



**STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
CITY OF GLENDALE GENERAL PLAN UPDATE
MEETING #2
CITY HALL
CONFERENCE ROOM B-3
5850 GLENDALE AVENUE
GLENDALE, ARIZONA
AUGUST 6, 2014
5:30 PM**

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at approximately 5:32 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Committee Members Present: David Coble, John Geurs, James Grose, Gary Hirsch, Danielle Martinez, Martin Nowakowski, Rebecca Ontiveros, Thomas Orlikowski, Tom Schmitt, Dr. Frank Sisti, Leslie Sheeler, Charles Whiffen, Kenneth Wixon, Erminie Zarra, and Barbara Plante.

City Staff Present: Jon Froke, AICP, Planning Director; Thomas Ritz, AICP, Senior Planner; Tom Dixon, Senior Planner; and Patti King, Recording Secretary.

Committee Members Absent: Larry Borden, Miles Charles, Arthur G. Dobbelaere, Noel Griemsmann, Robert Heidt, Chuck Jared, Bruce Larson, Nancy Lenox, David Moreno, Lorrie Moreno, Judith Padia, Manuel Padia, Jr., Anita Piazza, Brian Pirooz, Scott Richmond, Jacoba M. Worsdell.

Matrix Design Group Present: Celeste Werner, AICP, Vice President, Bren Cox, Associate Planner, and Nick Gonzales, Planner.

Guests Present: Matt Dudley, Transit Manager for the City of Glendale Transportation Division; Megan Casey, Valley Metro Community Outreach and Ben Limmer, Valley Metro Corridor and Facility Manager.

WELCOME/INTRODUCTIONS: Mr. Froke welcomed all those in attendance, and self-introductions were made.

LETTER FROM THE GOVERNMENT SERVICES COMMITTEE: Mr. Froke presented a letter from the Government Services Committee, which would be sent out to all Glendale board and commission members.



LOYALTY OATHS: Mr. Dixon presented Loyalty Oaths were sworn for those committee members who had not been present in May.

WEST PHOENIX/CENTRAL GLENDALE TRANSIT CORRIDOR STUDY: Mr. Dudley and Valley Metro staff member, provided an overview of the transit tax passed by Glendale residents in 2001, which included a high capacity transit tax. High capacity transit is expected to be in Glendale by 2026.

Megan Casey, Valley Metro Community Outreach Coordinator, provided an overview of the system's ridership for fiscal years 2012 and 2013. She discussed economic development activity along the light rail line since 2008, which totals an investment of \$6.9 Billion. She discussed the future transit system, the background of the funding for the extension to Glendale, the purpose of the project, which was to improve mobility in the region. She explained the timeline for planning to the point of operations, the goal of the planning study phase, the study area, and the study process, including the solicitation of public input throughout the process. The route alternatives were presented as well as the types of transit currently under consideration. In response to questions, Ms. Casey explained that maintenance is included in operations costs and is paid by fares and other miscellaneous sources of funding including the city. Other cities have dedicated funding sources to pay operating expenses. Valley Metro is required to prepare financial projections that clearly show the source of all funding. Mr. Dudley noted that a regional transportation tax was passed by the voters of Maricopa County in 2004 authorizing a 20-year extension of a half-cent sales tax for transportation purposes and that Valley Metro has planned for capital improvements and operations costs for transit projects as part of that tax. Sixty-percent of the current tax goes to fixed route, dial-a-ride and street improvements. It was emphasized that currently 45% of Valley Metro's income is from fare box revenues, which is double the national average. The remainder of the expense is split between the cities.

Ms. Casey stated the demographics on ridership breakdown as 25% students, 40% commuters and the balance as social/recreational users. She committed to providing the exact data to the committee members.

Mr. Dudley responded to questions regarding the use of the term Light Rail. A discussion ensued regarding the options that were available and the fact that light rail was not a certainty and would be voted upon by the City Council. Mr. Limmer expanded upon this question stating that rubber-tired transit (increased bus size) was also an alternative and was more cost effective and has not been ignored in the proposal.

Mr. Hirsch asked if there are studies on the impact of the 3 to 5 year light rail construction period on businesses, economic activity and things such as real estate values along the construction route. The answer provided by Valley Metro was that they are unaware of any such studies, local or national. Mr. Hirsch expressed surprise and disappointment.



Mr. Hirsch stated the 2001 Glendale Transportation Ballot measure approved by voters included specific language that clearly stated light rail “shall not be on Glendale Avenue.” Mr. Hirsch and at least two other committee members from the Ocotillo District expressed concern and some disagreement with Mr. Dudley’s explanation that ballot language was only “advisory” in nature and subject to interpretation. Mr. Dudley responded to several questions by a member of the committee relating to the impact of construction on real estate values and the businesses along the route.

The person who asked the questions also stated that the City of Glendale ballot clearly stated that light rail would not be constructed along Glendale Avenue. Mr. Dudley stated that the ballot is advisory in nature because it so far predates actual improvements, whereas the tax never ends. He assured her that the question has been presented to the Glendale City Attorney’s Office and is a matter to be considered by the City Council and Citizens Transportation Oversight Committee as well.

Ms. Casey explained an existing land use analysis and the economic development potential for the various routes being considered. She summarized the results of public input on the routes proposed to date, which show the Camelback routes most popular, with the Glendale Avenue and Grand Avenue routes receiving mixed feedback. Additional study will be undertaken on the routes and the type of transit. Removed from consideration were the Grand or Glendale Avenue full routes and the Bethany Home routes as well as the streetcar mode. Ms. Casey presented the level 2 study results, the future study schedule and the planned public outreach activities. At the end of the route will be park and ride lots, and transit centers; this is part of what is being studied. The end-of-line infrastructure is part of the total project funding.

