



August 31, 2015

Joan Daniels, Co-Chair
Joan Hall, Co-Chair
First to Campbell Grant Road Coalition
Tucson, AZ 85712

Re: August 3, 2015, Letter from First to Campbell Grant Road Coalition to the Office of Integrated Planning

Dear Ms. Daniels and Ms. Hall:

Thank you for your letter of August 3 regarding concerns and recommendations of the First to Campbell Grant Road Coalition. We agree that neighborhoods are an important part of the overall context of Grant Road and look forward to working collaboratively with the neighborhoods, as well as with the other stakeholders who contribute to Grant Road's overall context, going forward. Because the Citizen Task Force is recognized as the body providing recommendations to Mayor and Council on behalf of stakeholders in the Grant Road area, Stakeholder meetings and other communications are shared with Task Force members, including this response to your letter.

This response was prepared by Project Team members from the Department of Transportation and the Office of Integrated Planning. As you will undoubtedly note, some of the responses are similar to points discussed when Office of Integrated Planning staff met with the members of the First to Campbell Grant Road Coalition on August 4 and 25.

Neighborhood Input

Your letter asks how neighborhoods can have meaningful input into the project and raises some issues about the frequency of Citizen Task Force meetings and interaction with the Task Force. It is probably important to begin by clarifying the role of the Task Force to date and its role going forward.

Some Background on the Grant Road Citizen Task Force: The purpose of the Citizen Task Force is "To advise the Department of Transportation and the Mayor and Council on: (a) the roadway alignment that will widen Grant Road from 4 to 6 lanes from Oracle Road to Swan Road; (b) roadway design; and (c) land use and urban design plans for properties within and near the project boundaries." The Task Force was formed in 2007 with members representing a variety of stakeholders, including neighborhoods. Many members have been on the Task Force since its inception, with replacement members joining over time as necessary. The Citizen Task Force has held 38 meetings over the course of its existence and has accomplished the major milestone of providing a recommendation to Mayor and Council for the roadway alignment in 2010. Subsequently, the Task Force has met periodically to review and advise on the roadway design for Phases 1 & 2.

With the roadway project well underway, the City is now beginning the detailed land use planning effort building on work done through many public workshops and Task Force meetings to develop a Corridor Vision intended to guide planning of land uses adjacent to the roadway improvements. The attachment, which OIP has previously shared with the First-Campbell Grant Road Coalition, shows the complementary, but distinct, tracks for the roadway design and the land use planning efforts.

Based on input from the Coalition, we have inserted additional Call to the Audience items on the Task Force agenda to allow for public input after technical information has been presented and prior to the Task Force making a decision. This seemed to work well to improve public engagement at the July Task Force meeting.



Additionally, we are working to update the Grant Road website to include documentation of stakeholder meetings, such as those OIP has with the First to Campbell Grant Road Coalition, as well as providing the questions asked by stakeholders and answers provided by the Project Team. Task Force members will be alerted when this material is updated so they can review it. The Project Team is happy to forward information about upcoming Coalition meetings to the Task Force if desired.

Coalition Recommendations

Your letter includes five recommendations from the Coalition for addressing land use planning in the First to Campbell Segment. As shown in the attachment, and as OIP has shared when meeting with the Coalition, the plan is to hold a series of focus groups and design workshops to explore and evaluate with stakeholders possible approaches and tools to achieving the Corridor Vision for the identified Centers and Segments, including the First to Campbell Segment. Each recommendation is addressed below:

Recommendation: Unlink Segment

First to Campbell is one of two segments included in the “Central Portion Segments” called out in the Corridor Vision the draft for which was developed in 2008, and more recently updated and reviewed by the Task Force and public in preparation for Mayor and Council consideration of the Vision for adoption on September 9. The Vision is intended to provide guidance for land use planning for the Centers and Segments identified in the Vision, including the First to Campbell. However, the intention is that staff will work with the Task Force and stakeholders to undertake detailed consideration of the parcels that make up each sub-segment, the current opportunities and constraints, and actions that could assist in achieving the vision.

In summary, the unique sub-segments will be considered individually.

Recommendation: Continuous Input from All Stakeholders re Remnant Parcels.

The Project Team will provide ongoing opportunities to provide input regarding the remnant parcels with the understanding that there are RTA requirements regarding the remnants that the City must meet. The opportunities for input will include speaking at the “Call to the Audience” at Citizen Task Force meeting, participating in design workshops, meetings with Neighborhood Associations and other stakeholders, and regular updates on the land use planning progress via the Grant Road email list, Ward III, and other means that stakeholders may suggest. As shown in the attachment, the Citizen Task Force will weigh in on recommendations deriving from the design workshops for Mayor and Council consideration.

In summary, the Project Team will work to clearly communicate when and how stakeholders may provide input regarding the remnant parcels as the land use planning moves forward and will disseminate that information in multiple ways to try and get to as many potential stakeholders as possible. We should note that we appreciate the Coalition’s reference to “all stakeholders,” with presumably the understanding that stakeholders may have differing views.

