

Comment Summary
Houghton Road, Central Segment: 22nd Street to Valencia Road
Public Open House; Wednesday, June 6, 2007

Secrist Middle School

(Summary reflects comments received at the open house and during the comment period, two weeks after the event. Comments are typed from handwritten originals and are unedited.)

Roadway/ Traffic

What plans are there regarding traffic that will be forced to utilize other streets like Harrison? Will there be any widening of it, especially south of the Pantano Wash? Will there be a light put in at Harrison and Irvington?

I would like six lanes and traffic lights with turn signals at access points, especially at Poorman.

What are plans for protected ingress/egress for Civano?

I live on a dead-end street (S. Boulderfield Place) off of Houghton. What sort of consideration will be made for access, both north and south, to get on Houghton?

Make left-turn lane with a light from McGraws Restaurant heading north! This is urgent!

Given the extreme growth in the area, I think it would be better to expand to six lanes now. Traffic is only getting worse and I think that four lanes are not enough. I think the paved walkways are a great idea and hope there will be some kind of buffer zone between the road and existing homes on the east side of Houghton.

Also, please add a left turn arrow at Houghton/Escalante. I guess that's been done.

Improve the crosswalk at Secrist Middle School.

Do not even think about four lanes - it is already too late for that. Stick with six lanes and limit access points, even if it means frontage lanes. Keep traffic on a timed sequence during peak hours and on a "trip set" basis after hours. Keep traffic lights a mile apart as much as possible. Consider opening Escalante from Harrison through to Houghton; it would re-direct traffic east and west of Harrison and south of Golf Links.

A left-turn lane at McGraws Restaurant is needed when traveling north on Houghton Road. This is a must for a business with this much traffic.

I agree with the gentleman that pointed out a concern with the 29th/Houghton intersection. There are multiple churches in this area and a traffic light should be considered. Currently, traffic is directed by the Tucson Police Department on Sundays so people can get out of church. I do not feel a median opening would be sufficient.

We live on Falcon Point Drive (south of Golf Links) and our complex has only two exits, both facing Houghton. How will we be able to turn north? Will there be a break in the median or a traffic light? Or will we be forced to go south and then make a u-turn?

Is there anything you can do right now to help the right turn south onto Houghton from Golf Links - the disappearing lane? Very hazardous for people who do not know to merge. I am sure it will be addressed long-term but needs attention now.

Need adequate foot/bike paths that connect.

What are future development plans for southeast and southwest corners of Old Spanish Trail and Houghton?

What provisions will be made for the pedestrian/bike trail on Old Spanish Trail crossing Houghton? (i.e., tunnel, special crossing, timing for walkers, etc.)?

Six lanes, please, with limited access and frontage roads. Do it right the first time instead of ripping it up to widen it again in 10 years. Buy the land now while it is vacant (some of it is).

We love the walking trails away from the road.

Will there be a pedestrian bridge here at Secrist Middle School? Hope so!

We cannot get out of our subdivision now, especially when school is in session. A traffic light would be ideal.

I like the bike lanes/multiuse path plans.

Egress from Austin Point subdivision onto northbound Houghton is already a serious problem during rush hour. When the shopping center traffic is added to our 198 homes, it will result in too many cars trying to make a u-turn to go north. We need a u-turn lane or a light at Watson Drive.

It needs to get built! Preferably six lanes.

For Keystone Road and Houghton Area:

1. Do six lanes initially.
2. Walls regardless of the rubberized road.
3. Safe access and exit to and from Keystone Road.

Need a left-turn lane light from McGraws Restaurant heading north! This is urgent!

Those of us who live in the first two subdivisions south of Golf Links need a way to get out of our subdivisions, as there are only exits out onto Houghton. It is nearly impossible to get out. A traffic light to stop traffic at one of these exits would be desirable. Need turn lane into McGraws Restaurant when you are driving north.

I want to make sure I will have a turn slot into Pantano Trail.

Open house turnout should be strong indicator of concerns.

Stop multi lights every 20 feet; use frontage roads to drive various developments to four-way intersections.

I am concerned about possible access from my property to Houghton Road.

Concern for views being blocked

Concern for bus routes - stops - ways to safely cross to enter bus, especially for handicapped.

Why build only four lanes if six is anticipated? Do demographics really lessen that much?

I frequently see bike clubs traveling Houghton Road. Will the bike lanes accommodate for multiple bikes?

