

**Phoenix City Council  
Transportation, Infrastructure and Innovation Subcommittee  
Summary Minutes  
Wednesday, Feb. 3, 2021**

City Council Chambers  
200 W. Jefferson St.  
Phoenix, Ariz.

Subcommittee Members Present

Vice Mayor Thelda Williams, Chair  
Councilwoman Debra Stark  
Councilwoman Laura Pastor  
Councilwoman Betty Guardado

Subcommittee Members Absent

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chairwoman Williams called the Transportation, Infrastructure and Innovation Subcommittee to order at 10:01 a.m., with Councilwomen Guardado, Pastor and Stark present.

**CALL TO THE PUBLIC**

None.

**MINUTES OF MEETINGS**

**1. For Approval or Correction, the Minutes of the Transportation, Infrastructure and Innovation Subcommittee Meeting on Jan. 6, 2021**

Councilwoman Pastor made a motion to approve the minutes of the Jan. 6, 2021 Transportation, Infrastructure and Innovation Subcommittee. Councilwoman Stark seconded the motion which passed unanimously, 4-0.

Items 2-6 were for consent action. No presentations were planned but staff was available to answer questions.

Councilwoman Pastor made a motion to approve consent items 2-6. Councilwoman Stark seconded the motion which passed unanimously, 4-0.

**CONSENT ACTION (ITEMS 2-6)**

**2. Heavy Duty Bus Procurement - Request to Issue Request for Proposals (RFP)**

Deputy City Manager Mario Paniagua introduced Public Transit Director Jesus Sapien to address questions about the Heavy-Duty Bus Procurement.

Councilwoman Pastor asked if staff would be moving toward procuring electric buses.

Mr. Sapien explained the City's interest in implementing electric buses and shared that Valley Metro and the Phoenix Public Transit Department participated in feasibility testing of electric vehicles, finding that the technology had not yet proven feasible in hotter climates. He stated staff would notify electric bus companies of Request for Proposals and that he expected technology to improve in the future.

Councilwoman Pastor suggested that staff ask local school districts about the challenges they have experienced with their new electric buses.

Mr. Sapien stated he would seek further input on electric buses and shared that he hears regular updates on electric vehicles while serving on the Clean Vehicle Committee of the American Public Transportation Association. He explained the biggest challenge was the current range of electric vehicles.

Councilwoman Pastor recalled similar concerns about solar panels and expressed her appreciation for the information provided by staff.

### **3. Fare Box Software Upgrade Project**

### **4. American Association of Airport Executives Membership**

### **5. Voluntary Property Acquisition - 4108 E. Air Lane (Adonai Properties, LLC)**

### **6. Sibran Properties, LLC Lease Extension at Phoenix Deer Valley Airport**

## **INFORMATION ONLY (ITEMS 7-10)**

### **7. Street Transportation Department Five-Year Capital Improvement Program Update**

Information only. No Councilmember requested additional information.

### **8. Metro, Regional Public Transportation Authority, and Maricopa Association of Governments Meetings**

Information only. No Councilmember requested additional information.

### **9. Citizens Transportation Commission Meetings**

Information only. No Councilmember requested additional information.

### **10. Freeway Program Update**

Information only. No Councilmember requested additional information.

## **DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION (ITEM 11)**

### **11. Comprehensive Roadway Safety Overview**

Deputy City Manager Mario Paniagua introduced Street Transportation Director Kini Knudson and Assistant Street Transportation Director Briana Velez to present on the item.

Mr. Knudson began by sharing there had been three pedestrian fatalities in the span of six hours, as well as four traffic-related fatalities, in Phoenix during the previous week, which highlighted the need for a comprehensive roadway safety plan. He explained the Citizens Transportation Commission expressed interest in this topic, which was presented to them in February.

