

DRAFT

Open Response to public comments received for the FY 2009 – 2013 Draft Transportation Improvement Program

Introduction:

Public comment is solicited as part of the development of the region's Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). Three open houses were conducted in connection with the 2009-2013 TIP: March 4th in Green Valley at the Joyner Library, March 7th in northwest Tucson at the Foothills Mall and March 11th in central Tucson at the Reid Park Clubhouse. The program, various informational presentations and comment forms were made available at all meetings; a Spanish translator was on hand for meetings and Spanish language printed materials also were available. The program also was made available on line at www.pagnet.org, and at jurisdictions offices.

This "open response" document is the region's mechanism for providing responses to those public comments received where a response is appropriate. This document will be updated on-line to respond to new comments periodically until the 2009-2013 TIP is adopted.

How Public Input is used:

The comments received during the open houses and the comment period are forwarded to the TIP subcommittee for its review. The TIP subcommittee may adjust a project's funding or schedule based on the comments received if the group believes changes are appropriate. The subcommittee then forwards the "recommended" TIP to the Regional Council for adoption.

The comments are provided to the Regional Council for review prior to adoption of the TIP.

Format:

The comments received at the Open Houses will be grouped by question number with accompanying responses as appropriate. Additional comments received through the Web site or other means during the 30-day comment period will be added and responded to on a comment-by-comment basis, as necessary.

**FY 2009-2013
Draft Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)
Open Response to Public Comments Received**

Total Number of Comment Sheets Received: 14

1. What specific comments do you have about the proposed 2009-2013 Transportation Improvement Program (e.g. are there projects that should be deleted or added to the proposed list)?

- Upgrade and/or move up Tangerine Road corridor; should be done immediately and should be limited- access expressway.
- Be consistent on left turn lights and left turn signage.
- I am working in Public Involvement in Grant Road and your Title VI maps would be helpful to us.
- Given the vague general description of plan- (#144.07 and 145.07) RTA would request an outline for proposed areas in plan that would be done, thank you.
- Neighborhoods which have had bike routes put through them without consideration of sidewalks for pedestrian safety should be given priority for sidewalks-specifically, Miramonte neighborhood-Third St between Country Club and Alvernon needs to sidewalks to take pedestrian out of the street where competing with bikes and parked cars for space.
- Can't comment until I have a chance to look over the info distributed today. Thanks for the info.
- Volunteer transit program through PCOA working well
- Regarding Sam Hughes Safe Routes to School: in a neighborhood forum the majority did not want speed bumps on islands. We want sidewalks only.

Response –

Thank you for your comments. These comments were interpreted as not requiring a specific response, but will be reviewed by the TIP subcommittee.

Comment/Question – Street Car related comments

- Where is the Suntran railway going to start and end, and what is the cost?

- Light-rail on a trial basis? I had heard there would be two routes in near future. I am sorry to see that this is not included under transit

Response -

It is assumed that these questions are focused on the modern street car that was contained in the RTA plan. The street car will have termini in the downtown area and the U of A medical center. There has been preliminary discussion about potential future extensions of the street car but the TIP is a funding document and only projects that are funded in whole or in part are included.

Comment/Question – Process related comment

- There does not seem to be a mechanism to add new projects, one that has been anticipated

Response -

Given the complex nature of the transportation planning process, projects cannot be added without some sort of community dialogue. Because the TIP is a funding document it will only list those projects that are regionally significant that are funded, in whole or in part, within the time frame of the TIP document. Candidate TIP projects need to come from the sponsoring jurisdiction and each jurisdiction has a Capital Improvement Project (CIP) process that they follow. The mechanism, outside of that CIP process, is for the public to fill out comment forms, such as those provided by PAG during this TIP process. Comment forms submitted to PAG are shared with the jurisdictions and having “new” project recommendations appear often enough will work toward a jurisdiction reviewing that project for future inclusion in their CIP process.

- If funding runs short who decided what project get curtailed/ deleted?

Response –

As the TIP is developed, jurisdictions review their existing TIP projects to make sure that estimated project expenditures match revenue estimates. The TIP is fiscally constrained, in that, the region does not program more funds than it can reasonably expect to be available during the fiscal year. Historically, it is not uncommon for a few projects to encounter some sort of delay while many move forward as scheduled. If cost estimates for projects exceed the regional cash flow, the jurisdictions, through the TIP process, make adjustments to the project schedules as appropriate.

