



Cortaro Road/Magee Road:  
Thornydale Road to Oracle Road  
Community Advisory Committee Meeting



Community Advisory Committee (CAC) Meeting  
Monday, May 5, 2008  
6:00 to 7:30 p.m.  
St. Mark's United Methodist Church

CAC Members Present at Meeting:

- George Ballesteros
- Robert Barr
- Kathryn Culver
- Molly Frazer
- Kathy Gatto
- Dennis Hansen
- Steven Kresal
- William Scott
- Steve Sisson
- Tom Unger
- John Whitehill-Ward (fill-in for Carol Wagner-Cook)
- Bernie Wiegandt

CAC Members Not in Attendance:

- David Jacobs
- Carol Wagoner-Cook
- David Williams

Attending from Project Team:

- Arroyo Engineering: Robert Smolinsky
- DMJM Harris: Bill Schlesinger
- EcoPlan Associates: Mike Dawson
- Gordley Design Group: Melissa Benton, Angie Brown
- Kittelson and Associates: Khang Nguyen

Attending from the Public:

See attached sign-in sheets

Materials Distributed (attached):

- Agenda
- Environmental Screening Second Submittal document package

A CAC member welcomed the group to the second Cortaro Road/Magee Road: Thornydale Road to Oracle Road CAC meeting, announcing that Bill Schlesinger would be leading the discussion. He asked all members of the CAC to take turns introducing themselves. Bill Schlesinger, DMJM Harris, then introduced Jacqui Andrade, Pima County Board of Supervisors, assistant to Supervisor Ann Day; Rick Ellis, Pima County Department of

Transportation; Mike Dawson, EcoPlan Associates; Khang Nguyen, Kittelson and Associates; Bob Smolinsky, Arroyo Engineering and Jay Van Echo, DMJM Harris. The CAC members were given an opportunity to comment upon or question anything from the previous meeting. Bill Schlessinger was complimented for his presentation to Northwest Transportation Coalition. He did an outstanding job communicating the informational material.

Bill announced that the minutes from the last meeting were posted on the web site. He explained that he would give an informal presentation to convey information about the process and status of the project, highlighting existing conditions. Bill said that CAC members should feel free to ask any questions during the presentation, and that a time for questions would be open to the public afterwards. All CAC members received a copy of the ordinance in their binders. Bill said there is a table in the ordinance that addresses project issues that are open for input and changes, and those that are fixed. He said that the process would move forward most efficiently if the group discussed things that they have control over, and not the things that they do not have the ability to change.

Bill stated that as a result of the CAC meeting process, members will ultimately produce a report that will go to the Board of Supervisors. This report will provide CAC member opinion on whether products should be approved, not approved, or approved with contingencies.

Bill asked for two volunteers from the CAC to serve on the art selection panel in June. Robert Barr and Kathryn Culver both volunteered as representatives for the CAC. He described the role the committee would have in the art selection process: they will be on the panel for choosing the artist, as well as working with the artist to select the artwork; for the first one and one-half years, the artist will come up with corridor concepts, and come to the CAC meeting to gather significant input. Other factors will be in affect, including cost. Robert Barr said that he had previous experience with this process in another project.

Once the "housekeeping" was completed, Bill said that he would first talk about the process the team would be going through. He distributed the Environmental Screening Questionnaire for Establishing Potential Areas of Impact to the CAC members (see attachments). He said that the first one and one-half years would be a corridor study of Cortaro Farms Road/Magee Road from Thornydale Road to Oracle Road, which is five miles of roadway. The second phase will be the design of the intersection of Magee Road and La Cholla Boulevard. The ordinance has a process that must be followed, along with approval from Pima County. The team has also decided to follow a Federal process. He explained the reasoning behind following both the County and Federal process: to allow for the possible use of federal funds in the future. He clarified that being eligible for Federal funds does not mean that the project will receive more money. It means that the pool of Federal money that comes to Pima County can be used for this particular project. The use of this Federal money entails taking it away from other Pima County projects.