Include in the improvement plans to have signal light placed at the intersection of East Corte Madera Fina and Houghton Road. It will almost be impossible to exit on to Houghton, especially if the torn land is removed. As it is now it can take 15 to 20 minutes. To make the turn you always have to use the turn lane. It will be a lot worse. When the Sorrento Square is complete, this will add more traffic. The exit is very dangerous.

When construction starts from Speedway to 22nd it is incumbent that speed bumps be installed on Sonoran Heights Drive and Covington Street. These two streets are used as a bypass from Broadway and Houghton to bypass traffic on either street. Buses, trucks, cars, and motorcycles tear through those streets continuously.

I live in Austin Point (Golf Links and Houghton). It is very difficult right now to get out of my neighborhood in the morning. I have to pull onto the turn lane and sit there for quite a while before I can pull out to go north. Our neighborhood needs to be considered. We would like a turn lane into our neighborhood when going south to pull over and turn right into our neighborhood. We also prefer the six-lane plan. Maybe the 1/2 mile u-turn could be at Austin Point at one of our current exits. Also, we need a long u-turn lane to accommodate lots of people exiting Austin Point. Also, a light further south (before one mile) could greatly help slow the traffic flow that traps us in our neighborhood.

Safety concern: Traffic light is needed at either Falcon Point Drive or Watson Drive intersecting Houghton. Approaching traffic climbing hill on Houghton from Golf Links cannot be seen until they are two car lengths from Falcon Point. Important safety concern. Will we need to sustain crashes to act?

I would like to see limited roadway and I would like to start as soon as possible.

I commute by bicycle on Houghton from Golf Links to Valencia every day. There are quite a few of us who do. There is no alternate route. Please make sure that accommodations are made for bikes through the entire construction time so that we do not end up blocking traffic through the construction zone. Also, the recent lane changes at Valencia and Houghton removed the bike lane. Please put them back.

Make sure bike routes are continuous for the complete length of Houghton Road with safe intersection access and turn lanes.

A turn lane into McGraws Cantina would smooth traffic going north up the hill. I live in Rita Ranch and make this turn three or four times each week as do many other vehicles.

Driveway exit from property onto Houghton. Have double gates for exit/entrance of RV.

I am visually impaired, thus this impacts me. On these segments where traffic lights are placed, I would like to have audible crosswalk indication for the primary road (Houghton).

What about a traffic light at 29th Street? On Sundays it gets ridiculously backed up. A light that functions only during these hours would be a good investment.

I am sorry I arrived so late at the Houghton Road public forum held several weeks ago at the Secrist Middle School, and that it has taken be so long to respond to you. The issue of the design of the widening of Houghton is, as you can imagine, becoming an increasingly hot issue in the Community of Civano. As it should be.

I have been stunned by the growth of traffic up and down Houghton. Getting in and out of Civano during the morning and evening rush hours can be difficult. I am not exaggerating in saying that there have been times when I have been stuck at both the Seven Generations Way and the Civano Boulevard entrances for as long as 15 minutes, waiting for a break in oncoming traffic in order to turn out of or into the Community. I know that many others living at Civano could tell you the same story. "Rush hour" is a term that does not quite describe the traffic on Houghton. In the evenings, heavy traffic starts at 3:30 and will go on until 7 p.m.

The installation of the traffic light at Irvington has made a difference, and that combined with the turning lanes makes everything just barely, barely manageable. There are now around 600 families living in Civano. The population of children has grown significantly. In the morning and afternoons you will see numbers of kids waiting at the Seven Generations Way entry into Civano for school buses and to be picked up or

dropped off by parents. It is quite the congregation. Currently, with the left turn lane that is in place, "normal traffic" can navigate through these two busy times at the intersection.

As I understand it, the planned widening of Houghton will eliminate the turn lanes at both Civano Boulevard and Seven Generations Way. This is frankly a frightening prospect. It will make getting in and out of Civano very dangerous, at any time of the day; and extremely dangerous during "rush hour". It will create a dangerous situation at Seven Generations Way precisely during those times when children are awaiting, or departing from, school buses.

The amount of, and velocity of traffic on Houghton will increase dramatically with its widening. I know that the speed limit will stay the same. But I also know what human nature is, and a four-lane road, with a divider, will be an invitation to speed. You just have to go over to Kolb Road to the west to see what I mean. People living in the fast growing new neighborhoods to the south use Kolb heavily, and they are determined to get to where they are going with alacrity. The same is true of Houghton, now; and will only become truer after it is "improved".

