



New River/Desert Hills Community Association, Inc.
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June 26, 2009

Bill Hahn
Maricopa County Department of Transportation
2901 W. Durango Street
Phoenix, AZ 85009

Re: *Letter regarding NR/DHC's response to the MCDOT's Preferred Alternative (as presented June 25, 2009) for the New River Road "S-curve" west of Figs Springs Road*

Dear Mr. Hahn:

The New River-Desert Hills Community Association appreciates the chance to respond to the June 25 Maricopa County Department's (MCDOT) "Preferred Alternative" presentation.

NR/DHCA recommends that Alternative 1 be the preferred alternative for the following reasons:

- Least impact on the character of the area (we disagree with the evaluation matrix).
- It adequately addresses the safety concern by flattening the curve and improving the visibility
- It addresses the regional / local mix with the widening and addition of the turning lane.
- It meets the drainage needs (per the Evaluation Matrix).

NR/DHCA recommends that Alternative 3 (MCDOT'S Preferred Alternative) not be considered due to the following reasons:

- It would have great negative impact on the character of the area by making the stretch a "race track"; we have already seen this happen on the Skunk Creek bridge area.
- It would be more costly – not only the construction but also the maintenance since the original and new roads would need to be maintained.
- It would not address the safety issues for the local traffic that must use the original road.
- For the people who live between the original and new roads, it would exasperate the current situation of traffic noise; they would have noise from the front and back all the time. It would be even worse when New River Road is used to detour traffic off I-17 when there is an I-17 accident.

NR/DHCA also recommends that Alternative 2 (use of roundabouts) not be considered.

- It would not be acceptable to the area residence.
- We do not think the radius would be large enough since we disagree that the large trucks (e.g. truck pulling a large horse trailer, truck hauling large equipment, trailers moving a manufactured home) should use a "truck apron".
- If this alternative were to be used, a moving van, fire truck, and WB 65 truck should be used to check for the ability to navigate the roundabout using truck aprons but without striking any

curbs, signs, utility structures or other obstacles that would pose a safety concern or cause damage to the tires.

- It is the worst for travel operations (contrary to the Matrix). With two routes (original and new), there will be continuing issues at the Fig Springs intersection and additional problems arising from the traffic merging where the two routes merge.

Additional recommendations – for any alternative

- The shoulder or some area in the right away should be suitable for equestrian use.
- Continue to disallow rumble strips.

As our October 2008 letter did, we encourage MCDOT to delay plans for widening until the entire corridor (from I-17 to Carefree Highway) has the traffic to warrant it. While widening may be needed someday and we agree that right-of-way acquisition and access control predate actual programming of construction, we ask Maricopa County to avoid making any premature decisions with regards to the time frames. Once widened, the pressures to take on other urban development and features will increase. In addition, widening of this corridor will encourage non-local traffic to use it as a regional alternate to I-17, thereby increasing safety concerns and traffic congestion problems for our residential community. The current width is adequate for the majority of the time and helps preserve the rural lifestyle that most have moved here to enjoy.

Thank you again for including us in the stakeholder meetings and listening to the community. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us for further information.

Sincerely,

Terry Marron, Vice President
New River/Desert Hills Community Association, Inc.

C:

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