

Grant Road Improvement Corridor Planning Task Force

February 24, 2015

Tucson Association of Realtors

2445 N. Tucson Boulevards

Tucson, AZ 85716

Meeting Results

1) Call to order – Project Team & Task Force Introductions

The meeting was called to order by Meeting Facilitator, Nanci Beizer. A quorum was established, informational handouts were distributed to the Task Force.

Citizen Task Force Members

Present		Absent
Alice Roe	Andrew Jones	Dale Calvert
Beverly Rutter	David Sunderman	Henry Jacobson
Jay Young	Jim Hogan	Wayne Cullopp
John Wakefield	Linda Marie Small	
Moon Joe Yee	Rebecca Ramey	
Robert Tait	Roy Garcia	
Shannon McBride-Olsen	Susan Alexander	

2) Review and approve August 14, 2014 Meeting Summary

The Task Force reviewed and approved the August 14, 2014 meeting summary with a minor revision. The project team will post the approved summary to the Clerk's office.

3) Call to Audience

Bob Schlanger presented a letter to the Task Force that was composed and signed by the Neighborhood Association Presidents from Samos, Mountain/1st and Jefferson Park. The letter addressed concerns regarding quality of life, historic designations, and redevelopment. The neighborhoods – Samos, Mountain/ 1st, and Jefferson Park – noted that the Campbell Avenue project from Grant Road south to the UMC exhibited good sensitivity to impacted neighborhoods and is a reasonable model on which to base the new Grant Road between Park and Campbell Avenues.

4) Phase 2 60% Design Open House update and review

Alejandro Angel, Psomas, provided the Task Force with a Phase 2 update. A 60% design open house was held on November 19, 2014. The public meeting was well attended and the comment and response document is now available on the website. Regarding progress of roadway design, it is anticipated that the 90% plans will be submitted in May 2015. Construction of the road is scheduled to begin spring of 2016, with utility relocation work starting this year.

Grant Road Task Force Discussion

- Once construction starts, how long does it take to complete?
 - We anticipate an 18 month construction period after completion of utility relocations.
- When will road construction start?
 - Spring of 2016
- What percent of acquisitions are challenged relative to price? Are there any litigations due to offered compensation? Do people seem satisfied with the offers? Are you able to find resolution?
 - There has not been any litigation. The real estate acquisitions have gone relatively smoothly.
- Why has this project taken so long to go to bid? Contractors are hungry.
 - We are legally mandated regarding timelines determined through real estate and the acquisition process. For example, the City has to provide property owners with a 90 day period once they receive an acquisition offer. Additionally, we prefer to determine what is needed for the project before we start communication with the property owners. This happens after the 30%-60% design plans are completed.
- There are 20 acquisitions thus far, how many more are anticipated to be acquired?
 - We are about 50% through the full acquisitions.
- When you say full acquisitions, are you talking about buildings only and leaving the owner with the land?
 - The owner always has the option to retain their remnant. We haven't had anyone take that option.
- Have the parcels for the retention basin been acquired?
 - About 50% of the area for the basin has been acquired.

5) Phase 2 and Grant Road Improvement Project update

Beth Abramovitz, TDOT project manager, provided the Task Force with a corridor update. Phases 3 & 4 are underway and an open house is tentatively scheduled for the summer of 2015. Drainage improvements to the Columbus Wash will be made in 2016-2016. Psomas will be the designer for the Columbus Wash drainage improvements. Additionally, the Hot in Place Recycling pavement restoration project is anticipated to begin late March and be completed in April. Granite Construction has been awarded the contract to do the repaving. There has been a mailer sent out to residents and property owners in the project area. In addition to the mailer, a handout has been developed and MainStreet has been communicating with businesses.

Grant Road Task Force Discussion

- Will the millings be reused for other projects?
 - Yes, we stockpile the millings.
- Do we know how long the pavement will last?
 - Based on work that has previously been done in Chandler, we are estimating a 15 year pavement life. Ideal pavement preservation is aimed for a 20 year service life.
- What is the conceptual plan for the Columbus Wash – are there culverts?
 - The underground culverts are already in place. The project will add inlets and pipes to collect the drainage. The main box is already built.
- It would be really appreciated if businesses received a week's notice before the paving occurs. The more advance notice the better for businesses to contact their clients.
 - The business outreach has already begun. MainStreet is distributing the informational handout and going door to door. We are going to try to post scheduling information on the website so we can give everyone a better idea of what to expect. Additionally, we did to the saturation mailing for people in the project area.
- How long will paving take?
 - There are 75 contract days allocated to this process to finish every component.
- The project team for the Hot in Place Recycling project has already provided more information than the Southwest Gas project on Grant and Country Club.
 - Please contact the Grant Road project team with complaints or comments regarding any utility work.
- How long will people be denied access when the paving is occurring directly in front of a business?
 - About 30 minutes.

6) Landscape and Basin Discussion

Wheat Design Group provided the Task Force with a landscape discussion that outlined different landscape concepts. There are consistent elements along the corridor regarding the water harvesting features, tree grades, shade structures, bus shelters, etc. The design is intended to be consistent along the corridor. Wheat Design Group is also providing the landscape design for Phases 3 & 4. Additionally, Wheat Design Group provided the Task Force with a shade structure exhibit and samples of materials.

After the discussion, the Task Force reviewed an aerial map to review potential placement and logistics of the shade structures. Overall, the Task force wants durable, cost effective shade structures placed strategically where people will congregate. Additionally, the Task Force is interested in incorporating trees to provide shade to complement the shade structures.