Mr. Knudson explained data would be key to making decisions on recommended roadway improvements and presented a hot spot analysis map showing total roadway fatalities for vehicles, pedestrians, and bicyclists. He provided an overview of the “Four E’s” approach to traffic safety, which included Evaluation, Engineering, Enforcement and Education, and the ways in which this approach would encourage behaviors to guide decision-making.

Mr. Knudson presented key national trends, which showed that Phoenix had the third highest number of total roadway fatalities and was the sixth highest on a per capita evaluation. He explained that Phoenix had its highest collision fatality rate in 2018, with failure to yield and speeding as the major factors from 2015-2019 data. He explained that failure to yield included drivers not yielding to pedestrians in crosswalks and on left turns.

Ms. Velez provided an overview of the Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG) report of Top 100 intersections for collisions in the region, based on data from the previous five years. She explained 70 Phoenix intersections made the list, with many of those intersections located in hotspot areas.

Ms. Velez discussed staff’s participation in Roadway Safety Assessments (RSA) funded and coordinated by MAG or the Arizona Department of Transportation, field reviews of roadways where short, mid, and long-term improvements can be recommended. She explained short term improvements might include work orders for trimming vegetation or installing additional signage; mid-term improvements included pavement resurfacing and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) ramps; and long-term improvements typically required a Capital Improvement Program (CIP) plan.

Ms. Velez provided an overview of an RSA completed in 2015 for the intersection at 75th Avenue and Indian School Road, which is the top intersection for collisions in the region, per MAG. She highlighted the areas for improvement, such as street lighting and flashing yellow turn arrows. She stated there had been no funding source identified for these improvements, nor for improvements to the entire corridor of Indian School Road from 77th Avenue to 49th Avenue, which would cost \$9 million.

Ms. Velez discussed engineering efforts to improve roadway safety, such as High-Intensity Activated Crosswalk (HAWK) signals, new traffic signal installations to

incorporate left turn flashing yellow arrows, high visibility crosswalks, street lighting, access control, and offsets. She summarized staff's educational efforts including in-school curriculum to teach students about pedestrian safety, speed feedback signals, and the Heads Up and Scan the Street for Wheels and Feet campaigns.

Ms. Velez discussed enforcement efforts conducted in partnership with the Phoenix Police Department. She provided an overview of the proposed expansions of traffic units in the Mountain View and Maryvale-Estrella Mountain Precincts. She introduced Commander Brian Issitt from the Phoenix Police Department, who would be available for any questions from the subcommittee.

Ms. Velez explained the safety improvements for intersections ranked in the MAG intersection study would be cost prohibitive to implement due to limited and inadequate funding and long timeframes. She provided an overview of the systemic safety planning process and strategic planning efforts, and shared staff's recommendation to develop a Roadway Safety Action Plan, which would be a community process to establish the community priorities and request funding and additional staffing to prioritize prior RSAs for near-term safety improvements.

Mr. Knudson requested the subcommittee recommend approval to develop a Roadway Safety Action Plan and implement recommendations from up to four completed Roadway Safety Assessments, including the following components:

- \$3 million in Streets T2050 Funds;
- \$3 million in General Funds; and
- Five new positions, using Arizona Highway User Revenue.

Chairwoman Williams asked if a safety component was proposed for MAG to include in the Proposition 400 extension plan.

Mr. Knudson stated the City of Phoenix had provided a list of projects for street, freeway, and transit, which included a safety component.

Councilwoman Guardado asked which projects would receive funding as high priority roadway projects and wanted to know if any would be in District 5.

Mr. Knudson stated that many of the Phoenix intersections on the Top 100 list were in District 5. He explained the projects had not yet been identified for the short term, but staff would work on it for the next few weeks to determine proposed projects.

Councilwoman Guardado recalled previous discussions with residents and staff regarding challenges on 75th Avenue, including street racing. She expressed concerns that most of intersections were from Camelback Road to Indian School Road, from 75th to 35th Avenues and wanted to know if staff had discussed roadway issues with the City of Glendale.

