MEETING SUMMARY

Client/Project: South Mountain Corridor Study Citizens Advisory Team

Date: October 23, 2003 Time: 5:30 p.m. Location: Laveen Elementary School

CAT Members Attending:

Rock Argabright, Ahwatukee Foothills Chamber
Kris Black, Ahwatukee Foothills HOA
Steve Boschen, Valley Forward
Ron Chohamin, Lakewood HOA
Michael Goodman, Phoenix Mtns Preservation Council
Don Jones, Southwest Valley Chamber of Commerce
Wayne Nelson, GRIC District 7
Nathaniel Percharo, Landowners Association
Laurie Prendergast, Laveen Citizens for Responsible Development
Jim Strogen, Kyrene de los Logos Elementary School
Mary Thomas, GRIC Lt. Governor
Anthony Villareal, GRIC, District 6

Staff and Consultants Attending:

Thor Anderson, ADOT
Amy Edwards, HDR
John Godec, GRA
Theresa Gunn, GCI
Bill Hayden, ADOT
Floyd Roehrich, ADOT
Jose Solarez, GRIC
Bill Vachon, FHWA

Public Attending:

Priscilla Antone
Debra Duerr
David Foltz
David Gironda
Cathy Lopez
Andrew Mediguvich
John Merkel
Mary Merkel
Doug Murphy
Lisa Percharo
Bill Ramsay
Greta Rogers
Michael Vinson

Meeting Summary: Debbie Fink, GCI

Meeting Handouts:

- Agenda
- Draft Public Comment Summary

Welcome and Introductions:

- John Godec called the meeting to order, introduced the SMCAT members, and welcomed the public.
- Godec reviewed the roles and responsibilities of the CAT, the facilitator, and the public.
  - This is an opportunity for people to get involved.
  - It is also an opportunity to share your ideas and concerns while hearing other people's perspectives.

Public Comment:

- **Question:** Why was the public not invited to CAT meetings? How many acres will be taken away from South Mountain Park? **Response:** Open meetings have been discussed with CAT members, and they have requested that their meetings be held in a private setting where they can have open, candid conversations. If necessary, the freeway may take approximately 40 acres of South Mountain Park.

- **Comment:** ADOT had plans that showed the cut and fills required to go through the mountain ridges. The cuts will be highly visible as seen on this diagram. He requested that the SMCAT protect the mountain and prevent scarring the view for many residents. **Response:** ADOT will provide an artist rendering (visual simulations) of the proposed cuts at the next meeting.

- **Comment:** City of Phoenix has promised equestrian connections from South Mountain Park to Laveen.

- **Comment:** This process should be public. It appears that landowners and businesses are represented on the committee and not the residents and HOAs. The group should open to the public if the members don't want to increase the size of the group. ADOT can't exclude the voice of the people who are impacted. It shouldn't be the decision of the group but of ADOT. We are uninformed and can't tell our neighbors what is happening.

Project Status:

Amy Edwards provided an overview on the project status.

- There are ongoing refinements to the West I-10 alternatives. The project team is studying the potential environmental impacts.
- We are also developing draft technical reports.
- A video is being prepared for GRIC residents to view.

Public Comment Report:

Theresa Gunn provided a review of the Public Comment Summary, which was distributed to the members.

- Bill Hayden thanked the CAT members for attending the public meetings.
- **Question:** The group asked the project team if there was anything surprising about the comments received. **Response:** We were surprised that people had little awareness of where the freeway was planned. The map only show Pecos so people believe this is the only alternative, but there are other options.
- The group discussed the Public Comment Summary.
- **Comment:** Pecos is on the map because it is still a reasonable alternative.

- **Question:** What scenario would lead us to a no-build? **Response:** If an overwhelming opposition and if the other facilities can handle the demand. The impact would be severe and all involved agencies have to agree.
- **Question:** Can the City of Phoenix cause a no-build in itself? **Response:** No, this is a state facility. But the state would have to work closely with the city.
- **Comment:** When voters approved Proposition 300 in 1985, corridors were identified. The legal issue would be if the public votes for something can agencies override or supercede the voters? If the freeway isn't built, have we broken the law?
- **Questions:** How will the upcoming vote in May impact the legal questions of not building? **Response:** Don't know. This is a complex issue if we have a citizen mandate to build.
- **Comment:** Found Ahwatukee comments interesting that the people who don't want it on Pecos Road but think it's OK to go through Tolleson.
- **Comment:** I was discouraged about the tone of some of the comments.
- **Comment:** "Not in my backyard" was prevalent at all three meetings. Surprised about the support in Tolleson. Also surprised about the verbal attacks toward GRIC in Ahwatukee. We need to study the issues before we take strong positions on the freeways.
- **Comment:** Tolleson has always planned 99th Avenue as a parkway and would be willing to consider elevated or other freeway options.
- **Comment:** I'm not surprised about the comments in reference of GRIC. I have heard them for many years.
- **Comment:** I was also surprised at how many people in Ahwatukee don't get that the area is growing and we need to create awareness of that. Most people don't understand the process for working with the GRIC.
- **Comment:** Ahwatukee attitude is not new.
- **Comment:** GRIC District 7 is also dealing with other major issues as well. We still need to get more information to Tribal members. District 7 has concerns about the alternatives that border the boundary. Traffic issue is not going to go away.