With that note, Bill commenced going through the process to give general ideas of the flow of the work, CAC involvement and information regarding open houses. Bill said the team would like approval for the corridor study by next year. The study is made up of several main products: the Environmental Assessment (EA), the Design Concept Report (DCR), plans and CAC involvement. Mike Dawson, EcoPlan, will be working on the EA. The DCR is a document

that guides the design from the corridor study to the final design. It will be the guiding document to finalize the plans. Plans are essential for completion of the EA and the DCR. The plans will look at the impacts of the EA and the DCR, and how issues will be mitigated. The EA will be done according to both Pima County and Federal requirements. The first step is to do environmental surveys. Then, an environmental memorandum will be done to summarize the results of those surveys. During this process, engineering studies will be conducted for drainage and traffic analysis, as well as other issues, according to the DCR. Preliminary work has also started on plans. The first part of the plans, the surveys and mapping, has already been completed. As the team moves forward with the environmental memo and the existing conditions, Stage One plans will begin. Stage One plans involve several main components: looking at the alternatives in regard to more significant issues, the roadway section, the alignment, median openings and traffic signal locations. Only upon completion of the environmental memo, existing conditions, DCR, Stage One plans and CAC meetings to present this preceding information will the public be presented with information in a public meeting.

Once input is received from the public, a draft EA, DCR and Stage Two plans will be developed. Stage Two plans will make a recommendation of alternatives and include noise mitigation, art concepts and drainage. After Stage Two plans have been made, information will again be presented to the public for input and revised as necessary. Then the draft EA, DCR and Stage Two plans will go to Pima County for review. The documents will be given to the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) for review. After that, the documents will be given to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) with a recommendation from ADOT for approval. Bill explained that ADOT would make sure that the process has been followed correctly, public issues are responded to and environmental recommendations have been completed. Pima County has the ability to override ADOT recommendation, but this is not common or desired. Mike Dawson commented that ADOT checks the process, such as correct noise analysis and proper coordination with agencies. ADOT typically doesn't come back with any changes, and only wants to make sure that the procedures were followed correctly before it is passed on to FHWA.

Bill said that once this final draft of the Stage Two plans is approved by FHWA, they will respond to the federal comments and present them before the CAC. The County will then go out for a public hearing, required by the FHWA. It is during this time that the CAC will be reproducing a report that will go to the Board of Supervisors to recommend an action (approval, approval with contingencies, or non-approval). The Board will take action based on the teams' recommendations and the CAC input. If the Board approves, documents will be finalized and receive final approval from ADOT and FHWA. At this point, the County is eligible for Federal funding. This is the general process that will be followed, but it allows for other alternatives and going back to make revisions. Bill clarified that this process would hopefully be completed by 2009. The concern was made from a CAC member that there might not be enough time to hold another public meeting prior to the end of the year. Bill said that the schedule is tentative, and that they will slow down if it is necessary for completion. However, based on experience they feel that it is a comfortable schedule.

Bill proceeded to discuss where the team is in the current process. He said that the environmental memo, some existing conditions for drainage, traffic, survey and mapping is

done. They have started to look for alternatives. Khang Nguyen has analyzed the existing traffic volumes, as well as future volumes for the 2030 horizon. There are currently 17,000 to 20,000 vehicles traveling along this corridor per day. The projection is for the volume to increase anywhere from 24,000 to 34,000 vehicles per day. The no-build solution was also analyzed. This looks at the result of no construction for 20 to 30 years from now. The traffic volume would go from bad with the current condition, to much worse in the projected years. Traffic efficiency is rated on a scale from A to F, A being the best, and F being the worst. Khang said that most of the current roadways are functioning from D to E, and with the no-build solution, most scores would become F. The purpose of this rating system is for the Federal government and County to see that the traffic condition will become much worse if nothing is done.

Questions and Answers:

*Given the limited amount of arterials, is that traffic count reasonable in a short-term projection?*  
The model used assumes that improvements will be done to other arterials. It assumes that all RTA projects will be built.

*What is the assumed percentage of growth taken into consideration in the measurements?*  
The current zoning is taken into account, as well as a Pima Association of Governments (PAG) ongoing model of the entire transportation system of Pima County that is based on a population growth model.