Mr. Knudson agreed that he had heard similar concerns and acknowledged that many of the hotspot areas were in the Maryvale area. He explained there would be tools to address issues that would be flexible and adaptable to the needs of different areas in the city. He added staff worked with cities with which the responsibility for intersections and streets were shared to improve safety.

Councilwoman Guardado expressed her support for the recommendation and stressed the importance of gathering robust community input.

Councilwoman Stark asked Commander Issitt how the City Council could assist with rebuilding the fleet of solo motorcycle officers, known as “motors,” to help with enforcement.

Commander Issitt explained the largest need was equipment. He explained the Police Department had applied for supplemental funding from the Governor’s Office of Highway Safety and other funding sources to purchase motorcycles. He explained there had been 160 motors in previous years, which had decreased to 56 officers primarily focused on helping the patrol division with accidents occurring in the City. He explained from April through the end of January, motorcycle officers at the Mountain View and Maryvale-Estrella precincts responded to approximately 1,600 accidents of the more than 3,000 that occurred.

Councilwoman Stark wanted to know if block watches could get involved in enforcement.

Commander Issitt stated residents could call a traffic hotline, which received more than 1,000 complaints last year. He explained staff would reach out to the enforcement squads to supplement the traffic complaints. He explained Police Department teams benefit from community input and work to immediately address complaints from block watches, the traffic hotline, and City Council offices.

Councilwoman Stark commended Commander Issitt for his team’s assistance looking into speeding issues on 7th Street between Greenway Road and Thunderbird Road. She recalled seeing motorcycle officers more frequently in prior years and expressed support for acquiring additional equipment for motorcycle officers.

Councilwoman Pastor asked when there had been 160 motors on staff. She recalled various roadway incidents where having a motor available to educate would have been useful.

Commander Issitt stated the peak number of motors had been around 2007 to 2008. He agreed that when he was an officer, motors were seen more frequently. He explained drivers have been cited for civil citations, but that motorcycle officers were busy with criminal enforcement of 20 miles per hour or above.

Councilwoman Stark asked if staff would be studying other cities to implement unique roadway systems and signage to address areas such as the reverse lanes on 7th Avenue and 7th Street.

Mr. Knudson stated the department had been working on projects to address improvements to roadway safety on the reverse lanes. He explained that part of the Proposition 400 extension proposal would be to ensure improvements to reverse lanes and take advantage of improved technologies.

Councilwoman Guardado asked whether the federal BUILD grant would address the safety issues on 35th Avenue. She also asked if staff had been applying for additional funding, such as through the Road for Zero initiative.

Mr. Knudson confirmed the \$17.5 million BUILD grant would address safety issues on 35th Avenue from I-10 to Camelback Road, which would be combined with a \$7.5 million local match. He stated he was not aware of the Road for Zero initiative and said staff would research this option.

Councilwoman Pastor stressed the importance of equitable safety efforts across all the districts in the comprehensive plan.

Mr. Knudson explained the universal inspector program was developed to ensure there would be two employees dedicated to each district. He also explained the pavement program had been planned with equitable and objective criteria for allocation.

Councilwoman Pastor made a motion to approve staff's recommendation.  
Councilwoman Stark seconded the motion.

Councilwoman Stark requested an addendum to the motion to seek additional funding for equipment for solo motorcycle officers in the Traffic Unit of the Phoenix Police Department.

Councilwomen Pastor and Stark agreed to the addendum. The motion passed unanimously, 4-0.

## **INFORMATION AND DISCUSSION (ITEMS 12-15)**

### **13. Solid Waste Resources, Infrastructure and Financial Plan**

This item was heard out of order.

Deputy City Manager Mario Paniagua introduced Public Works Director Ginger Spencer, Assistant Public Works Director Joe Giudice, and Deputy Public Works Director Brandie Barrett to present on the item.