We all recognize that highway regulations will not allow a stoplight to be installed at Houghton and Seven Generations Way, because there are lights at Irvington and Bilby. In the original plan for Civano, Neighborhood One (what is now simply called "Civano") was connected with internal boulevards to Neighborhood Two and Three, now called Sierra Morado. Thus, there was a planned access to a controlled entry/exit point from the whole community onto Houghton. However, as developed, there are NO internal connections between Civano and Sierra Morado. This is a City of Tucson endorsed change. While the residents of Sierra Morado and Mesquite Ranch have a controlled access point to Houghton, the 600 families located in Civano cannot drive to a road that will have a stop light entry/exit to and from the Civano. They can only use either Civano Boulevard or Seven Generations Way without traffic lights and without turning lanes. As a much higher volume of traffic moves by the community with higher velocity.

Is there anyone associated with the design of Houghton road that can seriously consider this an acceptable situation?

The proposed plan for Houghton will have the effect of isolating Civano. It will create dangerous traffic situations at the only two entries into the community. I believe it will create a dangerous traffic situation at the location and times that children congregate to be picked up and dropped off by school buses at Seven Generations Way. The difficulty of getting into and out of Civano will have a harmful effect on the businesses located there. It will not help property values, either.

While the proposed plan may meet all the engineering criteria of highway design, it does not support one of Tucson's best-known neighborhoods, one that has national attention.

We all look forward to the road system on the East Side catching up with the extraordinary growth that has happened there over the past 5 years. But I can only hope that the planners of the Houghton Road improvement can step back and make sure that their work is creating a safer corridor of travel, and supports all the communities now growing up along Houghton, especially one that was and remains a neighborhood of special note. I think consideration should be given to installing a traffic light at Seven

Generations Way, despite what engineering regulations may say. I think it is absolutely necessary to install turning lanes at both Civano Boulevard and Seven Generations Way.

I hope you can pass along this letter to the powers that be on the Houghton Road planning team, and I look forward to attending more of the public information sessions. Thanks for taking the time to talk with briefly at the last session, and I look forward to more conversations.

There will be a need for an elevated pedestrian crosswalk (bridge) in front of Secrist Middle School. If an elevated pedestrian bridge is not included, the 15 mph school zone in front of the school will create a very serious traffic bottleneck on Houghton - as it does now.

I hope to see Houghton go to six lanes, with the constant growth just on the east side of the road. At Irvington/Houghton just to make a left turn heading west in the morning is a two-to-three light wait. In the evenings trying to turn on to Bilby can be a wait. Also, why are the signal lights at Bilby so close that they will have to be moved? You just put them in.

Need a left-hand turn lane into McGraws Cantina when traveling north on Houghton Road.

Access roads into Civano at Seven Generations and Civano Blvd.

Traffic lights at Drexel for the future commercial center and hospital.

Openings in median for left turns out of Seven Generations and Civano Blvd in Civano

It is already very difficult to leave our area (Austin Point) and turn left onto Houghton. I was hoping for a light at either exit of Austin Point. The concern is the proposed turn around median. Where will it be and how many cars will it allow for? I have seen short and long median turn lanes around Tucson and I would want to make sure that it would allow for lots of people leaving Austin Point.

Please make it a six-lane now and not later.

This project should be a six-lane roadway. One entrance and exit opening should be incorporated into Austin Point community.

Getting into/out of Austin Point subdivision is a nightmare. Unless there is a light nearby, just putting in a median will not make getting onto Houghton much easier. The traffic in both directions is ceaseless, so instead of waiting on Falcon Point, I will be waiting there and at the median opening.

One high-priority item for me is that we minimize the number of traffic lights - no more than one per mile. We need rigorous control and enforcement of new development access directly to Houghton.

Since completion of this project is many years away, I suggest one interim item in particular to help avoid gridlock. Going south on Houghton, north of 22nd, traffic often backs up due to a high percentage of cars turning right. A right turn lane on Houghton onto 22nd would greatly alleviate this bottleneck.

Why do you need so many bike lanes, walking paths plus buffer between them? Seems like overkill. The project needs to be done because of the heavy volume of traffic.

Recommend go directly to six lanes with appropriate left and right turns and appropriate turn arrow lights. The middle corridor is going to become extremely congested. Please give consideration to plans for a loop road, for example - from Irvington to Sorites Highway with connections at Valencia. Also, need light at Poorman. As for Houghton, please get it done - six lanes.

Six-lane format required!