*Is non-regional growth taken into consideration?*  
Yes, the model is the metropolitan Tucson area, as well as proposed transportation improvements and growth of the entire area.

Based on estimates from a previous project, there was disagreement from CAC members on the estimated number of vehicles per day that drive through the corridor. The team will provide the CAC members with the current vehicle counts at the next CAC meeting.

The CAC also expressed the desire for the City of Tucson, Pima County and PAG to have some foresight into the future when planning for transportation.

*Is there stratification of the vehicle counts to identify peaks and valleys in the counts?*  
Yes, and further analysis of the results will be discussed at the next CAC meeting. The counts are based on peak hours of the morning and afternoon.

*Existing traffic volume is between 17,000 and 22,000 vehicles, but someone mentioned 30,000?*

Yes, 30,000 refers to a 2030 time frame.

Concerning existing drainage, the watershed and flow volume numbers measured by Robert Smolinsky, Arroyo Engineering, have not yet been approved, but the analysis is showing what the team anticipated. A CAC member questioned the approval process. Bill said that the numbers would go to Pima County for approval.

Bill opened the floor up for Mike Dawson to talk about the environmental analysis. Mike passed out a two-page summary and environmental questionnaire form. He proceeded to highlight the following points from the summary:

- Partnering Meeting in November
- Field review (completed)
- Environmentally Sensitive Roadway (ESR) guidelines meeting
- Biological site evaluation in December
- Environment coordination meeting in January to blend EA and Environmental Assessment and Mitigation Report (EAMR) requirements
- Class I Inventory and Class III Survey conducted by environmental consultant (Researched records and surveyed area for cultural resources.)
- Biology – ESR, Flood Control District, Clean Water Act mitigation requirements
- Potential endangered species (lesser long-nosed bat habitat, other bat species in Canada del Oro Wash and cactus ferruginous pygmy-owl)
- Wildlife movement corridor (Likely limited to Canada del Oro Wash due to relatively dense urban development along other washes in the project area.)
- Section 404 and 401 – Clean Water Act, submitting recommendations for jurisdictional area
- Cultural resources survey completed and none were noted in project area
- Noise analysis – FHWA and ADOT approved Transportation Noise Model (TNM) will be used
- Mitigation of noise impacts through use of rubberized asphalt or other wall/berms abatement measures

Bill talked about the process of determining the design: roadway section, alignment, median openings and signal location. One manual used is *A Policy on Geometric Design of Highways and Streets*. This document discusses the different classifications of roadways: highways, arterials, collectors and local and neighborhood streets. Magee Road/Cortaro Road is classified as an arterial. Design standards are based on the classification of roadways. Studies show that the more access points that are in existence on an arterial roadway, the less efficient and safe it is; consequently, access control is important.

Bill distributed a handout on the components of a roadway. One component will be the cross section. There will be a median that separates oncoming traffic and provides a gap for left-turn access. There will be traffic and bike lanes, along with pedestrian facilities. The area outside the road is also important: the slopes, shoulder area and clear zone. Bill discussed limiting the amount of objects in the clear zone. There may or may not be curve in the roadway at the intersection with La Cholla Boulevard. Final decisions for this have not yet been made. Proposals will be brought before the CAC in August.

Questions and Answers:

*Since elevations of cross-sections differ (ex. Magee Road and Shannon Road), will cross-sections be taken all the way across equally?*

Slopes will match existing slopes, but standards will not change from existing areas. Problems may not be fully solved.

*Will this area have a noise mitigation issue?*

Noise analysis has not yet begun, so it is too early to tell.

*Upon looking at map, is right-of-way the outside clear zone?*

We feel that there is enough existing right-of-way.

*How wide is that roadway going to be?*

It has not yet been determined, but it will be addressed at the CAC meeting in August. Typically the existing right-of-way is 150 feet.

*Is the determination of lanes based on the traffic analysis?*

Yes.

*Are the adjacent developers financially responsible or limited with approval of what they can or cannot do? Would this affect the access points to the roadway?*

To a certain extent, developers go through the approval process of Pima County. Developers will know where County proposes access locations.