Ms. Spencer began by providing an overview of the solid waste rate increase that had been approved on Feb. 11, 2020. She explained the pandemic heavily impacted the solid waste division, causing a 20 percent increase in residential trash, recyclables, and bulk trash and resulting in increased overtime for drivers and other solid waste workers. She explained this caused a \$4 million increase to the Solid Waste budget and Coronavirus Relief Funds helped to offset costs.

She mentioned that Solid Waste had a goal to divert 40 percent of materials for the Reimagine Phoenix initiative. She stated Phoenix finished the campaign above the national average at 34 percent, with a peak of 36 percent in 2018 and 2019. She recognized the support from residents for drivers, which had helped with their morale.

Ms. Barrett discussed the financial resource requirements needed to repair, replace, and develop infrastructure; provide for reliable solid waste refuse and recycling services; and ensure a reliable fleet of equipment. She provided an overview of the FY2021 adopted budget of \$174.8 million and operating expenditures of \$158.9 million. She explained revenues increased from the prior year, and the largest revenue generators were monthly fees, disposal fees, and recycling. She attributed increases to disposal and recycling revenue to increased gate rates and improved market pricing for commodities. She explained the current rates support the operating budget, capital infrastructure, fleet replacement, debt service, and operating expenses. She shared that the solid waste utility would increase its contribution to Project Assist from \$70,000 to \$220,000, then \$360,000 in the next fiscal year.

Mr. Giudice provided an overview of the fleet asset replacement process, which had been supplemented with Diesel Emissions Reduction Act (DERA) grants from the United States Environmental Protection Agency to help the division invest in sustainable natural gas vehicles. He explained that 31 percent of the fleet was in excellent to good condition, and by April 2021 approximately 66 percent would be in that condition.

Mr. Giudice discussed the five-year Capital Improvement Program (CIP) program, which was comprised of transfer stations and materials recovery facilities (MRF) improvements, active landfill improvements, and closed landfill maintenance. He explained these improvements would maintain critical infrastructure and would be important for protecting public health.

Mr. Giudice stated staff planned to study other requests from the City Council, such as rates for 60-gallon containers, rates for an additional 90-gallon trash container, rates for additional 300-gallon containers, rates for green organics subscriptions, and modifications to the bulk trash set-out schedule.

Ms. Spencer concluded the presentation by highlighting accomplishments in the division, such as increased capacity at the North Gateway Transfer Station to improve the quality of recycled materials and the new household hazardous waste curbside collection pilot program.

Councilwoman Stark recognized staff for their efforts during the pandemic and said she was happy to see residents expressing their gratitude for the service.

Councilwoman Pastor asked if another rate increase would be requested based on the items listed as under review.

Ms. Spencer explained the items under review were requests from councilmembers and there was not a plan to increase the rate. She explained staff is currently looking to see if additional savings could be created to cover additional costs. She stated staff would return to City Council to take action if a rate increase were to be planned.

Councilwoman Pastor shared concerns she heard from staff about the maintenance of trucks and the need for new equipment. She asked if a plan was in place to provide new equipment.

Ms. Spencer agreed staff recognized a concern with an aging fleet which was due for replacement. She explained the department was planning to purchase additional supplemental vehicles for growth, and that the numbers presented during the meeting were for replacement.

Mr. Giudice added that the action taken by City Council allowed staff to address and remedy the aging Solid Waste fleet, which would soon be recognized by staff.

Councilwoman Guardado thanked staff for working closely with the district offices to submit requests for more garbage containers and trash collection. She also commended staff for their efforts to work closely with labor groups.

Chairwoman Williams commended Public Works staff for their focus on customer service and Ms. Spencer for her leadership.

## **12. \*\*\*REVISED\*\*\* Water Capital Improvement Plan Alternatives**

This item was heard out of order.

Deputy City Manager Mario Paniagua introduced Deputy City Manager Karen Peters, Interim Water Services Director Eric Froberg, and Chief Financial Officer Denise Olson to present on the item.