Austin Point is a community of 198 single-family residences with only ingress and egress off of Houghton. During the morning and afternoon rush, we are currently unable to safely leave our community. In the new plan we require, at a minimum, a break in the median for access and departure but really need an "as required signal light" for safety just as you did for the corner of Bonanza at Golf Links recently!

To whom it may concern: We are very concerned with traffic congestion as there is only one entrance/ egress from Houghton into Civano Boulevard.

Please - six lanes now - not later.

Regarding the construction period, how will the traffic be routed from Golf Links heading south on Houghton? We live at Austin Point and can barely get out onto Houghton now. We have two entrances into/out of our development. These would both be hindered by this construction. We have no other streets to use but Houghton. To make a left-hand turn now from our development is a very long wait and often impossible.

We really like the bike lane with the buffer to separate it from vehicles. Please keep it.

Six lanes now! Not four, and then six. It will save missions in the long run.

Pedestrian and bike path lanes - off roads - great idea.

Need left turn signal onto Escalante

Paths to Secrist Middle School - overhead crossing for youth.

Make six lanes now, not later.

There are multi-use paths along Sierra Maracto and Mesquite Ranch, as well as others in the Houghton/Valencia - Rita area. I hope the plan is to build west in these areas, so that we do not lose our paths!

Speed limit is too fast for continuous bumper-to-bumper traffic.
Southbound turn onto Houghton - eliminate the "yield" sign and make it a hard-core "stop" at red - people are not yielding but merging and causing very dangerous situations.

Enforce the center turn lane - people use it as their own private driving lane.

Emily Drive connects to Bonanza. Worried about cut-through traffic from the subdivision to the north. There is a pool and playground on Emily.

Must retain casement at Seven Generations Way for northbound traffic to turn right.

Need an underpass for bicyclists in vicinity of Seven Generations Way to reach Fantasy Island.

Irvington Road and Houghton Road is an extremely dangerous intersection with lower road out of Civano complicating the traffic problem.

To the city transport planners:

1. Before this construction begins, please punch Escalante west to Harrison so the east side traffic going to work will have a way to cut across the construction.
2. Put some rubberized asphalt on Old Spanish Trail from Houghton east to Avenida Los Reyes. East side commuter traffic is already heavy and it will increase as soon as construction begins.

A light at 29th Street would be highly beneficial. On Sundays, the church traffic clogs 22nd/Houghton, which makes it impossible to turn west onto 22nd (a turn arrow at this intersection would help as well).

Median cuts need too often to avoid U-turns.

Why six lanes?

Why not have Houghton like Pantano Parkway?

Certain times of day it is very difficult to get out of Austin Point now. Help.

Please - six lanes now - not later.

Please - six lanes now - not later.

Connect all paths.

Need elevated school crossing bridge at Secrist Middle School. Need drop-off/pickup lot on east side of Houghton to go with the bridge.

We need six lanes as soon as possible. Reuse existing bridge - add lanes. Do away with school crossing at Secrist Middle School.

It would be nice to have paths all along Houghton to allow for more bike and pedestrian traffic

Need a left-hand turn into McGraws Cantina going north on Houghton.

I believe we need a left-hand turn going north on Houghton Road into McGraws Cantina.

Drainage

City cleaned area and all water drains into our property.

I own the property where Eastview Wash goes through. I am concerned with its current drainpipes. I do request to participate in its future design and alternate to drain this wash under Houghton Road.

Environmental

What are plans for noise mitigation (road surface, walls, landscaping)?

Traffic noise should be a big issue. Route 51 in Phoenix is built below grade for that purpose and to eliminate traffic stops. A traffic light is a lot if you intend to move a lot of traffic. Route 85 in San Jose, CA is below grade and can still be heard a mile away depending on air density. Do it right now or do not spend the tax dollars.

Plan for adequate wildlife crossing. Too much road kill even now.

Between Old Spanish Trail and 29th the residents are requesting further information on noise protection.

We live at 1535 S. Cape Verde Place. Too close to Houghton. We now have noise and vibrations from vehicles and with four lanes this will be terrible. We will need a barrier (high wall) to cancel noise and vibration.

We are used to having all kinds of wildlife crossing Houghton and going into our yard - javelinas, etc. We would like to see these wildlife corridors preserved in place and not destroyed.

Keystone Road is part of an old (1983-84) subdivision (Saguaro Canyon) done by Pulte. Homes are cheap wood frame and need protection from noise in the form of walls.

Traffic noise from Houghton reaches my house now. I certainly hope that the project includes sound walls on the east side of Houghton.

