

## WARD 6 NEWSLETTER EXCERPTS ON BROADWAY WIDENING

These excerpts are somewhat of an archive for the Broadway widening CFT (Citizen's Task Force) process. The ward 6 newsletter accounts follows the 2 year long public process. It has never been quite clear due to divergent opinions on what widening should look like. Note: not all portions of newsletters are re-printed. Refer to the ward 6 website at <http://government.tucsonaz.gov/ward-6>

*Comments following May 7<sup>th</sup> & 12<sup>th</sup> Newsletters...*

*...I'm expecting to hear at the next meeting that 4 travel + 2 dedicated transit will be something they'd fund. The lack of clarity on that is one of the many frustrations about this process. I think we're close to getting to that point of reality check though - and if it's different than the 4+2 I'll have to agree that the CTF was taken for an 18 month ride...*

*...we've directed staff to keep the 4 lane option on the table pending the next public forum. In the meantime they're to gather some clarity on what happens to funding sources (both RTA and County) if CTF designs to less than 6 travel lanes. The 2 bike lanes would not qualify.*

*The RTA Plan requires construction earlier than the 10-20 year window you're suggesting. I'm pushing the funding envelope about as far as I can with cross width/lanes. To add extending the construction schedule would I'm certain be a total non-starter with them. At the end of the day we're spending money that has strings attached by others so we're not total free agents in how this moves forward.... SteveK*

### JUN 23<sup>RD</sup>, 2014

*I went back and reviewed the tape of our May 6th study session during which Jenn Burdick (Project Mgr.) and Daryl Cole (TDOT Director) shared their thoughts with M&C relative to what design options are fundable. During that meeting we voted to take the 8-lane (6 travel + 2 transit) off the table. Unless somebody changes their mind, only a couple of CART members would disagree that that's in the best interest of the community and region.*

*We were asked to consider removing the 4-lane option from the table because the Technical Advisory Committee of the RTA had taken the position that neither the RTA nor the County would fund it. The Citizen's Task Force wanted to retain it, at least for presentation at the recent public meeting. We gave direction to do that, and included in that to make it clear to the public that there is no outside funding for that option. That left the discussion of a 6 lane option and the 4 travel + 2 transit lanes. ... quotes from that study session:*

- Jenn: ...4+2T have the same Right of Way width as the 6 lane option*
- Jenn: ...We have the 6 lane, but staff is saying look at the 4+2T as well*
- Jenn: ...When I challenged the note in their Power Point that 4+2T was not fundable, Jenn said staff would revise the comment about repayment of the 4+2T.*
- Daryl: ...equating the 6 lane and 4+2T, ... we can dedicate the transit during peak hours and open up all lanes on non-peak hours.*
- CM Cunningham: ... we can narrow the width where needed ... have our 2 transit plus 4 travel lanes... we can do that" ... Daryl's reply ... "I agree."*
- CM Romero: ... confirming that when staff did the public meeting that they'd need to 'go with 3 options, 4, 4+2T and 6 lanes, but make it clear the 4 lane has all the funding issues.' Agreement from staff.*
- CM Uhlich commenting: ...that 4+2T and 6 lanes preserve funding, but tell us the 4-lane option is not...*

*And finally, at 42 minutes into the discussion, Jenn confirmed again when I challenged her contention that the CTF had known all of the funding challenges we were being shown that it was during that study session she and Daryl had put the 4+2T 'back on the table.'*

*Sounds pretty clear that we're not being funded for a 4 lane option, the 6+2T is no longer under consideration, and that staff is in agreement that both 6 lanes and 4+2T are fundable since they're essentially the same ROW and the changes relate to how the roadway functions at different times during the day...So, why was this poster displayed for public consumption at the public meeting held at Sabbar Shrine last week?...And last week Mr. Cole, in answer to some questions posed by the Broadway Coalition, and passed onto him through CM Romero, said this:*

*"Traffic modeling to date has shown that a 6-lane cross section is likely to meet RTA's functional requirement and that a 4-lane section or a 4-lane + 2 dedicated transit lanes ( 4+2T) definitely will not. We continue to work with the 4+2T to see if we can improve its performance and if we can envision a circumstance in the future where a 6-lane could be converted to a 4+2T. "*

### **JUN 18<sup>TH</sup>, 2014**

*...I still talk to the occasional member of the Citizen's Accountability for Regional Transit (CART) committee who clings to the idea that we can do nothing but the original 150' wide, 8-lane corridor. That 1987 concept is off the table, properly. What's left for the CTF to work with are 4 lanes, 4 travel + 2 transit, and 6 travel lanes. What's equally important is the actual width of any of those options.*

*In the material passed out by staff the widths were identified as 96' for the 4-lane, and 118' for the other two. I measured Campbell – another arterial – and it's 6 lanes and 96'. The design and function can be more creative than locking in on a 118' width. Having spoken and listened to enough of the CTF members, I'm confident in saying that they're in tune with trying to unlock some creativity and not sit and passively accept the staff suggestion as to cross width.*