Grant Road Task Force Discussion

- During the Grant/Oracle walk-through, the Task Force noted that the rocks in the water harvesting areas were too big – will this be considered in this phase?
 - Yes, smaller rock will be placed at the bottom to facilitate cleaning.
- It seems like the larger rock is like Velcro holding the trash?
 - We are reevaluating the rocks being used in this phase so it's easier to maintain.
- Where will the stabilized resin be used?
 - It will be used in the orange area in the diagram in the detention basin. We are using decomposed granite for areas with more water.
- How does resin hold up against UV? Anything that isn't rock tends to decay. How much does it cost to repair? From personal experience stabilized DG does not hold up when flooded.
 - We used it on A Mountain. This was a good test piece for us. The cost to repair decomposed granite is similar to the repair cost of standard concrete. It is as easy to maintain as concrete but looks more natural.
- Are the majority of the trees native? Trees are a good option for shade.
 - Yes – mesquite, acacia, and desert willow trees will be incorporated into the basin design.
- What is the lifespan of the shade structure covering? What is the replacement cost? This company gives a minimal lifespan to these same structures for residential use.
 - The warranty is about 15 years. I will get more information regarding the warranty from the company.
- What is the purpose of the holes in the material?
 - This is to let air and wind go through.

- Are the shade structures part of the public art?
 - No, they are part of the project budget not the art budget. The shade structures are not part of the public art process.
- Are we limited to just this company? It seems that the shape of them doesn't exude the most shade. Some of these options don't seem like they are shade providing.
 - No, we are not limited to this company. We are trying to institute a consistent look along the corridor.
- Architecturally the shade structures are very interesting. The lifespan is questionable. I like trees for shade – they are cheap. These structures are pretty expensive for the shade that is delivered for a few people. Are there options that are attractive that have solar panels that could provide ground lighting along this pathway without extra charge?
 - The issue we have with solar panels is that they are vandalism magnets and are expensive to replace. Other shade structure options can be explored.
- What type of space are we trying to create? Is the space for walking or barbecuing? This will impact my decision. I am skeptical that people will use the shade structures and semi-urban areas.
- If there is a bad idea in Phase 1, we should stop it now. We need to think about the big picture. The shade structure looks like a kite. The shade structure needs to match the size of the area and the purpose. The trees are a good idea.
- I am confused about where these shade structures will go. The budget allows for a maximum of 4 shade structures depending on which are selected.
 - The Task Force can decide where you want them to be in the project. We are providing some recommendations regarding placement – crosswalks, basin, near the shopping centers, etc.
- The detention basin is an amenity for Jefferson Park. Has anyone asked them if they want shade structures?
 - The basin area is an amenity for all the users of the Grant Road corridor. It is not a specific amenity to Jefferson Park. Likewise, the shade structures (if installed) don't have to go in the basin. They are intended to be an amenity for the entire Stone to Park segment.
- The drainage basin serves a dual purpose – a detention basin and a pocket park. The shade structures should coincide with where we want people to congregate.

- The structures have an exciting look. I'm not sure if I want to see it as a unifying figure for entire corridor. At the detention basin, there isn't parking. Bicyclists will stop and I think it will be used as a park. We should use the adaptive path technique— let things happen and see where people want to go. It might be helpful for the Task Force to walk the area.
- At this point, I would vote "no" for shade structures along the main portion of the segment. For the basin, I would suggest having larger trees and Sunbird 2/public art combined for a more permanent structure.
- Noise mitigation was a concern to the neighborhood. The detention basin will help mitigate this. The shade structures can be incorporated after construction. We should talk to the neighborhood about possibilities to use the funding to buffer noise. We don't need to decide the shade structures now.
- I am thinking about the corridor and I am concerned about the lifespan of these structures. The shade component was something exciting to look forward to and we can't put big trees along the entire roadway. However, if the shade structure is in front of my business, even if people don't stand there, it is a way to break up the entire roadway looking like concrete. I would like to see shade structures – just not these.
- I like the idea of waiting until construction is completed to institute the shade structures. I don't know about the public art yet and I am concerned that the fabric is too fragile and has the potential to be torn. Of the colors presented, I prefer the green color.
- Can people ride bikes in basin? What is the width of paths? Will walking paths be safe for children? Close to street?
 - The paths are 8' wide and are similar to a sidewalk. They set about 5' below grade.

After discussion of shade structures at a project exhibit, the CTF provided the team the following direction on shade structures:

- Investigate other types of shade structures that provide better shade, are more cost-effective and durable (this includes alternative materials to fabric). Present information back to the CTF.
- Consider using a mix of shade structures and trees. Use a portion of the \$70,000 to add large shade trees.
- Place shade structures in locations where people congregate but where there is also good line of sight to provide a vertical element to the roadway. Do not place shade structures in the median as people don't spend much time in the median. Potential locations include the signalized pedestrian crossings at the indirect lefts and near the basin.

7) Round Table

- I do not want to vote for any shade structure at this time.
- I liked the presentation. It was clear, uncluttered and easy to follow.
- Thank you for presenting us with the materials ahead of time.
- I think this was a very productive meeting
- Than you to Blue Willow for the delicious food.
- I noticed that the project team intervened to cut off prolonged discussions so the meeting could flow. Keep it up.

8) Adjournment

8:15 pm