



La Cholla Boulevard:  
Ruthrauff Road to River Road  
Community Advisory Committee Meeting



Community Advisory Committee (CAC)  
Tuesday, Oct. 9, 2007, 6 to 7:30 p.m.

CAC Members Present at Meeting:

- Humbert Arce
- Fred Bass
- Ann Girvin
- Norma Metz
- Wayne Metz
- Ellie Towne

CAC Members Not in Attendance:

- Ellen Clark
- Carol Gawrychowski
- Andy Hernandez
- Jason Kai
- William Mattausch
- Gretchen Ochoa
- Kaye Swinford
- Ian Stewart
- Robert Schwartz

Attending from Project Team:

- Pima County Department of Transportation (PCDOT): Carol Brichta, Rick Ellis, Dean Papajohn
- Pima County Department of Public Works; Real Property: Greg Foster, Kelley Hall
- HDR Engineering: Larry Barela, Bob Brittain, Ted Buell
- Kimley-Horn and Associates: Mary Rodin
- Gordley Design Group: Barb Alley, Jan Gordley

Materials Distributed:

- Agenda
- Map with Alternative E
- CAC Member individual contact sheet
- Binder for CAC members:
  - Welcome Letter
  - Project Features
  - Project Area Maps
  - Pima County Community Participation and Mitigation Ordinance

Dean Papajohn, Project Manager, PCDOT welcomed the CAC members and the public to the meeting. He stated that this meeting was being held as a follow-up to the previous week's meeting and the format

would be a round table discussion rather than a presentation. The team members, CAC members, and the public made introductions.

Ted Buell, Project Manager, HDR Engineering, gave a brief update on the status of the project. The following tasks have been completed or are in progress:

- Mapping and surveys on adjacent properties along the project corridor
- Testing for hazardous materials
- Utility mapping
- Traffic reports
- Noise monitoring (monitoring the existing noise levels)
- Roadway alignment study
- Drainage
- Bridge research

Ted stated that a draft of the Design Concept Report (DCR) would include the information from these tasks.

There are several activities dependent on roadway alignment according to Ted, and they are as follows, along with the timeframe that has been planned for these activities to take place:

- Roadway alignment – as soon as possible
- Open house to present the alignment to the public – about a month after an alignment has been identified
- Environmental Assessment and Mitigation Report (EAMR) – drafted by February 2008
- Soil testing for the bridge and roadway – targeted for February 2008
- Roadway plans for design and elevation – end of 2009 or January 2010

Dean stated that choosing an alignment is critical for this project to be able to move forward.

Dean went on to talk about the positives that the team heard from CAC members at the Oct. 2, 2007 meeting. He stated that he heard the CAC members liked proposed sidewalks, bus pullouts, turn lanes, median openings and bridge improvement. The area of concern seemed to be the approximate 1,000-foot stretch where homes are adjacent to the widening project. Dean stated he had wanted the CAC members to have time to think about the proposed alignment for a while and have a chance to talk with neighbors to get their input on Alignment E, the proposed alignment.

Dean asked Carol to comment on the debris in the Rillito River that was a concern brought up by some CAC members from the previous meeting. Carol stated that she needed to know the specific area and the debris that needs to be cleaned up, and then she would contact the Pima County Flood Control District. They would send out a representative from their department to survey the area and put in a request for cleanup. She asked that the CAC members approach her after the meeting, so that she could take down the information and start the process.

Mary Rodin, Traffic Planner, Kimley-Horn and Associates, gave a brief report of the traffic study. She stated that the report was based on traffic forecasts for the year 2030, which were obtained from the Pima Association of Governments (PAG). PAG does travel forecasting for the entire Tucson region. The PAG model, based on the Regional Transportation Plan (RTA), assumes that La Cholla Boulevard would become a major north/south parkway from Tangerine Road south to Interstate 10 (I-10). The I-10 connection would be made using Ruthrauff Road.

Dean pointed out that in the Community Participation and Mitigation Ordinance there is a section that states the project must follow the PAG model. The design team is doing its best to balance the guidelines set forth by PAG with the County and team's ideas with input from CAC members.

Questions were brought up regarding funding, and Dean stated that there were no additional funds for this project. The 17 million dollars that was budgeted for this project is what the team has to work with.

