

Friends,

We took a major step forward this week when Mayor & Council approved the final alignment for the Barraza-Aviation Highway, known as the Downtown Links. Once this roadway crosses Broadway, it is no longer a highway, but turns into a 30MPH at-grade neighborhood roadway. Here are some more details ... along with information on a few other issues we addressed:

- **Downtown Links:** We approved Option 3-D as the final alignment for the last leg of Downtown Links. This ends 20+ years of work to develop a route that allows vehicles to by-pass downtown if they're not going to downtown. These are never simple decisions. Impacts on neighborhoods and individuals must be weighed along with overall community good. I strongly believe we made the correct decision.

But I do understand the concerns raised by two of the affected neighborhoods. My ongoing commitment is to work with them - and every other neighborhood along the alignment, which runs along the north side of the railroad tracks from Broadway to Stone, where it then ducks down to go under the tracks, then continue along 6<sup>th</sup> Street to the I-10 frontage road. It will impact the south ends of Iron Horse, West University and Dunbar-Spring neighborhoods. Those neighborhoods' voices will be heard in the design of the roadway ... and amenities along the way, including a deck from approximately 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue to the railroad tracks, which will contain bike and pedestrian paths, garden and park-like areas, and more.

And, now that the alignment has been decided, we can begin to finalize the future of the many ADOT-owned buildings and vacant land that have been in limbo for 20+ years until the roadway alignment was determined.

- **Rio Nuevo:** During Study Session we received an update on projects primarily on the west side of the Santa Cruz. So many of these elements that we've been talking about for a couple of years have progressed through design to the point of drawing permits and getting ready to be 'timed' for implementation. We also received a clear summary of how many TIF dollars we've received to date ... and how they've been spent. This kind of update will be given on a regular basis to make certain we can see exactly what is happening in our downtown revitalization.

On a related note, we also approved the City moving forward to negotiate Madden Publishing's purchase of the historic MacArthur. What a boon they'll be, bringing 80 creative employees downtown - with plans to expand!

- **Environmental Issues:** We are moving forward on several important fronts.

- Solar Fields: Bruce Plenk, our City's solar guru, provided an update on the possibilities of constructing large fields of photovoltaics to generate power on city-owned property. This offers great potential for us as a city - and a region!
- Water Harvesting: We also discussed Councilmember Glassman's proposal to require rainwater harvesting on new commercial buildings. The stakeholders and staff developed an approach tied to landscape needs on the property, requiring that 75% of the water necessary to water the landscape on that property come from water harvesting on site. It's a logical approach based on need that I believe will serve our community well. Discussions continue on this proposal.
- Gray Water Plumbing: Staff is finalizing an ordinance requiring new homes to be plumbed to allow for use of gray water from showers and tubs, bathroom sinks, and washing machines for use in landscaping in the homeowners' yards. It would be up to the homeowner to decide whether to use the stub outs, but they'd be there to make it easier to reuse gray water.
- Office of Conservation and Sustainable Development: OCSD staff presented a framework that will make it possible for the City to address sustainability issues in all that we do, including how different departments will work together to assure goals are met; who's responsible for specific elements of each task; what are our basic goals and approaches, etc. I am delighted with the results of months of work analyzing goals, resources and current practices to create a meaningful and workable approach.
- PEG Funding: A task force of dedicated volunteers presented recommendations for how the Mayor and Council should apportion monies generated from our agreement with Cox Cable. We decided to maintain level funding for Channel 12 and Access-TV, two critically important communications assets for the city. Because of our previous decision not to provide funding for new projects in these tough budget times, no additional dollars were allocated for the educational channels. I also asked that the task force be extended so members can offer ideas and guidance for a future joint media center that might become 'home' to not only Channel 12 and Access-TV, but also other community-based communications outlets. I'm so grateful to the volunteers working on the task force - and their willingness to share their expertise and commitment with us all.
- Task Force on SunTran: We took formal action to establish a new task force to look at costs and operations of SunTran and VanTran. How can we

encourage greater ridership? What are the actual costs? What is an appropriate approach to fares? How can we strengthen services? Several of us have already appointed representatives ... including me. Thanks to Yaakov Eisenstein, who brings background in financial analysis as well as experience as a dedicated SunTran rider for being willing to represent Ward VI on this task force.

Then came the faux saguaros and palm trees! Not to make light of an earnest attempt to disguise cell phone towers so they blend more easily into the landscape, we had several requests in a row ranging from 35-foot tall saguaros to a 55 foot tall palm tree. Perhaps it was just the length and intensity of our prior discussions on roadways and Rio Nuevo - and more - but these measures did allow us to end the meeting with a bit of levity!

On a personal note, I want to thank the Broadway-Broadmoor and Palo Verde neighborhoods for creating a true sense of place, of neighborhood, of old-fashioned family-centered joy in celebrating the 4<sup>th</sup> of July. Absolutely delightful neighborhood parades truly lifted my spirits and brought back some wonderful childhood memories from what seemed like a simpler time. How nice that so many of our neighborhoods maintain traditions such as these!

A reminder, there will not be another meeting of Mayor and Council until August 6<sup>th</sup>. Now that's a Wednesday, for those of you who mark your calendars. The meeting was moved at my request so Councilmembers can attend Neighborhood Night Out, which takes place on Tuesday, the 5<sup>th</sup>. I hope to see many of you that evening!

Please do stay in touch!

*Nina*

Vice Mayor Nina Trasoff  
Councilmember - Ward VI  
3202 East 1st Street  
Tucson, Arizona 85716  
520-791-4601 Office  
520-791-3211 Fax