

**WORKSHOP MINUTES
PLANNING COMMISSION
GLENDALE CITY HALL
CONFERENCE ROOM 2-A
5850 WEST GLENDALE AVENUE**

**JANUARY 7, 2016
5:15 PM**

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at approximately 5:15 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Commissioners Present: Commissioners Dobbelaere, Harper, Hirsch, and Vice Chairperson Lenox and Chairperson Johnston were in attendance.

Commissioners Absent: Commissioners Gallegos and Moreno were absent and excused.

City Staff Present: Tabitha Perry, Assistant Planning Director, Jon Froke, AICP, Planning Director, James Gruber, Assistant City Attorney, and Diana Figueroa, Recording Secretary.

Special Guest: Jennifer Pyne, Valley Metro Project Manager, Megan Casey, Community Outreach Coordinator, Darrell Jackson, Glendale Star and Matt Dudley, City of Glendale.

ITEM:

1. VALLEY METRO - WEST PHOENIX / CENTRAL GLENDALE (LIGHTRAIL) TRANSIT CORRIDOR STUDY

Ms. Jennifer Pyne with Valley Metro provided the Commission with a brief overview of the Valley Metro - West Phoenix / Central Glendale (Lightrail) Transit Corridor Study and Recommendations.

Ms. Pyne stated that Valley Metro initiated a transit corridor study for the West Phoenix/Central Glendale area to identify high-capacity transit service options to connect downtown Glendale to the existing light rail system. She said Glendale had partnered with the City of Phoenix and the community to determine a route location and a type of transit that would best serve the area. She explained that they were at the end of the study. She noted that Valley Metro had completed two levels of technical analysis and was currently conducting the final level of study on two types of transit which were light rail and bus rapid transit. She explained on the map the three route alternatives identifying Glendale Avenue, Camelback Road/43rd Avenue and Camelback Road/Grand Avenue/51st Avenue. She stated that in addition Valley Metro was also conducting a focused analysis of the Downtown Glendale area. As a result of that study, a recommended downtown route was suggested as an option on Glenn Drive west of 51st Avenue.

Ms. Pyne discussed the alternatives, advantages and disadvantages of the types of transit being evaluated. She pointed out the highest ridership and capacity comparisons as well as economic development opportunities. She noted the many public outreach activity events and presentations that were held to secure community input and awareness. She explained that the

most interest came from the Camelback Road opportunity and the connection to Grand Canyon University. She stated that there had been mixed feedback with the Glendale Avenue option with some concern that it might impact existing businesses.

They recommend light rail as the transit type with the recommended route being Camelback Road to 43rd Avenue to Glendale Avenue, crossing over to 51st Avenue then north to Glenn Drive to conclude in front of the Civic Center. She indicated the next step was to obtain and incorporate additional public input. She noted that public meetings will be held January 19 and 20, 2016.

She noted this was the recommendation that will be brought before City Council in March or April as the preferred route. She stated that if approved, the preferred alternative will proceed into the design and environmental phase. Operation was scheduled for 2026.

Chairperson Johnston asked if the intersections would stay open while construction was taking place. Ms. Pyne explained there were no construction plans yet, but they do their best to ensure accesses to affected businesses.

Commissioner Hirsch asked if there was any data on which businesses remain after the light rail construction. He would like to see some data on how many businesses survive after a major construction exposure. There was no data available since there were too many variables and it being very difficult to track.

Commissioner Hirsch also inquired as to what the incentive was for the City of Phoenix to help fund the light rail from Camelback to 43rd Avenue in Glendale. Ms. Pyne explained that both cities have been involved throughout the entire process. She also provided information on where the funds would come from including federal and regional funding. She added that the City of Glendale and Phoenix will participate in cost sharing discussions for the remainder of the cost. Mr. Matt Dudley explained further noting that each city would pay their share 50/50 along 43rd Avenue given that this was a regional transportation network project that will connect the entire system.

Commissioner Hirsch noted he was still unclear as to why Phoenix would be on board with most of light rail going through Glendale.

Commissioner Lenox noted that light rail would go both ways therefore they would also receive some benefit.

Commissioner Harper discussed possibly including ASU West in the future.

The Commission discussed other possibilities.

Chairperson Johnston asked if business owners will know ahead of time when construction will begin to make arrangements for business traffic. The response was yes.

REPORTS AND COMMENTS

Jon Froke, AICP, Planning Director, informed the Commission that he will be at the Scenic Corridor voting meeting on February 4. The Corridor will extend from 51st Avenue west and south to Bell Road.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business, Commissioner Harper made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Hirsch seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 5:47 p.m.