South Mountain Corridor Study
Citizens Advisory Team
Meeting Summary

Date: September 22, 2005
Time: 5:30 p.m.
Location: Cesar Chavez High School, 3921 W. Baseline Road, Laveen

CAT Members Attending:

Rock Argabright, Ahwatukee Foothills Chamber of Commerce
Laurel Arndt, Ahwatukee Foothills Village Planning Committee
Jim Buster, Avondale
Peggy Eastburn, Estrella Village Planning Committee
Doris French, Laveen Village Planning Committee
Michael Goodman, Phoenix Mountains Preservation Council
Don Jones, Southwest Valley Chamber of Commerce
David Lafferty, Tolleson
Bob Moss, United Dairymen of Arizona
Wayne Nelson, GRIC District 7
Nathaniel Percharo, I-10 Pecos Landowners
Laura Prendergast, Laveen Citizens for Responsible Development
Michelle Pulich-Stewart, Sierra Club
Steve Williams, Maricopa County Farm Bureau

Staff and Consultants:

Mike Bruder, ADOT
Matt Burdick, ADOT
Kelly Cairo, GCI
Amy Edwards, HDR
Theresa Gunn, GCI
Bill Hahn, MCDOT
John Roberts, GRIC
Roger Roy, MAG
Bill Vachon, FHWA

Citizens:

Jessie T. Amavisca
Jose Amavisca
Simon A. Amavisca
Willie Amavisca
Alicia Brooks
Francisco Chepara
Leticia Chepara
Herman Dominguez
Maria Dominguez
William Eastburn
Olivia Escobedo
Susie Finkle
David Folts
Manuel C. Franco
Ruben M. Garcia
Frank Gonzales
John Gonzales
Serena Grimm
Jose Guillen
Lydia Guillen
Kevin Graff
Albert Hernandez
Amelia C. Hernandez
Carmen Hernandez
Diane Hernandez
Irene Hernandez
Joe Hernandez
Marcelino Hernandez
Rose Hernandez
Sylvester Hernandez
Delicia Juan
David A. Leon
Thomas Leonor
Thomas B. Leonor
Matthew Alan Lord
Andy Martinez
Andy Martinez (2nd)
Dolores A. Martinez
Jared Martinez
Robert Martinez
Jose Molina
Renee Molina
Richard Molina
Pauline Moya
Corrine Purtill
William Ramsay
C. Dale Raphael
Julio Reszale
Bill Romo
Dione Roscon
Roger Roy
David Sanchez
Rachel Sanchez
Toni Sanchez
Margaret Sarsoza
Robert Sarsoza
Walt Sherwood
Pat Skinner
Alice Terceno
Janet Waters
Clifford Wood
Jerry A. Wood
Patsy Wood
Frances Yslava

ACTION PLAN

Task/Activity	Who	When
Provide reports to CAT prior to the meeting and include a contact for questions	Amy Edwards/GCI	Prior to each meeting

Welcome and Introductions

Theresa Gunn welcomed attendees to the meeting and explained that at these meetings, comments from public attendees are accepted in writing, and if possible, responses provided. Due to the number of attendees representing the Santa Maria area, Amy Edwards presented information on the 71st Avenue alternative and provided a history of the project regarding local items of interest. Highlights of Edwards' presentation included:

- There are three potential alternatives for a westside connection to I-10.
- One alternative under study is between 67th Avenue and 75th Avenue, along Lower Buckeye Road, and was originally shown east of the school and west of the community of Santa Maria.
- Upon further investigation, the study team determined that Santa Maria is a potentially historic community.
- Therefore, that alignment was shifted and is now shown to the west of the school.
- This shifted alignment remains one of the three possible alternatives.

Due to the nature of the presentation, Edwards accepted questions and comments regarding Santa Maria, including:

Question: What if Santa Maria was registered as a historical community? **Response**: . Since it may be eligible for listing as a historic community the study team must look to avoid affects on it, including taking any property from within the community.

Comment: With the economy the way it is, I would have nowhere to move. This would also disrupt my family.