Ms. Peters began by providing an overview of water services cost comparisons, the affordability of the water rate, and community programs. She stated Phoenix had a water rate that was among the most affordable in the country, as well as favorable compared to surrounding cities and Southwest states. She acknowledged the financial assistance needed by customers and discussed the Project Assist program, code changes, and CARES Act funding that had been implemented to provide financial relief.



She explained staff would propose a water rate increase spread over a two-year period, which would fund the rehabilitation and replacement of water pipes, wells, and treatment plants.

Ms. Olson provided an overview of the five-year water and wastewater financial plans produced for the Water Services Department. She presented the following proposed financial plan alternative revenue increases:

- Option 1: No increase in 2021, then increase by 6.5 percent in 2022.
- Option 2: Increase of 3 percent in October 2021, then an increase of 3.5 percent in March 2022.
- Option 3: No increase in 2021, then increase of 3.5 percent in 2022.

She explained the third option would impact the department's Capital Improvement Program (CIP).

Mr. Froberg explained water rate increases were requested over time to address aging infrastructure. He presented data on when pipelines were installed in Phoenix, noting their projected life expectancy of 75 years. He stressed the importance of addressing the cost to replace pipelines, especially as the city grows.

Mr. Froberg provided an overview of the alternative rate options and their impacts to the CIP. He stated that Option 1 would fully fund the CIP and there would be a potential of \$100 million of projects delayed 18 months. He explained Option 2 would fully fund the CIP with no delays. He stated Option 3 would have the most impact to the CIP, which would not be fully funded. He explained the emergency capital repair programs and drought infrastructure programs would be funded under Option 3.

Mr. Froberg provided additional information on projects that may not be funded should Option 3 move forward, such as the major water rehabilitation and replacement program, water main replacements, booster pump stations and water stations, process control technology and energy efficiency projects. He also shared the Colorado River Resiliency Fund, which would allow the city to store water for future use, would not be funded.

Mr. Froberg promoted the department's Waterworks site, which had been created to increase transparency on the CIP, and discussed the next steps for the rate increase. He provided an overview of public outreach efforts, including village planning meetings, virtual public workshops, social media engagement, and City Council meetings.

Mr. Froberg stated the Water/Wastewater Rate Advisory Committee recommended to pursue Option 2, by a unanimous vote of 6-0. He thanked Water Services Department staff for their critical role in the community.

Councilwoman Guardado asked for an update on the \$2 million allocated for Project Assist and the plan to distribute the funding.

Ms. Peters stated \$1.2 million had been distributed as of Feb. 2. She explained staff made approximately 100 calls each day to delinquent account holders to notify them that the City is prepared to provide the credit. She explained they had shifted to an opt-out approach and had assisted more than 2,100 customers so far. She stated the call center employees have taken pride in the opportunity to bring good news to residents.

Councilwoman Guardado asked if there were ways for councilmembers to assist with outreach to residents with delinquent city services accounts.

Ms. Peters explained one obstacle for Project Assist distribution had been that residents may not be inclined to take calls from the Water Services Department and questioned the validity of the financial assistance.

Councilwoman Guardado suggested further discussion on how to improve outreach to residents about the program.

Councilwoman Pastor asked when the City Council would decide on the rate increase.

Ms. Peters stated staff would return to the subcommittee in early March to present the results of a community survey, prior to the hearing on the rate increase.

Councilwoman Stark expressed appreciation for outreach to residents and businesses to clarify the rate increase options.

Chairwoman Williams stressed the importance of water infrastructure to ensure the resource, which would become more precious, would be preserved.

#### **14. Downtown Transportation Plan Update**

Deputy City Manager Mario Paniagua introduced Street Transportation Director Kini Knudson and Assistant Street Transportation Director Chris Kowalski to present on the item.