A committee member stated that Glendale Avenue between 43rd and 51st Avenues really needs an economic development jolt. Mr. Dudley agreed there is quite a lot of development potential along that route. The committee member noted that economic development along that route is needed to maximize the federal investment in the project. Mr. Limmer agreed and referred to the top three federal criteria for funding a project.

Another person in attendance stated she was at a public input meeting and not one person present voiced support for Glendale Avenue. Mr. Limmer described rezoning activity and the various approaches taken around the light rail system around the Valley. He explained how the Transit Overlay District was applied in Phoenix. Mr. Froke described the changes that have and continue to take place with respect to the Glendale Avenue automobile dealers. For the most part, they want to locate along freeway corridors, which create an opportunity to look at repurposing the areas on Glendale Avenue formerly occupied by the auto dealerships. Zoning would be determined once a route was selected. Rezoning of property will require citizen participation input as part of the process.

Mr. Limmer also stated that light rail has not yet been chosen as the mode of transportation for the expansion into Glendale.



Questions were asked from various Ocotillo District representatives regarding the possible displacement of residents. Staff indicated that once a route is selected and design begins, then it would be determined if any residential property would need to be acquired to accommodate light rail.

Mr. Limmer verified that the project is contingent upon federal funding, and the reality is that money is short. The competition for funding is fierce, but the key is to work with stakeholders to identify the best project at a local level. In response to a question about whether the City of Phoenix is the gatekeeper for the light rail system, Mr. Limmer said not necessarily and explained that it is Valley Metro's responsibility to provide stakeholders with all the facts and then identify the best and most efficient project for the whole area.

In response to an expression of concern about downtown Glendale between 55th and 59th Avenues, Ms. Casey requested comments be provided on the feedback form or online. She reiterated the value of all input and feedback. She stated the next outreach goal is to take direct feedback about the project along Glendale Avenue between 51st and 59th Avenue. She stated that before Valley Metro determines a locally preferred alternative, responses from the Glendale city attorney and elected officials will be received.

It was asked whether it would be beneficial to extend all the way to the Glendale stadium. Mr. Dudley indicated that the city is considering how it could be extended to Westgate. Mr. Limmer described how they position the end of the line so that it can be extended. He also discussed the additional cost involved if they have to go to alternate routes, i.e., Lamar Road. Ms. Casey said that no right-of-way determinations have been made assuring those present that they look closely at this issue and do not take it lightly.

A member of the committee asked if an underground alternative had been considered. He added that it is being done elsewhere and the cost is not significantly more when considering all impact costs. He recommended it be considered. Mr. Limmer said this alternative has been considered.

Ms. Werner asked how acquisition cost is funded and what the overriding guidance has been from stakeholders. Mr. Limmer said that acquisition cost is part of the overall project cost. Ms. Casey responded that stakeholder guidance has been mixed 50/50 and includes both cities. They will do a more scientific study of those specifically impacted. Ms. Werner asked who makes the final decisions, and Ms. Casey indicated the final decisions are made by the city councils of Glendale and Phoenix and the executive committee of the Maricopa Association of Governments. A timeline will be recommended to the Glendale City Council in 2015.

Ms. Werner conducted an electronic vote of the committee members of their preferred option. The result was that 64% favored the Glendale Avenue route, 21% the Camelback Road route and 14% the Camelback/Grand/51st Avenue route. The vote was electronic and one person abstained from voting.



Ms. Werner requested from Valley Metro a comprehensive list of criteria they are using in their Alternatives Evaluation Matrix which they are using to evaluate each of the alternatives for decision-making.

A participant asked what the student population is for Grand Canyon University. Another participant indicated that their growth plan is substantial. Still another participant stated that the student population at Glendale Community College far outweighs Grand Canyon University and that 60% of the GCC students ride the bus. The current project does not consider servicing that community where enrollment is between 32,000 and 35,000.

A committee member whose child attended Grand Canyon University and that, on weekends and for breaks, she and her friends always headed east for fun, not west. When the person offered the new attendance figures, one committee member took offense and suggested that the transit expansion was not based upon demand but socioeconomic status and ridership to the east citing approximations of Glendale Community College attendance, estimated ridership and lack of mass transit expansion inclusions.

Mr. Froke outlined a project planned at 59th Avenue and Olive Avenue to improve safety and the transit service to GCC students.

ENVISION GLENDALE 2040: NEW NAME & LOGO: Mr. Froke unveiled the new Glendale General Plan Update project logo and explained the basis for its selection.

SCHEDULE/NEXT STEPS: Ms. Werner said meetings would be scheduled for October 1 and December 3 and explained the thinking behind scheduling meetings every other month. As far as activities, the team will be computing the data to prepare a background report to support a draft plan that will be dated March 2015. Public meetings will begin May 2015. A website (Glendale2040.com) will be maintained to keep everyone interested up to date and will also include a digital version of the background report. Ms. Werner called for ideas to help enhance the website resources. Map sections will be presented in digestible portions. She requested ideas for how the components of the atlas can best be presented at public meetings.

Topics for discussion at the next meeting include: West Valley Resort and Casino, Luke Air Force Base, Glendale Airport, billboard standards, zoning 101 for existing conditions, and an overview of what other communities are currently working on. Also presented will be an overview of the concept of a General Plan and the typical components and how they will meld other plan elements to fit into Envision Glendale 2040. Mr. Froke offered to send a map of the strip annexation area to committee members and advised that future topics would be identified.

ADJOURNMENT: In closing the meeting, Mr. Froke thanked everyone for their input. The meeting was adjourned at approximately 7:20 p.m.