Comment: Why does it take so long to find a short cut. I am concerned about moving traffic.

Question: I haven't received any flyers on this. **Response**: This was not our intent. We hand deliver newsletters to the homes and businesses within the study area. We also announce public meetings in the newspaper. However, any person who signs in tonight will receive future newsletters via the mail

Comment: What is the time frame? **Response**: After January 1, 2006, ADOT will select a westside preferred alternative. In the spring, we will announce where we believe a freeway would be built, if a build alternative is selected. There will be a comment period, with a final decision announced in the summer of 2007.

Comment: There is a new home development in the 71st Avenue area.

Edwards asked residents to provide contact information if they would like to discuss historical or community information with the project archeologist. CAT members introduced themselves. Peggy Eastburn invited the residents of Santa Maria to attend the Estrella Village Planning Committee Meetings and to contact her directly regarding concerns about this study.

Project Update

Edwards provided project information. The CAT received copies of recent news articles and a letter from a CAT member. Other items discussed included:

- Due to the short notice on moving the meeting, the project team made calls, sent email, and worked with the media to notify the public of the change in venue.
- Multiple meetings will be required to review the technical reports prior to ADOT's selection of a preferred alternative.
- The CAT decided they did not feel it was appropriate to have Frank Fairbanks, City Manager for Phoenix, present at a CAT meeting.
- The CAT is responsible for the format of these meetings, and members should let the study team know if they would like changes in the format or notes.
- CAT members should comment on the proceedings, such as whether items are of interest or are simply rehashed.

CAT Member Questions and Comments

Question: Did MAG send a representative as promised? **Response:** Yes, Roger Roy is here.

Question: Is John Godec still working on this project? **Response:** Yes.

Question: Is anyone from the City of Phoenix here? **Response:** No, there is also an I-17 meeting tonight, and several other ADOT-related meetings as well.

Comment: ADOT is giving us a run for our money. I don't appreciate being put on the spot to make a decision like this.

Comment: Those of us who have been on the committee don't want to hear the same information rehashed. We need to know numbers of houses displaced, land needed etc. We don't need additional input from the City of Phoenix.

Comment: We haven't had problems with the notes and we don't need to change the procedure or format of these meetings.

Comment: Let's move ahead with a decision.

Comment: We want to see technical reports.

Comment: We're tired of ADOT holding back information.

Edwards updated the CAT on the schedule. She pointed out that ADOT has not been holding back information. Rather, as the technical information has begun to come in, certain issues required attention, such as the potential historical status of Santa Maria and Hudson Farm. ADOT has extended the timeline an additional month. However, the agency is under pressure from communities and in order to plan other transportation projects. Edwards distributed a sample format that could be used to present technical summaries and asked the group if this looked like an appropriate procedure. There was general consensus among the group that this would be an acceptable format.

CAT Member Questions and Comments

Question: Regarding the technical reports, will they show information about the effect of not constructing a South Mountain Freeway? **Response**: Yes.

Question: How many reports are there to review? **Response**: There are 21 reports. **Reply:** We've been at this for three-and-a-half years, and now we have less than three months to review 21 reports?

Comment: We want each report two weeks prior to the meeting in which it will be discussed. **Response**: We will do this.

Question: Will information about "if a freeway is not built" be shown for the entire route? **Response**: Yes, for example land use along various areas will be noted.

Comment: The GRIC Borderlands Study becomes critical at this point. **Response**: To date, the borderland plan has not been shared with the project team. We will share information as we receive it, however.

Question: Can we have someone to contact with questions on the reports before attending the meeting? **Response**: This is a good idea, and we will provide a contact person. Also, are looking at flying the corridors in order to prepare a video tape that would assist with being able to show information visually.

Question: Is it possible to get an artist's rendition of how the South Mountain Park area might look? **Response**: We will provide a visual report, which includes an artist's rendering.

Question: I also would like to know, of area projects that are approved, what projects may not be apparent by viewing the corridor.

