



## **Transportation Advisory Committee Minutes**

Thursday, February 3, 2011

6:30 – 8:30 p.m.

San Tan Room – Development Services Building

### **Committee Members:**

Ryan Nichols – Chair	Present
David Brandhorst – Vice Chair	Present
Robin Benning – Council Member	Absent
Chris Clark	Present
Gregory Arrington	Present
Kim Mlazgar	Present
Nichelle Williams	Present
Patricia Conrad	Present
Richard Turman	Present

### **Town Staff Members:**

Bill Birdwell, Traffic Analyst	Present
Norma Hernandez, Management Assistant	Present
Tom Condit, Development Services Director	Present
Troy White, Public Works Division Manager	Absent

### **Staff guests/presenters:**

Lisa Padilla, Management Assistant II, Parks and Recreation  
Joe LaFortune, Emergency Management Coordinator, Fire  
Van Summers, Fire Chief

### **Public:**

David Bond  
Sara Christopherson  
Sally Galci

### **1. Call to Order:**

Committee Chairman, Ryan Nichols, called the meeting to order at 6:33 p.m.

### **2. Introductions:**

Self introductions were made around the table.

### **3. Public Comment:**

No public comments received.

#### **4. Items for Discussion and possible action**

##### **Item A: Consideration and possible approval of December 2, 2010 minutes**

Motion to approve the December 2, 2010 minutes, (Brandhorst/Arrington/Unanimous).

##### **Item B: Information the Disaster Management Plan Joe LaFortune/Chief Summers**

Chief Summers opened dialogue on the Town's Disaster Management Committee (DMC). He said the Town is the best protected small town in service; the Town is part of Automatic Aid System, which is added protection. The town is also protected by the Maricopa County Sheriff Department. The DMC consists of HOA's, school districts, religious community, Community Emergency Response Team (CERT 160 members), and amateur radio (HAM). The DMC is tasked with developing an appendix for the Town's Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) and for the organization and training of volunteers for use during a disaster situation. The Town has access to special assets and resources, if an occurrence happened there would be very good response from the surrounding agencies. However, if a regional disaster occurred, the Town would not have the same support from the surrounding municipalities due to each entity having to respond to their own residents. The Town does have an extensive volunteer list which would be added support in case of an emergency situation.

The main areas of concern in town are the flooding issues and old infrastructure; the primary goal in a disaster or emergency situation would be shelter and evacuation. The Town would partner with the Red Cross as well for shelter. The Town is divided into seven districts, which are equal in population, and each district contains at least one shelter location (a church or school).

The communication center would be in the Development Services Building (DSB); the town is on the same 800 mega hertz communication system along with Gilbert, Mesa, AJ, and Chandler. The sheriff's department is on their own communication system; however if the Town added a repeater on the DSB, there would be communication among staff from Fire, Sherriff, Town, and the hand held radios that volunteers would be using.

A question was asked by a TAC member in regards to moving people on a mass scale and having access to each road. If the Town is low on staff or volunteers, how will residents know where to evacuate to?

Staff said the critical piece is to put together a good traffic plan, staff can monitor arterials three miles away, alter timing, put a signal in flash, and put every signal in green to have all traffic move north. Phase II of the ITS (Intelligent Transportation System), will be able to monitor 22 video camera that will monitor 31 of the 34 intersections in town. This will assist in moving vehicles from one point to the next. ITS will connect to all the regional systems; the fiber optic system that connects all cities (the Town is one mile short of fiber optic connection to Mesa).

Staff advised that they are aware of the hot spots in town; what roads are going to flood, and what roads would be the critical roads in use. The Town has a relationship with Gilbert and Mesa; this allows staff to know where those entities are going to send fire trucks – this allows for the Town to be better prepared.

Staff also has the ability to program a message in the phone system which can send a message to all house phones. Staff is thinking about what other methods could be used for communication means. The DMC would have to react at the time of each emergency situation; even if traffic plans are in place, those plans can change by the minute. Staff runs scenarios about twice a year in an effort to approach modeling of an event; the Town has the manpower and equipment to cut roads and make a path if needed.

TAC member advised that if they know what the Town needs, the members may be able to provide ideas to be better prepared.

Staff said the TAC may have recommendations that would be beneficial to the DMC.

**Item D: Presentation on the Town Trail System**

**Lisa Padilla**

Ms. Padilla provided an overview of the Town's award-winning master plan for parks, trails, and open space. There was extensive public involvement and input from the citizens, which has contributed to the overall use of the trail. The trail system is designed to benefit everyone in the community; it is an attraction and quality of life feature for adults, children, and horses.

