

**TONTO APACHE TRIBE OUTREACH CONVERSATION
MEETING SUMMARY NOTES**
FRIDAY, OCTOBER 28, 2022
2:00 PM TO 3:30 PM

MEETING ATTENDEES

- Chairman Calvin Johnson, *Tonto Apache Tribe (TAT)*
- Eric Trevan, *aLocal Solutions Planning Consultant*
- Catie Hudson, *aLocal Solutions*
- Jason James, *LRTP Project Manager, Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) MPD*
- Don Sneed, *Planning Program Manager/Tribal Liaison, ADOT MPD*
- Paula Brown, *Planning Program Manager/Tribal Liaison, ADOT MPD*
- Brenden Foley, *District Administrator, ADOT Northcentral District*
- Stephen Craver, *Assistant Regional Traffic Engineer, Northern Region, ADOT TSMO*
- Bailey Smith, *ADOT EIT*
- Kristen Faltz, *Kimley-Horn*

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

Jason James welcomed attendees and introduced the Project Team.

2. P2P OVERVIEW

Jason James provided an overview of ADOT’s performance-based Planning-to-Programming (P2P) process, which is used to prioritize projects on the state highway system. He explained that performance-based planning is federal law and is also required by State statute.

- Jason shared a flowchart that provided an overview of the annual P2P timeline. P2P starts with the planning process, which includes project nominations and prioritization. Following prioritization, the top performing projects are added to the 5-year program following State Transportation Board approval.
- Jason provided a detailed explanation of P2P scoring for pavement preservation, bridge preservation, modernization, and expansion projects, as well as annual investment target amounts. He also provided a breakdown of the scoring percentages for technical, district, and policy components.
- He mentioned that a Tribe can nominate projects by submitting them directly to him, through the ADOT District Engineer/Administrator, or the Tribe’s regional council of governments (COG) or metropolitan planning organization (MPO). Project nominations need to be supported by data and are scored based on how well they meet the P2P scoring criteria.
- Jason to include the Tribe in the next round of the District P2P Workshop.

3. LRTP OVERVIEW

Jason provided an overview on ADOT’s Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) and the update that is specific to this tribal outreach effort.

- Jason mentioned that ADOT will be opening an LRTP public survey website and he will include the tribe in the notice, which should be released around December 21st. He also mentioned that, in January, ADOT will conduct a meeting with the tribes, COGs and MPOs. That meeting will be held prior to the first public hearings.
- Chairman Calvin asked if ADOT looks at trails as a consideration of multimodal planning.

- Jason answered no because trails typically do not interact enough with the state highway system, but pedestrian sidewalks will be included.
- Eric Trevan asked how revenue is judged on Task 5 of the LRTP.
 - Jason stated that all sources of revenue are reviewed.

4. TAT PRIORITIES/COMMENTS

The Project Team had an open discussion on priorities specific to TAT and any additional questions or comments attendees had.

- Catie Hudson shared her screen to discuss the development vision of the TAT.
- Eric shared that there is significant traffic in the area and the Tribe is working on balancing that traffic with upcoming development. He feels that upcoming economic development in the Tribe will be a catalyst for further development and improvements throughout the rest of the state. He shared that they are looking at the framework of what the tribe can work with ADOT on for the LRTP as well as share what developments the Tribe is anticipating to see in the future.
- Eric stated that the Tribe has done a wide variety of revenue generating analysis, including economic development. This analysis determined:
 1. The existing tribal entrance intersection on SR-87. A roundabout would be preferred here.
 2. Creating the development to where the two trust lands and development area are on either side of SR-87. There is a need for improvements to allow pedestrians to cross SR-87 safely.
 3. Green Valley Road has a planned extension. The Tribe is wondering how this will fit in with the future development
 4. Federal land is surrounding the development and trails. The Tribe is trying to determine how those fit in with pedestrian access to the anticipated development.
- Jason inquired what intersection the proposed development is at.
 - Eric shared it is at BIA-101 and SR-87.
- Eric stated that the trust land is on either side of the highway so there is need for pedestrian facilities to allow for people to safety cross SR-87.
- Eric stated that there is currently a hotel, casino, and gas station at the location. There is a feeling of the intersection being unsafe. As the tribe intends to buildout this area, there will be additional ingress and egress issues if not solved.
- Eric shared that possible development that were discussed for the future development include restaurants, a family fun center, an RV park, expansion of the gas station, light industrial, and grocery.
- Eric opened the floor to feedback.
 - Jason thanked Eric for the overview of the proposed expansion of Tonto Quarters. He stated that, to build a roundabout on a state highway, it has to meet ADOT's warrants.
 - Brenden Foley stated that as long as the intersection is meeting signal warrants it is likely also meeting the warrant for a roundabout. When there is additional development in locations such as this, these impacts will need to be mitigated by the developer.
- Jason stated that he saw that there was a health center in the proposal. He inquired what are the transit services offered by the Tribe and will these transit services serve the health center?
 - Eric stated that the Tribe understands that there is an opportunity to provide transit services to the proposed health facilities and this will likely be incorporated. Eric asked Chairman Calvin if there is any transit service in the Tribe.
 - Chairman Calvin stated that there is not currently, but if needed in the future, that can be developed.
- Jason inquired if there has been any conversation with the City of Payson or Gila County for potential partnering on the planned expansion.