Edwards asked if the CAT members would find a video of the corridor helpful. The group agreed that they would like to see this. Edwards reviewed the schedule. She noted that ADOT wants to receive input from the CAT by mid-January, which would be prior to the time they would select a preferred alternative. The schedule includes the design information as the first report reviewed, because it seemed that the CAT would be very interested in this report.

CAT Member Questions and Comments:

Comment: It is frustrating that after three years, we must suddenly come to a decision. I believe this is a political situation. This is a ridiculous time frame.

Comment: A while back, we talked about the end of 2005, and then everything stalled out. Now it's back on as a quick decision. **Response**: Decisions were delayed because of additional investigation that was underway.

Comment: I spoke with the governor's office and they acknowledged this is an aggressive time frame. They thought we would get more than two meetings for a decision. **Response**: We can have as many meetings as the group wishes.

Comment: We need another month or two. **Response**: This group could make a decision after ADOT selects a preferred alternative.

Comment: ADOT has cried wolf before.

Comment: Rushing the process lends credibility to the argument that the CAT doesn't matter, that ADOT is just fulfilling a requirement. **Response**: The CAT is not a requirement. Requirements include a public scoping meeting at the beginning of the process and a public hearing at the end. Also, in past projects, the CAT's recommendation has influenced and changed ADOT's selection.

Comment: It was implied that we would reach a decision first, then ADOT. We need to be assured ADOT will allow us to make a decision first.

Question: Will we be voting on the project as a whole? **Response**: You will be asked to evaluate each alternative based on the criteria you determine.

Following discussion on CAT member's preferences and availability, the group agreed to meet Thursday evenings according to the following schedule:

- October 20, Design Data Report, summary data to be provided to the CAT one week prior
- November 3, approximately seven reports including floodplains, water resources, geotech, and others
- December 1, approximately seven reports
- January 5, reports including air quality, noise, cost estimates, Section 4(f) and 6(f), cumulative impacts, secondary impacts, traffic operations/simulations.
- January 19, alternative evaluations
- January 26 (if necessary), alternative evaluations

Evaluation Criteria

Gunn directed the CAT to consider a perfect freeway and record aspects of such a freeway on individual cards. Comment cards included:

- no visual impact
- no health impact
- no societal impact
- no biological impact
- carpool lanes
- user friendly signage
- blends well into areas it goes through
- is a subway instead of a highway
- has light rail on it instead of cars
- safe merging/unaffected to other cars
- lots of trees and scenery along it
- freeway that is same level as other houses, land & etc. around it
- is more like a parkway
- is below grade
- never has traffic on it
- has only non-polluting vehicles on it
- long on & off ramps
- landscaped
- less noise
- tractor trailers "diverted" during posted rush hours
- landscaping
- more park way
- easy to read signage
- low visibility
- low noise level
- below grade
- must have HOV lanes
- landscaped not grass
- wide: traffic moving, no gridlock
- quiet
- HOV lane
- does not divide neighborhood

- quiet
- low impact on adjoining areas
- scenic
- easy accessibility off & on ramps
- quiet, low noise level with environmental products used
- below-grade in areas
- nice landscape
- over crosswalks
- less concrete walls
- rubberized asphalt
- no bottlenecks
- users understand the "passing" lane
- no harmful emissions come from it
- no gravel trucks
- trails adjacent for alternative travel
- mitigated with vegetation
- built to be expanded – not torn down to widen!
- does not take over bike routes
- no cost overruns
- underutilized HOV used by other vehicles
- landscape, no tumbleweeds
- does not cause traffic problems for cross roads/street system
- doesn't interfere with homes and family-friendly businesses
- only lets carpools on it
- respects bikes
- those homes left behind
- lowered if and when possible
- below grade
- more fast lanes
- below grade
- scenic
- minimum speed at all times, 50 mph
- quiet, rubberized asphalt, noise barriers where appropriate
- rubberized asphalt
- below grade
- no big trucks on it
- no death merges
- free flowing.