Mr. Knudson discussed the need for an update to the 2014 Downtown Transportation Plan to adapt to the rapidly changing downtown landscape and incorporate new developments. He explained that the original plan focused on projects, while the new plan would prioritize system operation, development coordination and opportunities for improvement.

Mr. Kowalski shared the major goals of the study, which had been to identify current and future available capacity in the transportation network, determine the impact of planned development, and investigate light rail transit impacts to the network. He explained the findings of the study included robust growth in hotels, multifamily projects, and businesses, as well as commitment from universities, and commitment to light rail.

Mr. Kowalski described the boundaries of the downtown study area, which was bounded by Interstate 10 and Tonto Street, from 7th Avenue to 7th Street.

Mr. Kowalski provided an overview of community engagement efforts, including the collection of nearly 300 comment cards and presentations to numerous neighborhood groups. He shared the final study and findings had been posted on the City of Phoenix website for public comment in October 2020.

Mr. Kowalski explained Street Transportation staff worked collaboratively with Community and Economic Development and Planning and Development staff to plan for more than 104 proposed downtown development projects. He described the impacts of these developments, which included 6.5 million square feet of anticipated development and a 68 percent increase in population and nearly 34,000 new cars added to the network, based on socioeconomic data from the Maricopa Association of Governments. He also discussed progress on the light rail that would impact the transportation network, including the South Central and Capital I-10 Extensions and their associated street capital improvement projects.

Mr. Kowalski explained the study had been organized into the following scenarios:

- Scenario 1, which would improve traffic circulation through optimization of traffic signal timing, identifying new signals, and adding turn and thru lanes;
- Scenario 2, which would support continued growth by incorporating six new traffic signal locations into the improvements proposed in Scenario 1; and
- Scenario 3, which focused on Opportunity Corridors, developed through public input.

He explained the scenarios considered adding network change, growth factors, and identifying streets or corridors with excess capacity, which would feed into the Active Transportation Plan.

Mr. Kowalski discussed key results of the study, including a review with local stakeholders of the Sunburst Plan, a traffic mitigation plan for the downtown area during sporting and entertainment events. He explained the study also found that internal circulation works well within the downtown study area and the network has resiliency to accommodate future growth. He also explained opportunities were identified to further explore alternative modes of transportation.

Mr. Kowalski concluded the presentation by discussing the next steps for the study, which included using the results to inform future private development infrastructure requirements, transportation planning studies, policy documents, and capital improvement planning.

Chairwoman Williams opened the floor for public comment.

Bramley Paulin requested information on the parking study and expressed concerns about adjustments and limited availability of on-street parking.

Chairwoman Williams requested staff respond to the resident's concern.

Mr. Kowalski explained that identifying streets with excess capacity would be a primary consideration for opportunity corridors. He shared public input from the study stressed the importance of ensuring protection for downtown parking and the streetscape, which would inform future corridor planning efforts.

### **15. Downtown Shared Electric Scooter Pilot Program Extension**

Deputy City Manager Mario Paniagua recommended that, due to the full agenda that day and the limited time remaining, this item could be presented at a future subcommittee meeting. He noted there were two members of the public wishing to speak on the item.

Councilwoman Williams requested this item be heard first at the Mar. 3 meeting of Transportation, Infrastructure and Innovation Subcommittee and opened the floor for public comment.

Phuong Bui, representing Spin, spoke in support of the extension of the electric scooter pilot program and highlighted their initiatives to provide safe, responsible, and equitable service to Phoenix residents.

Brandon Cheung, representing Razor, spoke in support of the extension of the electric scooter pilot program and highlighted their health, safety, and education initiatives.

Councilwoman Pastor recounted her experience observing scooter users who were intoxicated. She stressed the importance of monitoring those types of issues to ensure the safety of residents and electric scooter riders.

### **CALL TO THE PUBLIC**

None

### **FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

None.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Chairwoman Williams adjourned the meeting at 12:08 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Adeoffer-Marie Rabusa  
Management Intern