

BROADWAY PROJECT: \$74 MILLION FOR A NON-PROBLEM?

20 June 2012 Statement for Citizen Task Force Meeting

Let me begin by thanking you for the opportunity for Citizen input into the redesign of Broadway Boulevard. I'm speaking tonight on behalf of the Broadway Coalition, a growing coalition of neighborhoods, businesses and individuals concerned that the Broadway project be appropriate to conditions and the best road it can be.

DESTRUCTIVE

We oppose the 1987 plan that calls for widening Broadway to 150' and demolishing all properties along the north side between Euclid and Country Club. <http://dot.tucsonaz.gov/projects/broadway>

These properties include homes, small local businesses, dozens of historically and architecturally significant buildings and a landmark church. All produce property taxes and more than 100 of them generate sales taxes.

UNNECESSARY

This outdated project is unnecessary, as it is premised on 25-year-old traffic projections that have proven grossly accurate. At 30,000-40,000 vehicles per day, traffic counts are virtually the same today as in 1984. (See 2012 Traffic Engineering Study posted on RTAmobility website for Broadway Project, p.15) There is no reason to think traffic projections for 2030 or 2040 are any more accurate.

COSTLY & OVER BUDGET

Recent costs estimates for this project have risen to \$74 million.

Property acquisition is now estimated to cost \$43.7 million, more than the \$42 million RTA has

budgeted, accounting for nearly 2/3 of the project cost.

<http://www.tucsonaz.gov/sirepub/mtgviewer.aspx?meetid=728&doctype=SUMMARY>.

Resolution #21681

There is no guarantee or timeline for when Pima County will contribute its \$25 million share, leaving the project 40% under budget.

UNSUSTAINABLE

The 1987 plan would sabotage COT and PAG goals of livability, sustainability and walkable, bikeable streets. Removing dozens of accessible local businesses, lifeblood of our local economy and community, would degrade not only the immediate area but the livability of a large section of central Tucson.

Ethical and fiduciary responsibility demands updating the Broadway Project by designing not a wider road but a smarter, more efficient road one. Improvements such as bus pullouts, turn bays, and properly timed lights would move traffic without widening, while encouraging bus ridership, biking and walking along a safe and pleasant street. Thoughtful redesign would keep the project under budget, preserving and enriching this unique area for generations to come.

“CHARTER” THWARTS CITIZEN INPUT

We are concerned that applicants to and members of the Citizen’s Task Force have been asked to sign a restrictive Charter which prevents them from redesigning the street to fit current conditions and concerns or budget realities.

Citizen input is integral to planning processes, as well as legally mandated (ARS 48-5304.)

WHAT WE WANT

1. We want the Citizens' Task Force and the Broadway Design Team empowered to use best practices, designing a great street, not a wide one, that meets the needs of all users of the street, including bus riders, pedestrians, bicyclists, businesses and residents, while preserving the businesses and buildings falling outside the current curb-to-curb alignment.
2. We welcome yesterday's Mayor and Council mandate to design the street within the existing curb-to-curb crosswidth and the \$42 million RTA budget.
3. We also wish to thank the Mayor & Council and especially Councilmember Kozachik for his energetic and effective leadership in getting this process moving—and moving in the right direction.
4. Finally, I wish to have read into the record resolutions from Sam Hughes Neighborhood Association and Rincon Heights Neighborhood Association, early members of the Broadway Coalition, calling for reconsideration of the 1987 Broadway Project.

Any questions?

Thank you.

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