The CAT was asked to identify the themes these cards represented. Gunn split the CAT into small groups and asked them to use the themes identified to make criteria statements. Themes and related statements included:

- Cost
  - Assuming all things are equal, least cost is best.
  - Cost/benefit.
  - Basic need/desire.
- Design
  - Cannot be treated as a separate issue
  - Design affects traffic operation, noise, visual, community cohesion, obsolescence, quality of life air quality, cost.
- Community cohesion
  - does not physically fragment a community or neighborhood
- Noise
  - houses closest to freeway can sit in backyard and hold a conversation
  - noise levels allow for normal conversation, i.e. also by pedestrians walking together across overpass
- Ecological
  - does not disturb or harm wildlife habitat, wildlife corridors, and native vegetation
  - does not harm regional watersheds to detriment of neighboring humans or wildlife
- Quality of life effects
  - keep communities in tact
  - keep natural and environmental fabric in tact

    - protect and preserve 4(f) property
- Air quality
    - no truck stops
    - designed to maximize flow of traffic
    - less stopping at on/off ramps
    - no dead-end freeway bottle necks
- Visual
    - minimum visual impact
    - visually intuitive signage and engineering (easy to use)
    - depressed freeways whenever possible
    - visually pleasing noise barriers
    - landscaping
- Displacement
    - minimum displacement possible of homes and businesses
    - proper and efficient usage of land
    - lessen the impact on communities
- Design obsolescence
- Operations
- Alternative mode

CAT Member Questions and Comments:

Statements shown in italics are recorded verbatim from comment cards.
Question: What about alternate modes? Does a freeway have to be "car-centric?"
Response: Alternate modes are looked at in the purpose and need.

Comment: Freeways may be safe for vehicles, but not other traffic like bicycles, and pedestrians.

Comment: The Pecos Road alignment would displace the bicycle trail.

Comment: This noise requirement for a freeway would mean it would have a higher standard than city streets. **Response**: This is a criterion for the CAT to rank – a standard to achieve. It does not mean you will achieve this goal.

Question: *Which report will give us the traffic data showing us the percent of commercial vs. residential vehicles?* **Response**: This will be shown in the traffic operations report.

Question: *How many "business" members make up the CAT and what has been their attendance record?* **Response**: Attendance varies. (CAT members in business-related areas identified themselves.)

Question: *How is ADOT prioritizing the "projects"* (completion or improvements) on the list of Maricopa transportation projects? **Response**: The Regional Transportation Plan shows plans and improvements scheduled for the next 20 years. Studies are starting now.

Question: *What is the projected percentage of federal funding expected on this project?*
Response: This depends on how ADOT wants to use its funds. Up to 94% percent can be federally funded.

Question: When is this (funding) determined? **Response**: This usually occurs after construction begins.

Question: *West side tie-in, which one? When is choice made? Final alignment choice when?* **Response**: The preferred alignment will be documented in the draft EIS at the end of 2006. This is not considered a final decision until the FHWA issues a Record of Decision, which would occur in 2007. However, this does not include information about any potential GRIC alignment alternatives.

Question: Who makes the *final decision of Pecos alignment…state or federal government?* **Response**: This is a joint ADOT/FHWA decision.

Question: Pecos alignment or on Gila River, if no in Gila River, is this cause for no-build? **Response**: Not building the freeway is still an option.

Question: What is the cost for a freeway running above vs. below an arterial street? **Response**: This depends on the area. It is possible for it to be less costly below the street.

Respond to Written Comments/Questions:

Gunn asked the CAT if, due to the extended length of the meeting, if they would prefer to read comments received from the Santa Maria community in the meeting notes or have the comments read aloud. The group preferred to have the questions entered into the meeting summary (below).

