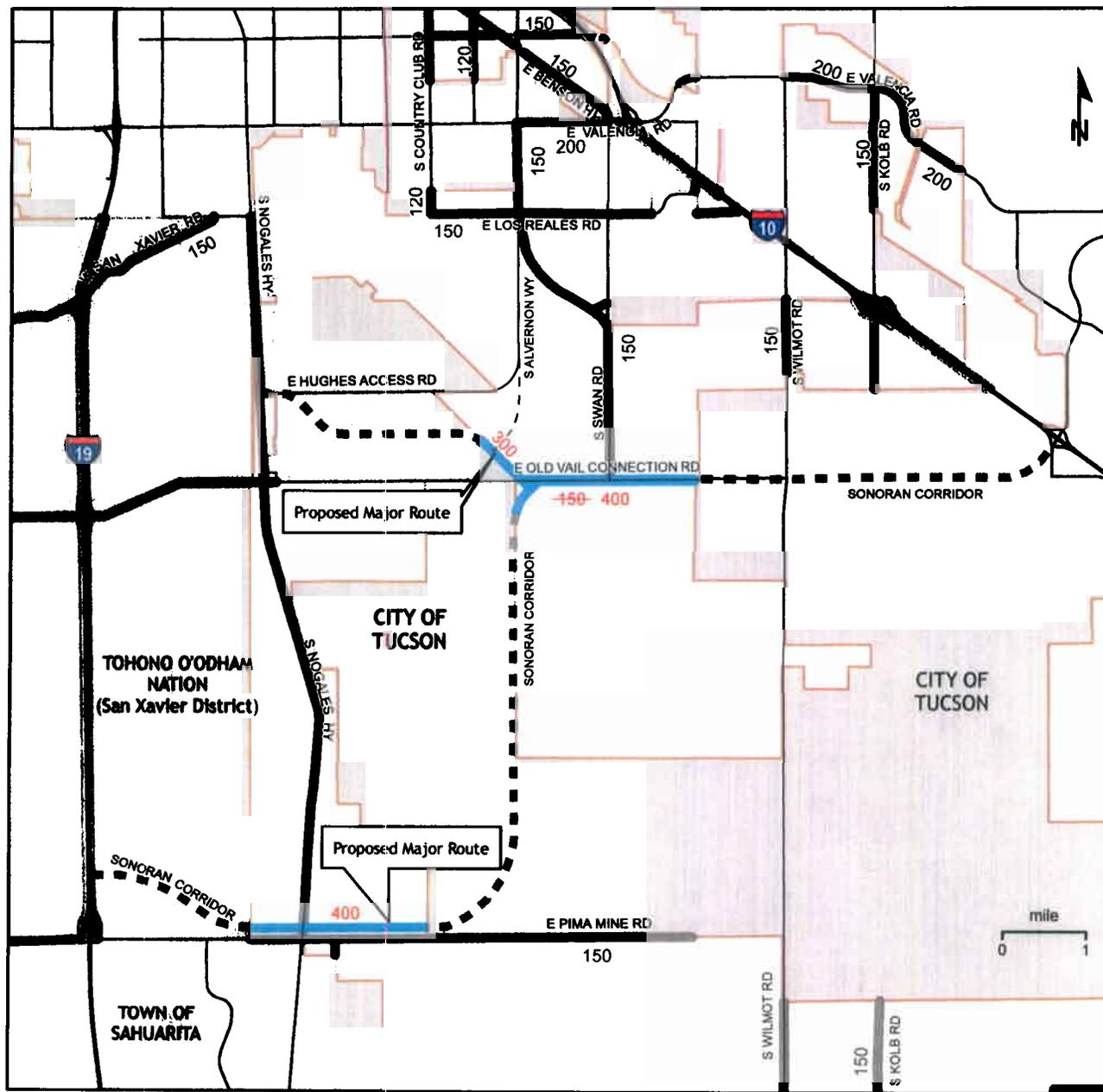
Base Map #'s: 137, 138, 315, 316



April 30, 2014

Exhibit 1: Location Map

(Whole Route)