Bill explained that road alignment is based on the design speed and the functional classification of the roadway. The roadway is able to curve more with elevation, which provides flexibility in the design. The median openings have not yet been determined, but the roadway will be controlled access. The County does not typically space turn lanes closer than 660 feet, or further than a quarter mile apart. Preference for access is given first to collector streets and then shared driveways. The traffic volume issues are considered.

*Regarding safety, are off-set turn bays addressed, as opposed to head-on turn bays?*

Site visibility is looked at, such as in making a left-hand turn.

Installation of traffic signals is based on federal guidelines. Traffic signals at the wrong locations cause accidents, and the County is liable for these regulations.

*Are there intermediate traffic counts based on sections of the roadway, and traffic counts from the egresses into the roadways?*

Yes, there are traffic counts by segment at every major intersection, as well as percentages of right and left turns.

*Will the CAC see the analysis for specific locations?*

Yes, at the next meeting that information can be presented. There is not a count on minor side streets, however. If more counts are necessary, they will be put in place.

*On the timeline at this stage, there should be recommendations for where signals should be placed.*

At the next meeting recommendations for median location, horizontal alignment, cross-section and signal location will be presented.

*When recommendations are made to the County, will the crossroad entrances and exits be looked at?*

Yes.

Bill requested that the CAC members stay after the meeting to look at the aerial photos and given recommendations.

*Where will this project start?*

The road will not be built all at once. The phases will be determined by the DCR; however, it has been determined that the first construction will occur at the La Cholla Boulevard intersection.

*How many potential plans are there for the La Cholla Boulevard/ Magee Road intersection?*

There was originally about 12 plans looked at, which were eliminated into three alternatives (however, other options can still be proposed):

- A roundabout.
- Reverse curves connecting Magee Road.
- A left-turn loop ramp using the vacant area to the east and south of Magee Road, which would head west to allow for a more safe left-turn movement.

A CAC member commented that on the aerial view sectionals on sheet 10 and 11, the north arrow is pointed the wrong way.

*Bill said that would be corrected.*

*Does the third star in the schedule represent an August meeting, and is there any particular target for that meeting?*

Yes, and the meetings are targeted for the first two weeks of August. That information will be sent via email.

*Can contact information of the CAC members be sent out?*

No members were opposed to their contact information being given out. It was decided that this information would be sent out via email with the meeting dates.

Bill opened up a question and answer time for the public.

*Was the Tetrattech study tossed?*

No, it is being looked at. It was done primarily to show drainage. It was not a wasted analysis.

*A member of the public proposed that this project be designed like the 1940 Congress Expressway in Chicago, which is still in use. Residents were paid to move from their properties for the construction. This current project will have to expand west, and off turn-ramps and drainage should be taken into consideration. The road should be built with four lanes on each side so that constant additions will not have to be made.*

*A member of the public felt that the projected estimation of 34,000 vehicles per day was too low, given the development in the Thornydale Road and La Cholla Boulevard area.*

Bill said that the method that PAG uses to estimate the numbers would be discussed at the next meeting.

*A member of the public, based on his experience as chairman of an adjacent CAC, felt that the assumptions for development were inaccurate.*

*Is it assumed that the CDO bridge at Magee Road will be widened?*

Yes. Plans have not yet been made, but it will be widened to four lanes.

*A member of the public expressed concern about the residential five-mile stretch becoming an arterial road, in relation to school buses, Sun Tran, etc. She proposed a mixed-use two-way path on the side of the road, similar to the south side of Tangerine Road, near Copper Creek. She believed that this would address the issue and still keep the neighborhoods intact.*

Bill commented that pedestrian and bicycle use will be looked at. But he wanted to clarify that the road was not being changed into an arterial, but functions as an arterial today.

Bill closed the meeting, inviting everyone to stay behind to look at the map. He explained that he was not looking for input on the proposed arterials, only suggestions for other options that had not yet been proposed.