Serena Grimm, 105 N Linus Dr. #2079, Avondale, AZ 85323
My understanding is that one of the proposed sites of the freeway will cross 71st and Superior Rd. There are new houses being built on Superior Rd. Currently they are only plot #'s. I have bought one of these houses. Could you please comment on the exact plot #'s that would be affected "bought up" to build the freeway. Please mail me an answer at the above address. Thank you

Diane Hernandez, Santa Maria
I will attend the Estrella Village Planning committee to get info on how to make Santa Maria a historical area. It is extremely sad to think that we will be separated from our neighbors, not to mention the financial hardship. I built my home there on a piece of land my parents gave me. At 47 and a single parent, I would not want to start over. We are extremely interested in saving our community.

Ruben M. Garcia, Santa Maria
What type of safety procedures for health is ADOT going to take? And, what type of sound barriers will be put in place to protect our children and our health from pollution. Health/noise etc.

Amelia C. Hernandez, 7029 W. Lower Buckeye, Santa Maria
I am a 65 year old widow about to retire. I have been looking forward to being able to stay in my safe surrounding. For the first time I have conveniences close by. I work at F? owler District for 32 years. If my home is taken away it will be like killing me. My

husband died there. I have planted pecan, fruit trees and many plants that deceased teachers and family and friends have given to me. I have a son that is mentally sick. Everybody in the neighborhood knows him, thus the safety issue. I have a 17 year old CPS teenager that lives in my home just recently. My home is a five bedroom, 2 baths and my daughter and husband live there too, all with health issues. My other son lives in the back house, which will help with my measly retirement check. If my home is taken away I will loose all of this. Santa Maria has been my home for 45 years and all of the community is more like an extended family than neighbors. All I can ask is that you seriously put yourself in my position and let your conscious and our dear Lord guide you in this important decision. Everyone there feels the same. P.S. I would be one of the first to go. Santa Maria is a very family oriented and also sort of a retirement community with the inheritance going to our children.

Patricia Franco, daughter of Manuel Franco, Santa Maria Community

1. Can't you come up with other alternatives? Like building the freeway further south so it would go thru most of the desert, not communities that have been built here for more than 50 years.
2. Some people are hearing impaired. Is there any way to get microphones so we could hear better?

Frank Gonzales, Santa Maria
This freeway going thru our township will disrupt our traditional way of life. Where will our residents relocate, especially our senior citizens? Properties everywhere are sky high. If this goes thru it causes a hardship on everyone including myself and family.

Alicia Brooks
What will be the outcome if they decide to go through Santa Maria? I have lived there for 60 years. My father built the house I live in. Unfortunately, both my parents are deceased. They left the property to me. I will be retiring next year and looking forward to it. But, I can't even think about it if I lose my home. I also work for the state and am on a fixed income.

Olivia Escobedo
I have lived in Santa Maria for 50 years. There's a children's Mexican dance group that practices in a house in Santa Maria. Kids from 5-18 years old, to help kids off streets and drugs. We perform in different places. We also take kids on trips. This year was Hawaii, Mexico and Washington D.C. All the kids would miss all this if we were to move.

Other questions received and responded to included:

David Folts, Concerned Families Along South Mountain Loop 202
Question: Shouldn't the SMCAT group be allowed to schedule and decide on when they meet? After all aren't they the ones making the recommendation by voting for or against this project? It almost seems ADOT is forcing this citizens group into a decision before all this information can be digested. **Response:** This was reviewed tonight.

Question: A question was asked last month. "Can you name the interchanges on the west and south side of S. Mt. Loop 202 that will be raised interchanges? How many feet above grade will the tallest one be"? The response was "Currently all interchanges are planned with the freeway going over the arterial street. The freeway would be 25 feet above the arterial street." Please define where the measurement of 25 feet starts and stops, i.e. from the lower road surface to the lowest structural member of the bridge? **Response:** This will be addressed at the next meeting.

Question: Earlier, ADOT mentioned removing 4 million cubic yards of soil from S. Mtn. To make way for the highway as it passed through S. Mtn. Park. Will some or all of this 4 million cubic yards of soil and rocks be used to construct the elevated interchanges? **Response:** To the extent possible, fill material is used within the project.

