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Planners have questions on 202

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The list of questions is growing regarding the proposed South Mountain Freeway through Ahwatukee Foothills despite the most hopeful development in years that could make the answers moot.

The Ahwatukee Foothills Village Planning Committee has been compiling a list of questions based on the proposal to build the 22-mile, \$1.7-billion freeway along Pecos Road.

Such questions remain, even though the Gila River Indian Community governing council voted to form a committee to negotiate with the Arizona Department of Transportation about widening Interstate 10 and the possible placement of Loop 202, the South Mountain Freeway, on tribal land.

"Overall, I think it's a very positive step that there's a formal group that's tasked with talking to ADOT and negotiating," said Doug Cole, chairman of the Ahwatukee Foothills Village Planning Committee.

If the freeway route is moved south of Pecos onto tribal land, many of the questions on the committee's list could change or become moot. Cole, who has read the governing council's three-page resolution, which was obtained by *The Ahwatukee Republic*, said he was encouraged by the community's position and multiple references to Loop 202.

The resolution calls for establishing a transportation team with five members of the governing council that will report back to the larger council no later than March 31.

"My personal opinion . . . is there's another process that's begun, but we as a village still need to protect ourselves if Pecos Road is taken," he said.

The committee has compiled a list of about four dozen questions.

In other words, the Village Planning Committee will continue to monitor the proposed freeway's development no matter what options surface.

"Even if this is built 500 feet south of Pecos, aren't we going to have the same issues and questions?" committee member Larry Hanson asked.

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