The trail system plan is to be implemented in fragments; different paths have been created to accommodate everyone. There are sandy paths along the bottom of the trail to accommodate horses, paved paths away from the horse paths to accommodate pedestrians, and lots of greenery to add aesthetics. Connectivity is an important element in the movement of people, just as with traffic. The Queen Creek Wash is the spine of the trail system; which connects to Gilbert and will eventually connect to the San Tan Mountains Regional Park, and Pinal County. When applying for the Transportation Enhancement Grant, the Town received extra points for local and regional use, connectivity, and destination. The trail system will be a great regional path for many to utilize.

**Item C: Presentation on the Town's adopted traffic control policy**

**Bill Birdwell**

Mr. Birdwell provided an overview on the Town's Adopted Traffic Control Policy which was approved by Council in 2006. For the next few months staff will review the Town's current policy, comparison of surrounding agencies policies, and proposed staff recommendations to the existing policy. The purpose of the policy is to acknowledge the necessity for sound traffic calming designs in the planning and development of new residential subdivisions. To set forth the process and criteria by which a citizen request for measures designed to control traffic volumes and speeds will be evaluated and potentially implemented.

The Town receives many requests for speed humps; Traffic staff spends more than two hours at each location monitoring traffic. However, 98% of the time staff does not find an issue with the area being reported. Any time a traffic calming device is put in place, staff needs to assure they do not cause any dangers; they need to be sensitive to the safety of the community. For example, if a speed hump is placed in a particular area, the speed hump may cause the area to flood due to drainage issues or flow. If staff can verify there is

definitely a traffic speeding issue, they will ask the Maricopa County Sherriff's Operations (MCSO) to monitor the area and issue citation tickets.

Some of the low impact traffic measures that can be used are speed trailers, increased traffic enforcement (MCSO), speed limit signs at all entrances to a neighborhood from an arterial or collector street; multi-way stop controls when traffic warrants are met, and marking bike lanes – adding centerlines to reduce lane widths. Research has determined that speeding sometimes occurs when lanes are too wide; re-striping can make a difference and slow traffic down.

In established neighborhoods, speed humps can be placed in critical areas that staff has determined traffic calming is warranted. In new upcoming subdivisions, some of the traffic calming devices that can be done is to install traffic circles, to have narrowed street sections, and to reduce the lane widths. Most of the speeding issues are visual – big open areas cause people to speed.

The process for a traffic calming device to be requested is to contact Traffic staff to report the problem. Staff surveys the streets (street type and design, land uses traffic volumes, and speeds). Based on survey, low impact measures are implemented and monitored. Many times if staff changes one thing on one street, something has to change on another street to make sure traffic does not become an issue on other streets.

If low impact measures are unsuccessful, high impact measures need to be implemented. Staff would determine the area, send surveys to all residents and businesses in that area and ask if they agree to have speed humps installed. In order to have a successful survey outcome, there needs to be a response of 51% that agree to the speed humps. If response is successful, staff may have a public meeting depending on the area and impact. As a general rule, if more than one set of speed humps are requested, they need to be at least 300' apart from each other.

The Town Engineer will use the best standard practice to justify the implementation of each type of traffic calming device, considering: traffic volume, bus route, emergency vehicle access (staff has to obtain approval from the Fire Department in an effort not to slow down fire apparatus/ambulances), posted speed limit (needs to be less than 25 mph), actual measured speeds, distance to stop sign, traffic signal, (speed humps cannot be too close to the curb or to an intersection), or other applicable concerns. The process can be completed within 90 days if all criteria items have been met.

The Town is responsible for funding the project and retaining the contractor, conducting plan review and obtaining the required permits, and maintenance (at this time, there are no funds available for traffic calming devices).

Questions raised by TAC members after the presentation:

1. Does Solid Waste have to approve the speed humps too?
2. Is there a time limit they have to be installed?
3. How about installing dips, such as at Sossaman and Queen Creek?

Staff said Solid Waste would have to be considered. There is no time limit when to install, but usually the entire process can take up to 90 days. Installing dips is very expensive, much more costly than speed humps due to design work needed, removal of asphalt, and installation of concrete.

**Item E: Update on ITS / CIP**

**Bill Birdwell**

This item was moved to the meeting on March 3.

**Item F: Request for future items**

The next TAC meeting will be March 3, 2011 at 6:30 p.m. in the Development Services Building – San Tan Room.

**5. Announcements**

Debbie Reyes has resigned the TAC.

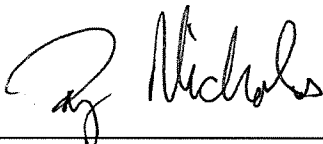
Chris Clark thanked Bill Birdwell for his assistance in the Kiwanis Club Parade in December.

**6. Adjournment:**

Meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

PREPARED BY: Norma Hernandez, February 8, 2011

PASSED AND APPROVED ON: April 7, 2011



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Ryan Nichols, TAC Committee Chair