Entrance/exit from Austin Point - for traffic noise I'll just plant trees.
I live in Civano and would also like noise abatement.

Still concerned about traffic noise.

I am interested in what plans you have between Speedway to 22nd. My concern is that the road is going to get too close to existing wall on my house. Concern with noise, and having to upgrade home with new window, insulation to reduce the noise. That will be an expense that I cannot afford.

Are we going to get a sound wall?

The noise from traffic along Houghton presently is bad. Therefore, the expansion project should include sound walls; otherwise, our property values may be affected.

Walls to lower noise and recycled rubber asphalt to lower noise. The plans look good. Obviously, there will be population explosion.

Roadway should be embedded where possible and noise walls placed so as not to interfere with visibility from properties.

With the multitude of new houses (Piper Viner - North Ridge) being built, the homes along Civano Boulevard will be compromised - heavy traffic, congestion, noise pollution, air pollution, and safety are paramount to us and our neighbors.

Concern: traffic noise. What can be done about it? Please do not shave land off Civano, except for the bike path/buffer. Also, we want a slower speed limit than now: They are going to go 10mph faster anyway.

Please consider sound barriers for the residents whose property is immediately adjacent to Houghton Road.

Heavy traffic noise and vibration in adjacent houses.

We need a wall built, especially those close to Houghton get a lot of noise and vibration from construction vehicles now.

Art and Landscape

How will the project be landscaped? Including median?

"Xeriscape" - native landscaping in medians.

Please plan for water harvesting/ swales for landscaping.

Please take special care not to "ruin" the Houghton hills near the stables. These stables give the area a rural feel and to destroy/blade the hills would be horrific.

Slope cut south of Escalante: stabilize slope aesthetically. Stabilize similar to the county's Swan Road (north of River Road) or like Sunrise west of Craycroft Road.

Some sort of fence to separate my property from greenway.

Trees, etc. Really needed. Make as nice as upper Golf Links or Sunrise.

Crosswalks with brick or other defining material.

Make all light signals stable - not ugly wires.

Wall for visual abatement of traffic.

Think about slightly depressing the roadway so walls do not have to be so tall.

Trees landscaping.

General Comments

How are plans to be coordinated with hospital? With other commercial development?

I do not like the fact that it is going to be right up along the back of my house (I back up to Houghton in Austin Point). I am at a point where I cannot sell because this project has gone public. I also cannot conceal the fact because I do not want to be sued. Several years ago, I was told by an ADOT employee that it was likely that ADOT/COT would have to buy our row of houses because there was not enough right-of-way room (due to the power lines across the street). We are stuck.

We have concerns about noise reduction, traffic, and property values. We live in the Highlands Trails Neighborhood across Houghton from McGraws Cantina.

The Highland Trails Homeowners Association will schedule a meeting with M.J. Dillard and submit our concerns and requests after having a HOA meeting to allow input of our homeowners.

We would appreciate a meeting with someone to discuss what Civano residents want or would like regarding Houghton Road.

Ten years too late.

The format of "meeting" left me unfulfilled. I was expecting a formal presentation of facts with a question/answer period. That would have allowed information to be provided to me versus having to hunt and seek it after waiting for others ahead of me in line to seek out their respective information. I left without any new information and very frustrated. Perhaps a combination of formal presentation and open house format would be more useful to attendees.

I would like to be certain that the bus stop pull-offs and sidewalks will be included for pedestrians and bus users. At the pull-offs I would also like shade huts with benches.

My property backs up to Houghton, and according to either design proposal it appears you will be cutting into my property line. What sort of compensation is going to be made to me and my neighbors if this occurs? In addition, I have a gate and access off of Houghton as well as others. Will we lose this access that we have had for years?

At 22nd and Houghton, there are telephone poles close to the road. Will you be expanding on the west side of these or will you move them?

Why spend so much money on a median that will only limit access to side streets when cities like Tempe and Chandler use a continuous turn lane and spend the money elsewhere?

I recommend that a 15-25 car pick-up/drop-off parking lot be constructed on the east side of Houghton so kids can be dropped off/picked up without impeding or conflicting with the traffic on Houghton.

This is a good project - a little late, but better late than never.

Thank you for considering our plea.

Can we bury power lines?

Thanks to the quick workers on the Harrison Road project. Great job!

Stop use of Jake Brakes. Put limits for completion; once started stay with it until finished.

Is funding in place or spend elsewhere?

Do not shave land off Civano.

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