- Chairman Calvin stated that this is an election year in Payson so the City is more focused on that but there have been conversations with those who are staying with the City and they are excited about the project. That is the extent of the discussion with the City. He shared that the Tribe has not contacted Gila County yet.
- Jason stated that the area of the development is within Central Arizona Governments (CAG). He recommends approaching the planning division for CAG as well. This may result in funding opportunities in the future. Travis Ashbaugh is the transportation planner for CAG.
 - Eric agreed that the Tribe was also planning on this but wanted to reach out to ADOT first as the roadway is a state highway.
- Eric asked if anyone had any information on the Green Valley Roadway extension?
 - Jason stated that he does not believe this is a state process.
 - Brenden confirmed that the roadway is outside of ADOT right-of-way, and it is not included in the five-year program.
 - Eric stated that an ADOT study referenced it so wanted to confirm.
- Don Sneed inquired on the timeline of the development, He stated he knows this is preliminary planning but wanted to ask what the timeframe is for the development.
 - Eric stated that the Tribe is working through identifying funding and trying to see how that will shake out in the upcoming years. Some of the development can be relatively soon, within the next two to five years. They are also trying to look into infrastructure needs and traffic patterns to see how the development will fit in with the surrounding infrastructure.
- Don stated that regarding traffic or crashes, the Tribe can communicate with ADOT and they can aid in coordination on the request from the Tribe. Also, ADOT's planning division is undertaking a traffic count process. They are working with Tribes to determine what the existing process is for traffic counts. If interested, Don can put the Tribe in contact with the project manager. CAG can also help with this.
 - Eric stated that that is appreciated. He shared that they are in the process of finalizing the engineer to work on the project.
- Eric stated that the next step for the project includes finalizing the engineer to start the design/engineering. It sounds as though there is an LRTP update meeting in January. The Tribe thinks that the roundabout will be a great option, especially as an introduction between the Tribe and Payson.
- Jason stated that we can keep this conversation going as the project moves along. Working with the Northcentral District and establishing a warrant for the roundabout at the intersection is crucial. Once there is confirmation of that, it can go into the P2P process where it can potentially be funded.
 - Eric stated if the Tribe can leverage additional funding, how would that work on an accelerated timeline.
 - Jason stated that it depends on how much funding is received and what the funding source is. If the funding opportunity is a local match, it cannot be accelerated. If the Tribe receives federal funding that can cover majority of the funding, that can accelerate the development process.
 - Brenden stated that there are many grant opportunity out there. If you identify the needs and data behind the project, it would be very helpful. The more you can get grant funding to make these improvements, the more installation can be accelerated.
 - Jason stated that Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) funding is also available. Projects that are eligible must have a fatal or suspected serious injury crash at the location within the last five years for funding. He asked if the Tribe knew of any fatal crashes.

- Chairman Calvin stated there have been none.
- Eric stated that they are trying to temper the release of some of their ideas early on but those are the Tribe's initial thoughts. The more the Tribe and ADOT can work together, the smoother the development will go.
- Don stated that traffic safety is a major consideration for ADOT. Does the tribe have a tribal safety plan?
 - Chairman Calvin stated that the Tribe does not have one currently but following the discussion today, this is something that will be explored.
- Brenden asked Jason to share his contact information with the Tribe.
- Paula Brown inquired what major challenges the Tribe is encountering when completing transportation priorities.
 - Chairman Calvin stated that there is a staffing shortage on tribal land. The reservation only spans two miles of roadway. The Tribe previously have not had the need for transportation planning studies, so they have never had the staff to complete them. They will definitely look into this. The Tribe previously relied on the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) but needs are compiled with those of other tribes rather than addressed specific to the Tonto Apache Tribe.

5. Closing Remarks

The Project Team thanked the Tonto Apache Tribe for their participation in the Consultation Session.

6. ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

The following links provide additional resources:

- [State Long Range Transportation Plan](#)
- [Planning to Programming Information](#)