Comment/Question – UPRR related comment

- Why are we tax payers paying to replace/upgrade UPRR tracks? (e.g. TIP ID #132.04) since UPRR is a private company, why don't they replace their own tracks? Road widening will include clearly-marked bike lanes right? Why have HAWK Beacon at Euclid Ave and 9th Street when there is an existing one at 7th Street? Euclid is already a

mess- and has no bike lane between Broadway and Speedway, mind you—in this area, why make it even worse? Sidewalks on all arterials and corridor streets! Having them on side streets is nice, but since traffic is more and faster on arterials wouldn't sidewalks make more sense here?

Response -

A majority of this comment is project specific and will be forwarded to the City of Tucson for their review. However the specific question about UPRR can be commented on. In this specific instance ADOT is relocating the UPRR tracks because the current track location interferes with the I-10 improvements planned for this area. This TIP project only represents a phase of a larger ADOT project of which the track relocation is only a part. See TIP Projects:

131.04	I-10: Marsh Station Phase 1
132.04	I-10: Marsh Station Phase 2
133.04	I-10: Marsh Station Phase 3
81.01	I-10: Pantano RR/Cienega

The following comment was received for email on May 30, 2008.

Comment/Question – Houghton Rd. related

- I'm not sure if this the form to complete for the public comments period which ends today, May 30th, but I couldn't find any other place to comment.

I have lived in Corona de Tucson since 1996 and I want to express my concerns about south Houghton Road from I-10 to Sahuarita Rd. I know that section of Houghton Rd. was removed for improvement from the RTA plan. I urge the RTA to reconsider. That stretch of Houghton is extremely dangerous and has become more so with the increase in population to the area over the last five years. It is an "accident waiting to happen". There are many, many new residents in the area with more arriving every month. They don't travel the posted speed limit of 55 and they pass in no passing zones. I'm also concerned about a school bus accident.

I recently attended a Pima County presentation on the upcoming construction of the Houghton/Sahuarita Rd intersection. I was distressed to learn that one of the presenters didn't know whom to contact with updated information on that project. I fear that may also be the case with the traffic conditions on south Houghton Road. Lack of knowledge on the part of RTA officials for the road's hazardous driving conditions is apparent. Perhaps these officials need to spend considerable time driving this stretch of road to better make an informed decision on the necessary widening this country road requires. Please, please reconsider your decision before someone pays the ultimate price while driving this road. Hopefully it will not be a student riding a bus to school. Thank you.

Response –

Response from PAG: Thank you for your comments; they will be included in the FY 2009-2013 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). You are correct in that south Houghton Road from I-10 to Sahuarita Rd. was originally in the RTA and then removed from the final plan. While new projects cannot be added to the May 2006 voter-approved RTA plan, there are other funding sources that could be used for such a project. Unfortunately, these funding sources are limited and need to be prioritized with our project needs from around the region. The first step in getting this project into consideration for that funding prioritization process is to work with the jurisdiction in which it is located within their established Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) process.

Response from Pima County: Houghton Road south of I-10 is within the City of Tucson's jurisdiction. Pima County assumes maintenance of Houghton Road south of Andrada Road. The widening of Houghton Road south of I-10 requires planning, coordination, and funding commitment from both Jurisdictions. Although this portion of Houghton south of I-10 is not scheduled for widening, there is a master plan for the future. Information on the Houghton Corridor Study may be found at www.houghtonroad.com. In the interim, the Houghton/Sahuarita Intersection will begin reconstruction late summer of 2008.

The best contact numbers for the City's portion of Houghton, south of I-10 would be the City of Tucson's Transportation Planning at 791-4371 and in Pima County, contact Future Planning at 740-6403.

Response from City of Tucson: Thank you for your comment. Pima County plays an important role in project developments on Houghton Rd since the roadway abuts Pima County. The City will continue to discuss improvements to Houghton Rd. on a regional level and can be contacted at the Transportation Planning Department at 791-4371.

2. In what way do you feel the proposed 2009-2013 TIP project(s) might affect you or your immediate neighborhood either positively or negatively (e.g. increase safety, increase access to jobs and services; relieve congestion; other impacts on the environment, neighborhoods and/or businesses, etc)?