Question: Is there a strong association between childhood leukemia and other childhood cancers from vehicle emissions in major highway corridors? Please use "Distance Weighted Traffic Density in Proximity to a Home is a Risk Factor for Leukemia and other childhood cancers". This is a JAWMA study. Please enter this information in the S. Mtn. Loop EIS.

Question: Is the cancer risk higher for populations exposed within 2 kilometers off major freeway corridors and do mobile source emissions account for 90% of the cancer risk? Please use the MATES II Study when answering these questions and enter this in the S. Mtn. Loop EIS.

Due to time constraints at the previous meeting, only questions that had not been asked at other CAT meetings were addressed. These questions and comments were also read at the meeting and included:

David Folts, Concerned Families Along South Mountain Loop 202
Question: Concerning particulate pollutions, are ultra fine particle (<o.1 to 2.5) microns predominantly derived from combustions of fossil fuels? Are these ultra fine particles a major component in vehicle emissions? **Question:** Do ultra fine particles (<0.1 to 2.5 microns) from vehicle emissions have a high content of potentially toxic hydrocarbons among all PM sources? Do ultra fine particles (<.01 to 2.5 microns) penetrate deeper into lung tissues than fine particles and if they do, can the particles trigger inflammation in the smaller airways leading to exacerbation of asthma and bronchitis? **Question:** If one had to relate living along this highway within 250 feet and being exposed to the highway traffic pollution, this would equate about to smoking how many cigarettes a day if any? Please enter this question in the EIS. **Response**: All particulate matter sources penetrate deeper. ADOT will have to determine if this appropriate to address in an EIS.

Question: Since South Mountain Loop 202 bypasses the center of the city and resides on the southern border, will South Mountain Loop 202 be the new Hazardous Cargo Route? If this is selected as a Hazardous Cargo Route will radioactive materials be allowed? Please describe some of the present hazardous cargo being transported on Hazardous

Cargo Routes. Please enter this question in the EIS. **Response**: ADOT determines if a design feature makes a route a poor choice for hazardous cargo. Recent decisions for no HC include the I-10 tunnel, and a route over a river due to potential impacts to the river. If it is legal to haul the material and there is no exemption from ADOT, the material can be hauled on a freeway in general.

Comment: I would think it a good idea to allow a 10-minute discussion period before each CoNexus vote so all the SMCAT members are up to speed on definitions and intent. **Response**: Yes, we will allow time for discussion prior to the evaluation.

Question: Can you name the interchanges on the west and south side of South Mountain Loop 202 that will be raised interchanges? How many feet above grade will the tallest one be? **Response**: This will be discussed in the design report.

Question: What percentage of the 160,000 vehicles that are passing through South Mountain Park are trucks and what percentage are vehicles that are just passing through Phoenix? Please enter these questions in the EIS. **Response:** This will be discussed in the traffic operations report.

CAT Member Questions and Comments:

Question: Rubberized asphalt was to be evaluated by ADOT. Where does this stand? **Response:** The product hasn't been used long enough for the complete evaluation. Initial reports show from a 4-5 decibel reduction up to about an 8-9 db reduction. The long term effects are not yet know. We hope to see these reductions over the live of the pavement. Previously rubberized asphalt was not considered a tool for reducing noise.

Comment: Even if a freeway is depressed, it still cuts a community. Another issue of community cohesion is not just those displaced, but also those left behind who now live next to a freeway.

Question: Which report will show displacement? **Response**: This will be included in social conditions, economics, and environmental justice.

Comment: I previously noted that the City of Phoenix is missing from these meetings, and I know that Fairbanks is willing to attend. I think it would be valuable to hear the position supported by Phoenix. **Response**: This issue was discussed earlier this evening with the CAT. The group indicated that they have heard a previous presentation from the city and now wants to review technical data, not political positions.

Next CAT Meeting

Gunn asked the CAT where they would like to hold the remainder of the meetings. There was consensus to continue to meet at the District 6 location.

The next meeting will be held Thursday, October 20, 2005 at 5:30 p.m., location to be announced. If the facility is available, the meeting will be held at the Learning Center Meeting Hall, Komatke Center, in District Six.