Environmental Report Methodologies:

Amy Edwards reviewed the list of environmental studies that are currently underway. CAT members were asked to identify the topics on which they want additional information. These were the choice of the CAT.

- Utilities (SRP Irrigation canals)
- Noise
- Air
- Potential Transported Hazards
- Residential/Business Displacements (also future number of displacements.)
- Local Land Use Plans.
- Multi-Modal Corridor Planning
- Public & Jurisdictional Acceptability
- Threatened & Endangered Fauna Corridors (noise affects on natural environment)
- Cultural Sites

- Sun Circle Trail
- Local Deliver/Long Haul Trucks
- Cultural Resources
- Storm Water Across/Under Pecos Road
- Freeway Elevations in Laveen
- Crime Issues
- Potential Health Issues pertaining to sensitive receptors (schools)
- Animal Corridor
- Car Pollution Impact on Plants
- Parkway vs. Freeway (truck bypass)

- Traffic numbers will be updated in May 2004 after the election.

- **Comment:** Culverts under Pecos have caused erosion on Tribal lands.

- Amy will review the list of topics and schedule presentations on these topics as it becomes available.

Building Consensus for Preferred Alternative:

John Godec asked the group if they feel they can make a grudging consensus recommendation on a preferred alternative using the computerized decision-making system by mid-summer.

- **Comment:** Allottees did come up with three alignments which have never been shown to the public.

- **Comment:** There are more voices in Ahwatukee. There is not consensus on what the benefit to their community will be. Some allotted lands are owned by 1,000 people. The land is all that the Tribal members have left. Can we minimize impacts? The value of land is increasing. Let's concentrate on the benefits, design, impacts, costs, and we may come up with a consensus.

- **Comment:** We will also have to work with the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Salt River has a separate governance structure. It is not like the GRIC.

- The group agreed to try and reach a consensus and submit a recommendation to ADOT for a preferred alternative.

Public Comment:

- **Comment:** There are 2 tribes. The Maricopa and the Pima. Maricopas were here in 1800's. This is part of our land.

- **Comment:** We have a new chair for GRIC District 6. Our land is very sacred. A lot sell land for dollars. We have been raised to never sell our land. There are a lot of cultural sites in this area. Trash from Ahwatukee has been dumped on our lands. There are new subdivision by Lone Butte and other things being planned. We are told to get our lands ready for agriculture for the new water. The mountain used to be open but has been fenced. We don't want pollution. We also have homes and have the same concerns as the other residents.

- **Comment:** I live near Desert Vista High School. I am grateful to have the opportunity to attend this meeting and voice my concern about Ahwatukee being made the villain and am surprised about the concern about the "push back". All the routes shown go down Pecos

Road. This is very suspicious. Where were MAG and ADOT in the last 15 years? Ahwatukee has grown into a community and GRIC is also part of the community. There are no compelling reasons to build a freeway. We are only focusing on the symptoms of congestion, air, noise and not the underlying problem. Why do we need to build a freeway? Everyone is getting into cars and going to work. The solution is to give a meaningful alternative to driving to work. The Park and Ride lot at 40th and Pecos Road had 217 cars yesterday. Let's look for a meaningful alternative. Come visit neighborhood and see if a freeway makes sense.

- **SMCAT Comment:** I agree it would be nice if we had more transit and we have discussed it many times.
- **SMCAT Comment:** If you want to know about the purpose of the freeway, go to the Village Planning Committee and get a feel for the growth.
- **SMCAT Comment:** Phoenix put Pecos freeway on the map in 1985 and a lot of minority communities have faced the same situation.
- **Comment:** The concerned families along Loop 202 would ask that all CAT meetings be open to the public and published on the web site.
- **Comment:** This was extremely helpful information, and thank you for allowing us to attend. Who represents Woodside? **Response:** Ahwatukee Village Planning Committee.
- **Comment:** I would like to talk to Bill about working together as a community.

Next CAT Meeting:

- December 4, 2003
- Technical Report Presentations