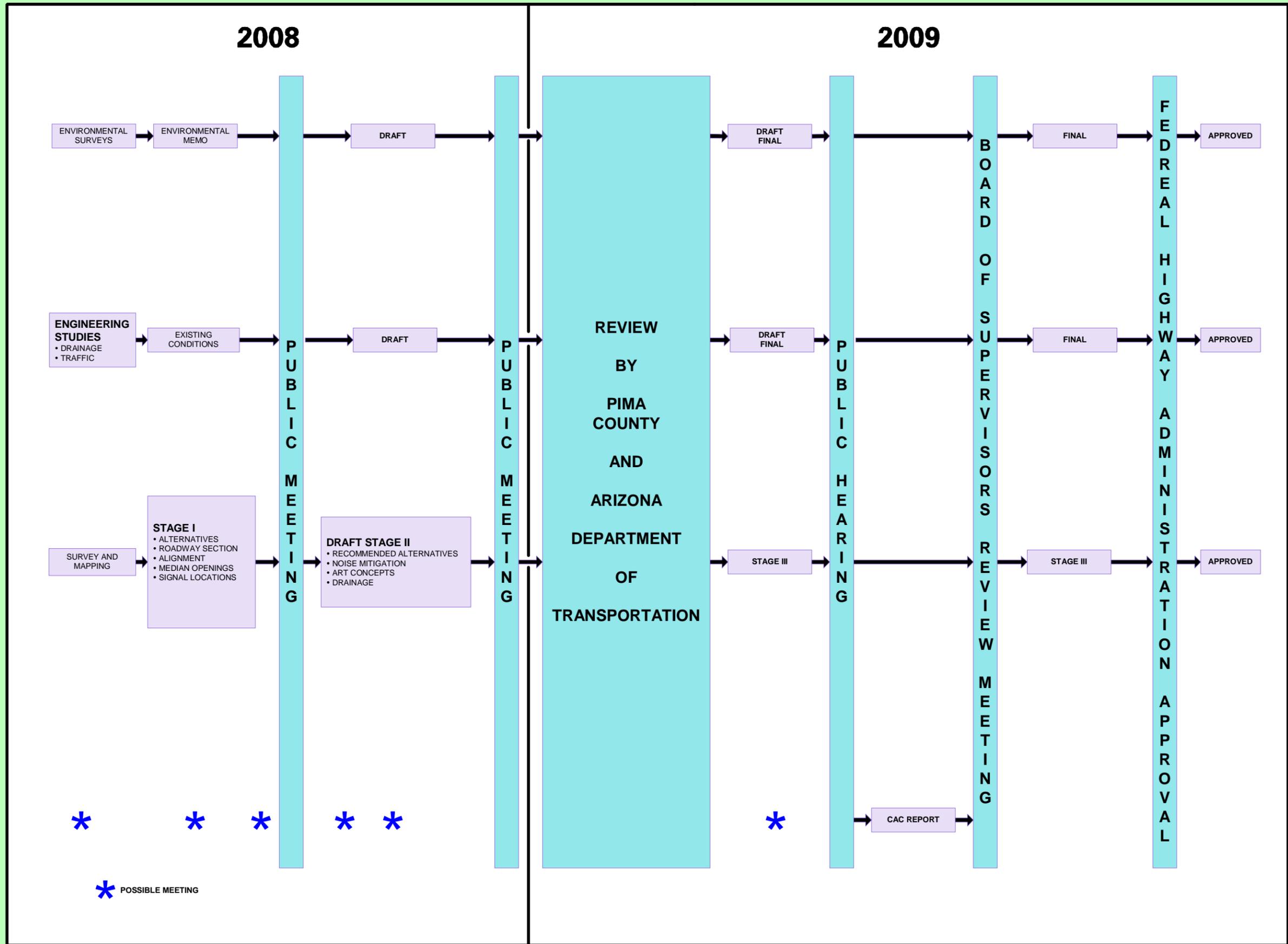
Meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