- Negatively, by effectively delaying one or more Oro Valley town improvements
- Residing near Grant Road/ Alvernon intersection- stated for 2013-the widening project-the effect of existing business (some may be completely removed). The economic shift due to loss of business (some may be relocated to other areas of city- hopefully). This may be a possible negative to the area considered in the proposed project (#55.06)
- I see nothing that affects my neighborhood
- By having extended service on a lot of our major routes helping everyone to arrive

home safe

- Broadway corridor (Euclid- Country Club) negative impact of noise, exhaust pollution and house value decline
- Widening of Broadway between Euclid and Country Club
- Broadway widening could take out historic structure in Rincon Heights (between Park and Campbell north side of Broadway). Neighborhood streets need to be protected from cut-through traffic. Increased traffic on Broadway would entail more air and noise pollution.
- Same as above... regarding Sam Hughes Safe Routes to School: in a neighborhood forum the majority did not want speed bumps on islands. We want sidewalks only.

Response –

Thank you for your comments. These comments were interpreted as not requiring a specific response, but will be reviewed by the TIP subcommittee.

3. The Transportation Improvement Program is a financially constrained program, where the cost of the projects cannot exceed the available funding. Federal regulations require that you have an opportunity to comment on this 5-year financial plan explained in the Draft 2009-2013 Pima Association of Government's Transportation Improvement Program in Appendix 2. This section is labeled "Fiscal Constraint Analysis" and shows a year-by-year comparison of available funds, (revenues and expenses) allocated to PAG for the Transportation System.

Please provide any other comments or questions you may have regarding the financial plan.

- Need multiple Federal transportation "earmarks".
- Hopefully the proposed plans are able to meet with the projected financial allocations.
- Too complex for quick response
- Having extended weekend service on major routes
- Set asides for categorical (small) projects need to be identified for the residents of that jurisdiction
- More money for public transportation, i.e. buses

- Speed bumps are very costly and not effectively in a neighborhood that is very traffic calm anyway. The bicycle route on E 3rd St. should not be destroyed.

Response –

Thank you for your comments. These comments were interpreted as not requiring a specific response, but will be reviewed by the TIP subcommittee.

4. Given the region’s limited funding for transportation, please rate the relative importance of the following factors if you were making decisions about which transportation projects to fund in the next five years:

Improve safety

5's-7

4's-3

3-

2-

1-1

Provide air quality benefits

5's-7

4's-2

3's-1

2 -

1-1

Relieve congestion

5's-7

4's-2

3's-3

2-

1-

Maintain and preserve... infrastructure

5's-3

4's-4

3's-2

2 -1

1-

Support economic development...

5'-3

4's-4

3's-4

2-

1-

Distribute funds evenly among jurisdictions

5's-3
4's-3
3's-2
2's-3
1-

Provide opportunities for alternative modes of transportation

5's-11
4-
3-
2-1
1-

Widen roads to gain capacity

5's-3
4's-2
3's-2
2's-2
1's-2

Use new technology to gain capacity

5's-2
4's-6
3's-1
2s-2
1-

Solve specific problems in my neighborhood

5's-3
4's-2
3's-2
2's-3
1-1

Solve major problems on a regional level

5's-4
4's-4
3's-3
2-
1-

Provide improvements that benefit the greatest number of people

5's-7
4's-2
3's-2
2-1
1-

5. Please provide any other comments or questions you may have regarding the 2009-2013 TIP or TIP planning process.

- I would like to see public transportation increased from Green Valley to Tucson, to enable me to attend the variety of cultural events that Tucson offers.
- None at this time
- Attending to the existing problem in established neighborhood in COT should be a higher priority
- To make sure that people and families are not getting stranded down on the weekend's lot.
- Buses shelter needed on Broadway and Trent (north side) lots of people waiting today in hot sun (80 °F in March). Speed bumps/humps not agreed upon in Sam Hughes neighborhood around SH Elem. School or on E 3rd St. bike route
- The information provided in this Open House was ok in the handouts, but not in the presentation.

Additional Information:

Please provide your five digit zip code (home):

85614 -1
85701 -
85702- 1
85704 -1
85706 - 1
85711 -
85712 -
85715 -
85716 -2
85719 -4
85733-1
85749 -

Do you work in transportation planning?

Yes - 2

No - 9

Did you find the information you expected at the Open House?

Yes -7

No - 2

Did you receive adequate answers to your questions?

Yes -8

No -1

Can you suggest ways we might improve the Open House next year?

- Longer hours
- Expecting lay people to understand the system being used means that people are based on very limited knowledge. Seems like a rubber stamp process, not a decision-making one.
- Getting information posted at the bus transit center as well as in the buses
- Recycle bins... whose contents will be recycled and not dumped in the trash.