Dean also stated that he had pictures to pass around that showed the Right-Of-Way (ROW) lines staked by whiskers (a pink fuzzy on the top of a stake driven into the ground). Since the CAC members wanted to know exactly where the ROW lines were in relation to their property, the team felt the ROW being staked for the affected properties along the project area would be beneficial to the homeowners.

Dean opened up the discussion to the CAC members for their comments, and then expressed the desire to hear comments from the public that came to share their thoughts and ideas.

Fred Bass requested hearing the other options that were not presented.

Bob Brittain, HDR Engineering, gave a brief overview of the alternatives that were not discussed at earlier meetings. They are as follows:

Alternative A: Buys the adjacent residential properties on the east side of the road, portions of some business properties and shifts the roadway to the east

Pro – this option allows for a 30-foot wide two-way frontage road, potential noise wall and extra room on the west side of La Cholla Boulevard, and a 16-foot median

Con – the cost to purchase these properties would involve an additional cost of 4.3 million dollars or more

Alternative B: Buys the adjacent residential properties on the west side of the road and moves the roadway to the west

Pro – same as option A – except the extra room would be on the east side of La Cholla Boulevard

Con – the cost to purchase these properties would involve an additional cost of 3.6 million dollars or more. The number of properties needed to buy on this side would be less than on Alternative A.

Also, this option would have to take the existing well and move it (It can only move within 500 feet of its existing site).

Alternative C: Instead of a frontage road, this option would simply add an additional lane to the roadway for residents to turn directly in and out of their homes

Pro – none

Con – not considered a safe option if vehicles back out onto La Cholla

Alternative D: Buys residences only on both sides that have driveways directly on La Cholla Boulevard and widens the road from its existing center line

Pro – roadway centerline can remain in the center of the existing right-of-way

Con – still expensive at a cost of 3.6 million dollars or more that is not in the budget

Alternative F: Buys every other residential property in order to have room to put circular drives in at the homes that are left; this will allow for those residents to safely exit and enter their properties off La Cholla Boulevard without a frontage road

Pro – safe access, reduces number of residences to purchase

Con – additional budget still required; every other property would be County-owned; question remains as to who would maintain that property.

Bob briefly went over Alternative E – Not purchasing any property. City of Tucson well site is not disturbed. This option provides adequate lane width of 11 feet and median width of 18 feet, one-lane frontage roads and allows for safe access to residences.

Humbert Arce: Which alternative is more schedule-friendly?

Bob stated that they all have their issues, so they all involve about the same time frame. Those alternatives that would require purchasing property could potentially take a little longer due to the acquisition process.

Dean made the statement that the RTA's plan was for a six-lane roadway, which was voted on, and the six lanes are what are needed for future growth in the area. He also said that acquisitions on this project were not possible due to the budget constraints.

Some of the CAC members and others in attendance were concerned about the noise, reduced speed needed for six lanes of traffic and the safety of children playing in their front yards so close to the road, and the loss of parking; residents are currently using the street in front of their homes and that will no longer be available. The team stated that the noise would be buffered by the fact that the frontage road would be between the homes and the throughway. It was also stated that René Tanner, HDR Engineering, would be reporting at a future meeting on the noise study and the reduction of noise by using rubberized asphalt.

The other concerns brought up by the CAC members had to do with the socioeconomic status of the residents in the project area. The CAC members feel that because they are at a lower income level than those on some of the other County projects, the decision makers at upper levels in the County are not hearing their concerns. The CAC members feel that the County set precedents because they have purchased homes throughout the County on other projects – but it was not provided for in the budget for this project. The CAC members are also concerned about the safety of children crossing La Cholla Boulevard from the middle school.

Dean suggested that if the CAC members wish to communicate their concerns to others at a higher level in the County, they could draft a letter, outlining their concerns, which he could present to his superiors. The CAC members agreed that would be a good idea.

The issues brought up by the public were as follows:

- Why were they not told of these proposed plans? The team stated that this project has been talked about for many years, has been of public record and had been voted on by the public.
- The bridge was not widened as originally planned because funds were shifted to other projects. The team stated that the County is no longer operating in that manner, and funds allocated for a project will stay for that project and within the budget that was set forth.

Fred Bass was chosen as the chairman for the CAC. The members decided to meet Monday, Oct. 15, 2007 to draft their letter.

Dean adjourned the meeting.