



Citizens Steering Committee (CSC) December 17, 2008 Meeting Summary

Pima Community College Downtown Campus, Amethyst Community Room, 1255 N. Stone Avenue; 5:30 PM, Conversation & Refreshments; 6:00 – 8:00 PM, Meeting

CSC Members Present: Charlie Wachtel, Chair; Dick DeNezza; Bernadette Jilka; Darel Magee; Martina O'Brien; Ken Scoville; Leon Solomon; Lois Roth; Gloria Townsend

CSC Members Absent: Jason Brown, Vice Chair; Tad Denton; Erik Nielsen; Bill Quiroga; Joshua Randell; Cathy Rex; Bob Wright

Staff Present:

UPD OARP Team – Rebecca Ruopp, Project Manager; Jennifer Burdick, Planner

Ward 3 Staff – Tamara Prime, Council Aide

Technical Advisory Team – Ron Thompson, Tucson Police Department

Tucson Department of Transportation (TDOT) – George Caria, Transit Administrator

Meeting Agenda & Discussions

Actions Taken/ Follow-Up Required

1. Welcome and Introductions

The CSC members introduced themselves by name and affiliation to the project area. Staff members and audience members introduced themselves.

Regular Business

2. November 19, 2008, CSC Meeting Summary – CSC members approved the summary, with Leon Solomon moving to approve, and Bernadette Jilka seconding the motion.

Approved by vote of 9-0

3. Updates and Announcements

- **CSC Announcements** – Charlie Wachtel acknowledged CSC member Gloria Townsend for enrolling at Pima Community College for the Spring semester. Her choice to go back to school was related, in part, to being a part of the CSC and getting familiar with the campus.
 - **Area Business Association (Charlie Wachtel)** – The next meeting of businesses within or around the Oracle Area project area will be January 15, 6-7:30 p.m., at the Executive Inn & Suites (333 W. Drachman).
- **CSC Membership** – No more additions have been made to the CSC. There are currently 3 seats open and the audience and the CSC were encouraged to let others know that they can apply. Applications are available at the meetings, online at the OARP web site (www.tucsonaz.gov/planning/oarp), and through the Urban Planning & Design Department.
- **Update on the Ghost Ranch Lodge** – This item was moved to the end of the meeting to allow the guest speaker an opportunity to make his presentation.

4. Presentation on the City of Tucson’s Transit Program

George Caria, Transit Administrator with the City of Tucson’s Department of Transportation, provided an overview pertaining to the City’s transit program, how bus routes, stops and schedules are programmed and where the funding comes from. Some highlights from his presentation are as follows:



**Actions Taken/
 Follow-Up Required**

Meeting Agenda & Discussions

- 75-80% of riders are dependent on public transportation
- For every dollar spent on running the transit program, .20¢ is paid by fares from riders and .80¢ is subsidized by the City.

Questions and comments related to Caria’s presentation were as follows:

- *CSC Member:* At the Speedway/Stone intersection, there is a huge pothole in the intersection that is dangerous for wheelchairs.
- *CSC Member:* The bus stop at the northwest corner of Stone/Drachman is barely visible and there are no seats for riders.
- *CSC Member:* Bus drivers are not always providing the best customer service, in many instances to riders in wheelchairs. They may take the time to strap in the wheelchairs, or they just may not pick up riders in wheelchairs. Also, the drivers don’t always announce the major streets as they pass them.

Caria’s response: Continuity of bus stops and amenities, and connectivity between the stops is a big issue and one that Transit is always working on. We are working on making all bus stops accessible. We are keeping a list of stops and ridership needs. If you or someone you know comes across these stops, please call.

By law, wheelchairs must be strapped in. If bus drivers are not doing that, please call it in.

Also, every major street must be announced by bus drivers.

- *CSC Member:* Visibility is a big issue. It is difficult to find bus stops, difficult to see oncoming buses and for the bus drivers to see people at the bus stops. Design of the stops is not as good as it could be. Some of the stops only provide scant shade and only minimal protection from rain.
- *CSC Member:* The articulation (connectivity) of the bus schedules leaves something to be desired. When I travel to the far-east side of town on the weekends, I usually can’t get to the connecting bus on time. I end up having to wait almost an hour until the next one comes. It would be great if the time intervals could be mapped out a little better so that it would be possible to connect to other buses.

Caria’s response: Continuity of bus stops and amenities, and connectivity between the stops is a big issue and one that Transit is always working on. We are working on making all bus stops accessible. We are keeping a list of stops and ridership needs. If you or someone you know comes across these stops, please call.

- *CSC Member:* There should be some way, also, to factor in rush hour delays into the bus schedules. We need more buses during rush hour, as well.
- *CSC Member:* It takes me 1.5 hours and 3 hours to go 5.5 miles (from Oracle/Grant to River/Dodge) because there are very few west-east bus connections.

Caria’s response: You can get trip planning assistance online at the Sun Tran web site (<http://www.suntran.com/>) or by calling 792-9222. If you don’t have a computer, an operator will help you on the phone and mail you the print outs of the trips you plan over the phone.

- *CSC Member:* I am glad to see that the bus service on Grant has been extended to



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Meeting Agenda & Discussions

the weekends; however, it still needs service in the evenings.

- *CSC Member:* There are no places to put grocery bags or baggage, so people put their items on other seats, which fills up needed seats on busy bus routes. When buses are full, bus drivers don't stop. They just drive by bus stops and leave people to wait for the next bus.
- *CSC Member:* I know that the buses are run on cleaner fuel, but why are they left running at the transit stations? I go to Ronstadt and there are buses that run for sometimes 20 minutes until they are scheduled to depart on their next routes.
Caria's response: It's a tough issue. For riders, when buses are turned off, there is no heating or cooling. In the summer and winter, this can be uncomfortable.
- *CSC Member:* Why don't bus drivers report drunks camped out at bus stops or those who create nuisances on the buses?
Caria's response: Drivers are required to call in such issues. It may be difficult at times, when the drivers have to manage traffic, busy buses and
- *CSC Member:* Why don't you run buses 24 hours a day, going north-south and east-west?
- *CSC Member:* Lighting is really important at the bus stops – there are some rough people out there and sometimes no lights at bus stops. It makes people vulnerable. The new bus stop at Granada/Congress, for example, needs a light.
- *CSC Member:* Why is money
- *CSC Member:*
- *CSC Member:*
- *CSC Member:*

5. Call to the Audience

- 6. Next CSC Meeting (Thursday, January 22, 2009) – Preliminary Agenda Items**
 - *Regular Business*
 - *Working Session*

7. Closure of Formal Meeting (7:20 PM)

7:20 – 7:30 PM Break

8. CSC Working Session –

A request was made by a CSC member to send materials out to the CSC in advance of meetings so they can be read prior to the working session.

Another request was made to consider boosting safety in the area by passing a City ordinance to encourage selective enforcement of crimes in the OARP area.

Further discussion will be held at the next meeting on December 17, 2008.



Meeting Agenda & Discussions

**Actions Taken/
Follow-Up Required**

- Staff will arrange for a presentation on the City's transit program for the December meeting.

- Staff will bring a schedule of working sessions to the next meeting.
- Staff will provide materials in advance of meetings, as appropriate.
- Staff will research selective enforcement of crimes.