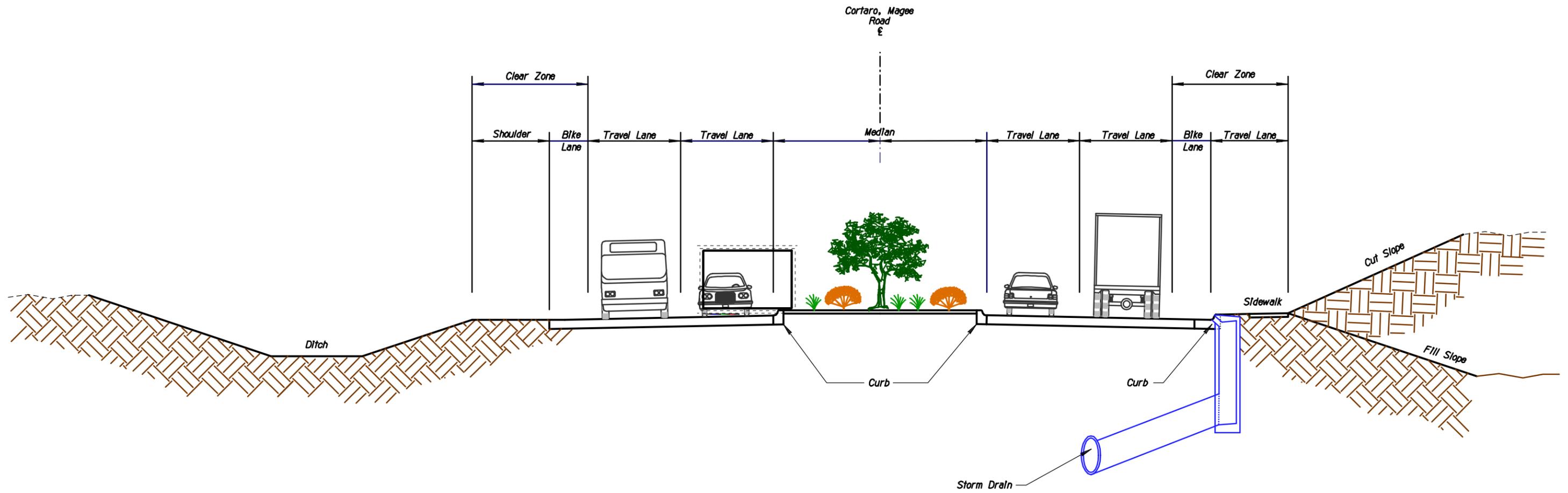
# Environmental Assessment

# Design Concept Report

# Plans

# Community Advisory Committee Meeting





CORTARO ROAD/MAGEE ROAD TYPICAL SECTION  
(EXAMPLE ONLY)

# ENVIRONMENTAL SCREENING

## Results Memorandum

### Cortaro Farms Road/Magee Road: Thornydale Road to Oracle Road

#### Screening Process Description

- Partnering Meeting, November 1, 2007, attended by representatives of design team, county staff, stakeholders, public involvement consultant, and environmental consultants. Meeting included a site survey that identified the general technical and environmental issues that may be associated with the project.
- Environmental Consultant Field Reconnaissance, November 15, 2007, undertaken by representatives of the environmental consultants. Collected and analyzed information on adjacent land uses, potential Waters of the United States, and potential hazardous materials concerns in the project area.
- Environmentally Sensitive Roadway (ESR) Guidelines for Native Plant Inventory and Mitigation Meeting, December 12, 2007, attended by project manager, county environmental staff, and environmental consultants. Clarified applicable mitigation requirements for native plant impacts in accordance with Pima County ESR, Pima County Flood Control, and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers permitting process guidelines (meeting notes attached).
- Biology Site Evaluation, December 20, 2007, conducted by environmental consultant biologist. Evaluated area for biological resources.
- Environmental Coordination Meeting, January 3, 2008, attended by project manager, county environmental staff, Arizona Department of Transportation environmental staff, public involvement consultant, and environmental consultant. Project representatives met to discuss environmental issues, technical issues, environmental documentation, and sequencing of environmental document submittals and review processes (meeting agenda and meeting minutes attached).
- Class I Inventory and Class III Survey, January 15–16, 2008, conducted by environmental consultant. Researched records and surveyed area for cultural resources.