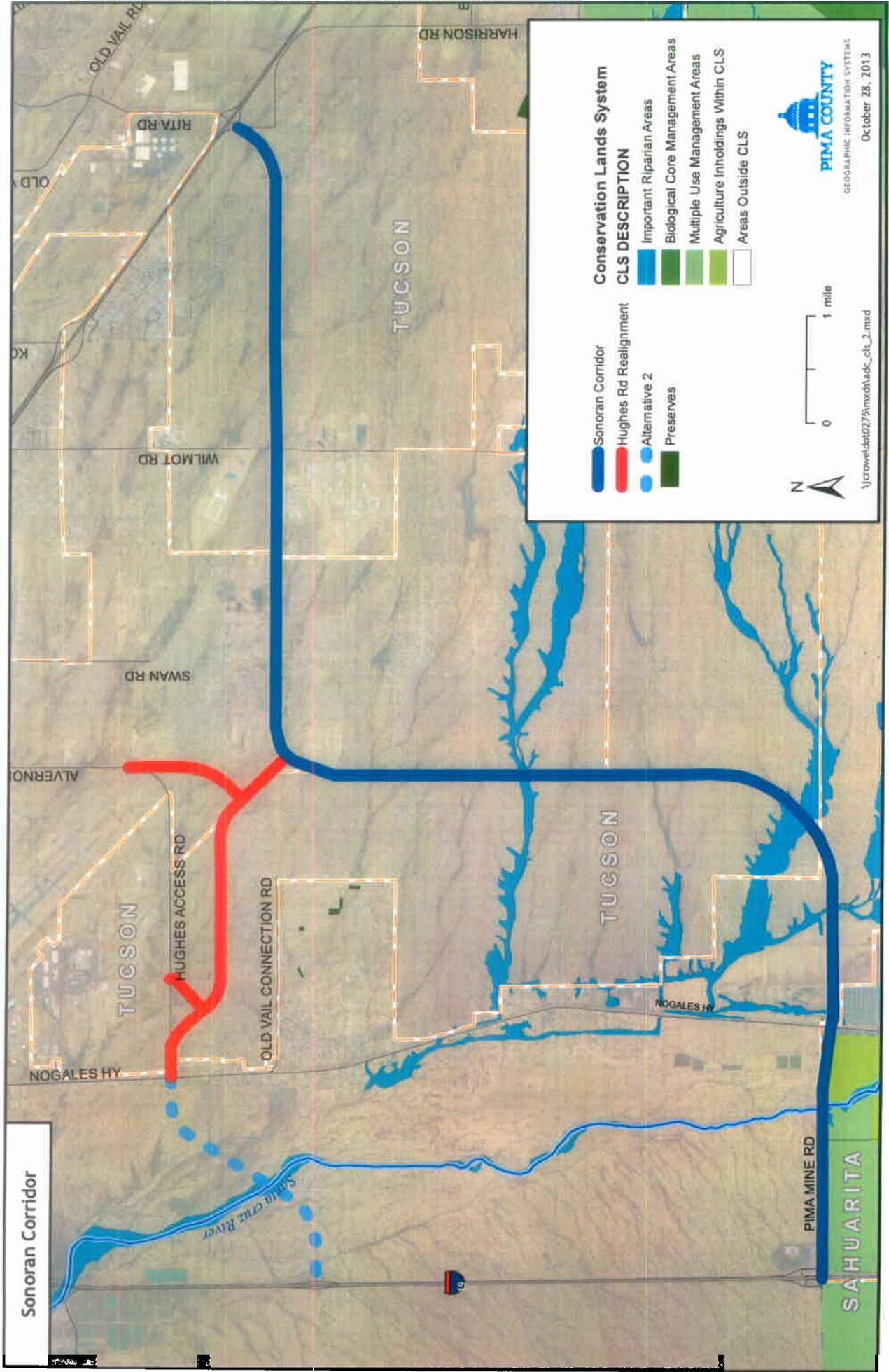


-  Major Route
-  Scenic, Major Route
-  Scenic, State or Interstate Highway
-  150 Planned Right-of-Way Width
-  Proposed Major Route
-  Proposed Major Route by Others

 Other Jurisdiction



Conservation Lands System (CLS)



Sonoran Corridor Phasing & Aerial Map



The data provided on this map is for informational purposes only and does not constitute a contract. The user assumes all responsibility for the use of the data. PIMA COUNTY GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEMS
 1000 North Main Street, Suite 100, Tucson, AZ 85724
 (520) 297-1234
 www.pima.gov

- Future Railroad Spur
- Phase 1 - Aerospace Parkway Nogales Hwy to Alvernon
- Phase 2 - Old Vail Connection to Kolb
- Phase 3 - Old Vail Connection Kolb to I-10
- Phase 4 - Old Vail Connection at Alvernon to Pima Mine Road and I-19

- Aerospace Park Boundary
 - TAA/AFP44 Boundary Change
 - AFP44 Buffer for Existing Facilities
 - AFP44 Buffer for Future Facilities
- Ownership**
- Private
 - Tucson Airport Authority INC
 - Union Pacific Railroad
 - City of Tucson
 - Pima County
 - State of Arizona
 - United States of America