Recommendation: Honest, productive and timely stakeholder access to planning and design discussions

The approach to access regarding planning and design discussions is addressed in the response above. It is certainly the intent of the Project Team to be honest and, if for any reason it is found there has been miscommunication of information, to address such issues in a straightforward manner. The Project Team also understands that stakeholders’ time is valuable and, therefore, it is very important the stakeholders’ perceive that the discussions are productive – i.e., that they are heard and explanations provided as to why ideas may or may not be pursued. For discussions to be productive, the Project Team understands that they must be timely so that there is an opportunity to affect change.



In summary, the Project Team's intention is to provide honest, productive, and timely access to discussions.

Recommendation: Preservation of existing R-1 and NR-1 zoning

The two-step approach Mayor and Council adopted at its May 5, 2015, meeting to "restart and move the land use planning forward for the Grant Road Corridor between Oracle Road and Swan Roads," included (1) adopting a Corridor Vision based on the Draft Community Character & Vitality document prepared in 2011 by the Project Team with active input from the Task Force and public, and (2) achieving the Corridor Vision through development and implementation of land use planning tools, including an overlay and other tools phased with the roadway design."

The second steps is the one in which consideration would be given to the types of tools that could be helpful in achieving the vision for an area. This would be the focus of the design workshops, and it is anticipated that this discussion would include considering whether and how the existing zoning may be an asset or constraint to achieving the vision for the segment. If rezoning were suggested, it would require a public process, including possible specific plan amendments, and approval by the Mayor and Council.

In summary, zoning will be a key part of the upcoming land use planning discussion, including the design workshop discussions.

Recommendation: Installation of buffers such as walls, berms, pathways and green space to mitigate resident exposure to noise and visual intrusion

The Corridor Vision calls out focus for the Central Portion Segments, including First to Campbell, as "Active and engaging neighborhood buffers," so there is agreement that buffering is important. The type of buffering will be considered further in the proposed design workshops. As OIP has discussed with the Coalition, there are a series of issues that will be important to consider going forward. The results of the technical noise analysis; the effectiveness of various elements to mitigate noise; the upkeep of open space; the funding of elements not in the roadway budget; the benefits/liabilities of activating arterial frontage and providing more "eyes on the street," and others.

In summary, buffering will be a focus of upcoming land use discussion, including the types of buffering for consideration ranging from buildings to walls, berms, pathways, and green space with the goal of identifying tradeoffs.

Coalition Requests for Serious Consideration by Decision Makers

Request: Designate Grant Road Phase II remnants as green space, with appropriate walls, berms, and amenities, and include neighborhoods in design

As OIP has discussed with the Coalition and as indicated in the attachment, the remnants will be a focus of the proposed design workshops, in which stakeholders, including neighborhoods, will be encouraged to participate. It is important to remember that the City does not traditionally sell remnants until construction of a project phase is completed or almost completed, so there is time to have thoughtful discussions about the use of the Phase 2 remnants.

Request: Respect historic designations of adjacent neighborhoods, including funding of consultant to redraw historic boundaries to mitigate contributing properties destroyed by project

As OIP conveyed to the Coalition when it met in August, the City's Department of Transportation has written a letter that will ensure the funding of a consultant to redraw historic boundaries following completion of demolition necessary for Phases 5 and 6. A copy of this letter will be provided to the Coalition as well as to Neighborhood Associations affected and to the City Historic Preservation Office.



Request: Include the Jefferson Park Health/History Walk-Ride Loop in the design of the south side of Grant Road

OIP will work with the Coalition to make sure that the Loop is one of the scenarios considered in the land use design workshop for the First to Campbell Segment.

Request: Stop intrusive traffic into neighborhoods by closing appropriate streets, specifically Hampton

The traffic analysis for Grant Road does not indicate that there will be increased traffic from the widening project on Hampton and, therefore, there are no plans to close Hampton as part of the Grant Road project. However, the City understands that there is concern about traffic related to the Walgreen's and Sausage Deli development and that during negotiations between the Jefferson Park Neighborhood and the developer there was talk about the possibility of closing Hampton in the future. Project Team members are committed to helping the Jefferson Park Neighborhood explore different approaches to addressing a partial closure for Hampton in accordance with the City's policy for street closures.

Request: Address serious concerns relative to bicyclists safety at Mountain/Grant intersection

The Mountain/Grant intersection will be looked at as part of the Phase 5 and 6 designs. In the meantime, Ann Chanecka, who oversees the Bicycle and Pedestrian Program for the Department of Transportation, is working on interim safety improvements for bicyclists at this intersection. The improvements are expected to be installed by the end of October. Regarding bicycle safety at Park, the full signal will accommodate bicycle traffic similar to what is there today.

In Conclusion

As OIP continues to meet with the Coalition, we will be providing more information on the land use planning process for the Grant Road Project highlighted in the attachment, including more specificity about the Citizen Task Force's role and meeting schedule and plans for the design workshops.

Thank you, again, for your time and commitment to the community.

Respectfully,

Handwritten signature of Daryl Cole in black ink.

Daryl Cole
Director, Department of Transportation

Handwritten signature of Nicole Ewing Gavin in black ink.

Nicole Ewing Gavin
Director, Office of Integrated Planning

C: Mayor and Council Members
Michael Ortega, City Manager

Attachment: Grant Road Process Overview

**Attachment
GRANT ROAD PROCESS OVERVIEW**