#### Identification of Technical Studies Completed During Screening Process

- Biology report (draft)
- Preliminary Initial Site Assessment (draft)
- Recommended determination of Waters of the United States (draft)
- Class I inventory for cultural resources (results identified in the environmental questionnaire and Class III survey draft)
- Class III survey for cultural resources (draft)

#### Environmental Issues Identified During Screening Process

##### *Biology*

- Removal of native vegetation, including cacti and desert trees, in the project area. Mitigation measures outlined by Pima County ESR guidelines, the Pima County Flood Control District,

and Clean Water Act Section 404 are applicable (ESR guidelines for native plant inventory and mitigation meeting notes attached).

- Special status species list requested for project area (completed Arizona Game and Fish Department On-Line Environmental Review Tool).
- Endangered lesser long-nosed bat habitat listed as in the project vicinity (within 3 miles). Project is not expected to have direct or indirect effects on the lesser long-nosed bat because few potential food resources and no temporary or maternal roost sites will be affected.
- Substructure of bridge over Cañada del Oro Wash is potential roosting habitat for other bat species.
- Cactus ferruginous pygmy-owl (currently delisted) habitat. No cactus ferruginous pygmy-owls have been recorded during surveys by Pima County in the project area. Pima County will continue to survey the area for owls.
- Potential wildlife movement corridors are likely limited to Cañada del Oro Wash due to relatively dense urban development along other washes in the project area.

#### *Hazardous Materials*

- Potential presence of asbestos and lead-based paint, requiring special handling and disposal during bridge demolition or reconstruction.
- No other hazardous materials concerns were identified.

#### *Section 401 and Section 404*

- Four potentially jurisdictional washes occur in the project area:
  - Pegler Wash
  - A tributary to Pegler Wash
  - Carmack Wash
  - Cañada del Oro Wash
- If determined to be jurisdictional, an application for a Section 404 permit covering the entire corridor will be filed with the U.S Army Corps of Engineers.

#### *Cultural*

- Residences in Samalayuca Estates adjacent to the project area near the Magee Road/Paseo del Norté intersection are more than 50 years old. The project is not expected to impact these residences.
- Two other cultural sites were identified: AZ BB:9:41 (ASM), Cañada del Oro, a historic trail; and AZ FF:9:17 (ASM), SR 80, a component of the Historic State Highway System. The project is not expected to impact these sites.

### *Suggestions on Addressing Issues Through Design Modifications and/or Alternative Investigation*

Coordination with the Arizona Game and Fish Department and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service should continue throughout project development. Specific measures may be identified, including:

- Bat exclusion measures should be undertaken prior to demolition or reconstruction of the bridge over the Cañada del Oro Wash.
- The Cañada del Oro Wash may serve as a wildlife corridor, and the construction of a new bridge provides an opportunity to preserve wildlife movement. Measures to minimize the impact to wildlife crossing during bridge demolition or reconstruction should be considered, as appropriate.

Due to the potential presence of Waters of the United States, the final design should anticipate the need for a Section 404 permit or authorization. Because federal funding and the need to acquire an Individual Section 404 Permit are likely, an Alternatives Analysis and an Environmental Assessment will likely need to be prepared for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Design alternatives should be developed to avoid or minimize impacts on Waters of the United States. Compensatory mitigation, which could include on-site habitat restoration or in-lieu fees, may be required for impacts to Waters of the United States.

Alternative designs should be analyzed for the proposed realignment through the currently vacant 40-acre Pima County–owned parcel to minimize impact to Carmack Wash, existing habitat, and adjacent residents. A number of feasible alternatives should be developed and compared to evaluate traffic operations, drainage, and associated environmental impacts.

### *Identification of Any Technical Analyses Needed Beyond That Specified in Original Scope of Work for the Environmental Assessment and Mitigation Report*

Technical analyses beyond the original scope of work for the Environmental Assessment and Mitigation Report are not necessary.

### *Attachments*

- Completed questionnaire
- Completed summary matrix
- ESR guidelines for native plant inventory and mitigation meeting notes
- Environmental coordination meeting agenda and meeting minutes