Auxiliary Interstate Highway • I-10 - I-19

An economic catalyst poised for growth in the Sonoran Desert

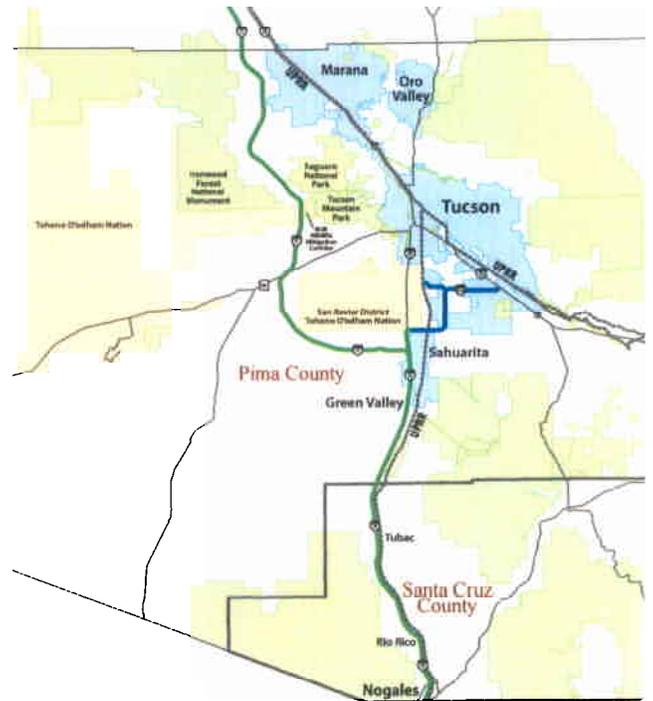
Many potential economic centers wait for the right elements to fall into place to begin development. The Sonoran Corridor area is an already vibrant economic region. This link will accelerate its future as a national economic powerhouse.

The assets already in place:

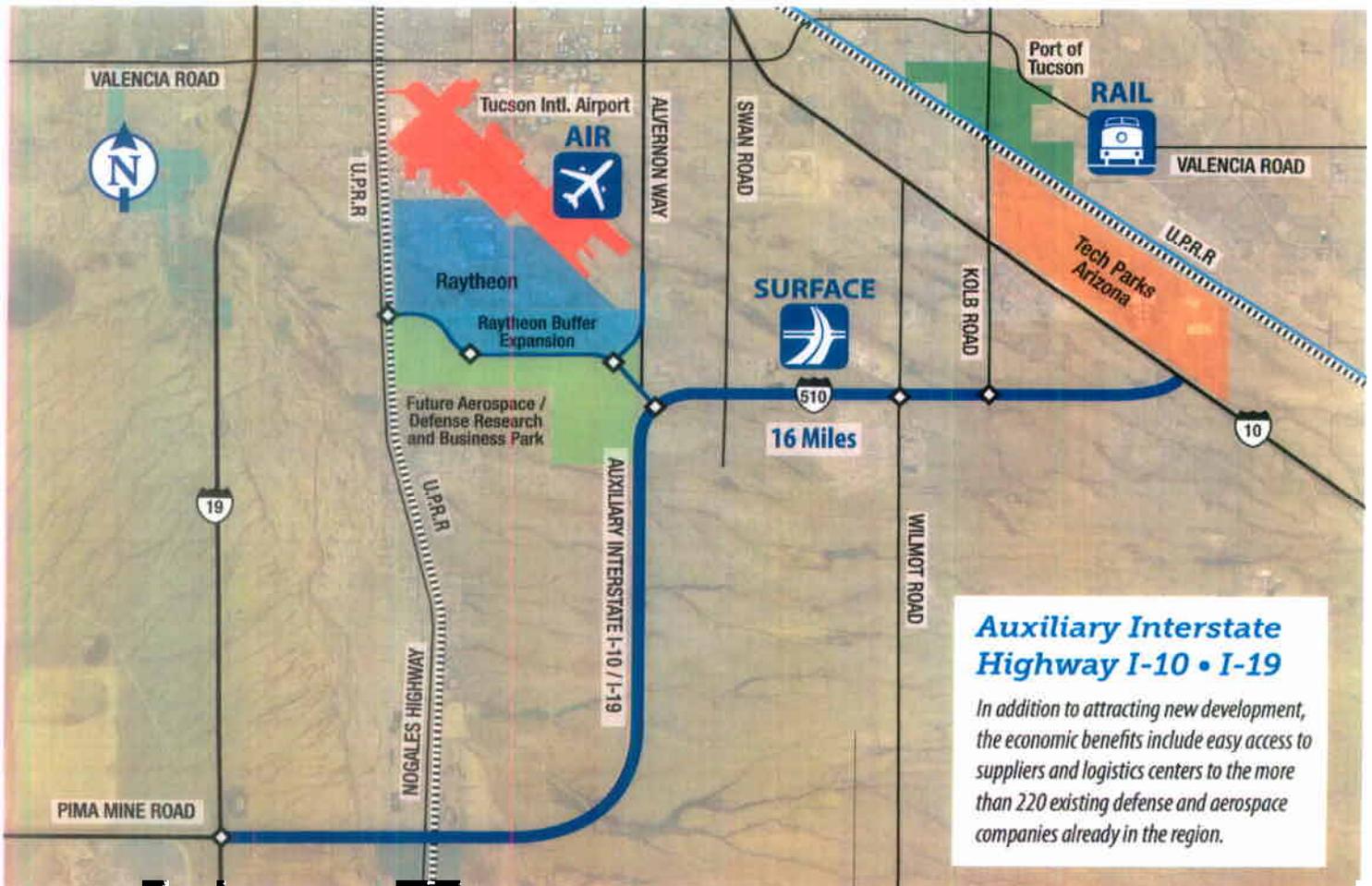
- Rail lines east and west
- Rail service south to and from Mexico
- National and international air service at Tucson International Airport
- Raytheon Missile Systems
- University of Arizona Science and Tech Park with almost 2,000,000 square feet of high-tech office, R&D and laboratory facilities
- The Port of Tucson, Arizona's largest intermodal center
- Interstate highway access west, east and south to Mexico (less than 60 miles away)
- Land identified, planned and zoned for commercial and industrial development (without residential impact), including the future Aerospace/Defense Research and Business park

The remaining link...

is this Auxiliary Interstate Highway, a high-speed, limited-access corridor that connects this area with I-19 to the west and I-10 to the east. The project has already received local support with over \$17 million of funds spent and committed from Pima County and its regional partners.



The Auxiliary Highway is a critical transportation link and economic catalyst for southern Arizona's growth in the coming decades.



Auxiliary Interstate Highway I-10 • I-19

In addition to attracting new development, the economic benefits include easy access to suppliers and logistics centers to the more than 220 existing defense and aerospace companies already in the region.

The project takes advantage of the labor force and other economic assets

- Access to existing residential communities with affordable housing and strong infrastructures in place
- Existing Foreign Trade Zone
- The University of Arizona, one of the top ranked research universities in the United States

In addition to attracting new development, consider the economic benefits of easy access to suppliers and logistics centers to the more than 220 existing defense and aerospace companies already located in the region.

Transportation benefits

An additional benefit accrues immediately on project completion. It will relieve the current overburdened I-10 / I-19 transition which is projected to overwhelm the current infrastructure by 2020.

Commercial trucks traveling between I-19 and I-10 will save 10.8 miles per vehicle per trip and with projected volumes of 1600 daily trips, total fuel savings alone are estimated at approximately \$20,000 per day and growing.

Request

With significant local resources already committed, we're asking for a designation as an Auxillary Highway from I-10 to I-19, which will enable Federal and State assistance for implementation.

The Traffic Case

Projected traffic volumes through the current interchange system will rapidly become unmanageable without this projected Auxiliary Interstate Highway.



Tucson International has 3 active runways, the longest of which is over 11,000 feet. It has full 24-hour port of entry facilities for both cargo and passengers, including customs and immigration services.



Arizona's largest port of entry, Mariposa, is less than 60 miles to the south. The I-19 / I-10 route already handles high volumes of imported and exported goods. Trade projections show a rapidly increasing volume in the next decades.



The Port of Tucson is the largest intermodal center in the state and highlights the area's flexibility in transportation. Rail, air, or truck services are available in a conveniently concentrated area.



Town of Sahuarita Comments

David Petersen

From: Anna Casadei <acasadei@ci.sahuarita.az.us>
Sent: Friday, May 09, 2014 2:36 PM
To: David Petersen
Cc: Sarah More; Sheila Bowen
Subject: Co14-14-01 Sonoran Corridor Amendment
Attachments: SECAP LU Options_11x17.pdf

Mr. Petersen,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this proposal. In general, we support the proposal as consistent with the Town's future land use and transportation plans. We do have a few specific comments:

1. There appears to be no connection to Nogales Highway (south). Please show a proposed connection with this regional corridor.
2. The Town of Sahuarita is developing a conceptual plan for areas east of the Town. Please show a connection to the future "Andrada Road" connection as reflected on the attached concept maps.

Thank you, and please let me know if you require clarification.

Regards,

Anna Casadei, AICP
Senior Planner
Town of Sahuarita Planning & Building Dept.
Direct (520) 822-8854
PLEASE NOTE NEW EMAIL & WEB ADDRESS:
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www.sahuaritaaz.gov

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Town of Sahuarita East Conceptual Land Use Plan Desired Link (Andrada Road)