*There is some pushback against the staff suggestion that a 4-lane option is not going to be funded by the County or RTA. On this one, staff's right. The current road-way is 5-lanes. The funding sources are not going to play "addition by subtraction." But there's nothing to be gained at this point by digging in and picking a fight with the guys who are writing the checks. That's especially true when it's also true that what matters is improving the functionality of the roadway, but doing so with a meandering alignment that is in the 96' – 100' range. That's doable and is responsive to the will of the voters. And the funding would not be yanked...*

### **May 27<sup>th</sup>, 2014**

*Last Thursday, the Citizen's Task Force had their first meeting since our study session in which we were told that some of our funding sources would be at risk if we allowed certain design decisions to move forward. Specifically, reducing the current 5 lane roadway down to 4 lanes would cost the City the \$7M RTA funds that have already been invested in the project design and property acquisition, put at risk the \$25M County Bond money that is earmarked for the project, and we'd lose the remaining \$35M in RTA dollars that are now budgeted for the project.*

*M&C directed staff to leave the 4-lane option on the table to respect the work of the Citizen's Task Force, but to also have our TDOT Director address that group with a frank and honest presentation about the dollars. On Thursday, that's what occurred.*

*I began working on this project design/alignment in earnest with an April 30th, 2012 rally outside of the First Assembly of God church on Campbell and Broadway. It's a 50+ year old church that would be demolished if the ballot language were followed strictly. That ballot language was for a 150' wide, 8-lane roadway, all shifting to the north of the existing alignment. In addition, over 115 existing businesses/structures would be taken down at the cost in excess of \$42M, not counting the tax base we'd be losing to fund the road project.*

*On Thursday, TDOT Director Daryl Cole correctly credited the CTF for having worked to convince the funding sources that the ballot direction was untenable. The 8-lane option is off the table. To the consternation of some, Daryl also delivered the message about the dollars that will be lost if the CTF moves forward with a 4 lane proposal. The RTA and County will at the very least require an increase in functionality of the roadway, and according to Daryl moving from 5 lanes to 4 won't meet that standard.*

*Beyond that though, he made it clear that design options of either 6 lanes, or 4 travel + 2 dedicated transit lanes are fundable. That leaves considerable design work ahead of the CTF. Specifically, lane width, how the road meanders from north to south to miss buildings, how to address redevelopment of intersections, landscaping, bike lanes, parking, where to decrease cross-width to address pinch points in relation to existing buildings, and much more....*

### **May 12<sup>th</sup>, 2014**

*...and speaking of things on Broadway bubbling up, the much anticipated memo from County Administrator Huckelberry arrived. Must say that I was very grateful that it was only a page long. Often times they're epistle-esque. I guess one who is vulnerable to a similar critique shouldn't comment. In that one-pager, Mr. Huckelberry made three very important points in the final paragraphs. (see May 12th newsletter for text )*

*The three points needing highlighting are:*

- 1) There are mechanisms to amend the Bond Ordinance. In a nutshell, the Board of Supervisors would have to take the item back to the voters, asking for a change. My sense is that that's a pretty heavy lift to expect of them.*
- 2) The County Administrator is recommending that the BOS stick with at least a 6 lane divided facility. I have seen that body give deference to Mr. Huckelberry on multiple engineering related issues. I'd suspect they'd do so on this one, too.*
- 3) HURF distributions are not locked in stone. We know that, and also note that in the most recent legislative session those distributions were incrementally increased. For that, we're grateful. And we recognize that that might change next term.*

*All of this makes the next Citizen's Task Force meeting critically important. Staff and our consultants have to make a compelling presentation, including the realities of the funding*

landscape in light of the memo cited above. Several of the Council members, including me have stated that we're not going to put at risk significant funding for our roadways. And we've also said the vulnerability of those sources has to advance beyond mere speculation. The May 22nd CTF meeting is the time and place to firm up the message so we can move this project forward one way or another.

I would also note that at our last M&C meeting, TDOT Director Cole walked through a mental description of a design for the corridor that included a meandering alignment, changes in cross-width from block to block and seemed to embrace the creativity we've been encouraging of the CTF. I think there's a good way forward in all of this. The meeting on the 22nd will begin at 5:30 and right now is scheduled for the Family Services building on the SE corner of Broadway and Treat. It's of course open to the public.

### **May 7th, 2014**

...Specific questions deserve specific answers. I walked out of the last CTF meeting feeling as though the process had been flipped on its head. Questions were left about who really has the design authority, and tied directly to that is what financial leverage can be, and is being used to guide the design discussion to a particular end.

If that is true, it was known 18 months ago and should have been the opening statement by staff at the first CTF meeting. On Tuesday I asked a series of questions trying to drill down into what level of authority those claims made by staff really carried. I won't support having to refund \$7M to the RTA, and I won't support losing \$25M in bond money. But I will support a process that takes input from appointed CTF members, and significant input from the community as to desired design alternatives. The three reoccurring themes we've heard from those groups over the past year and a half are to create a destination place on that corridor, preserve the existing local businesses and to consider multimodal forms of transportation. If that process is a sham, we should know that and quit wasting the time of the citizens who are serving on the CTF.

The alignment presented to the CTF last week, and to us on Tuesday shows the corridor meandering to both the north and south sides of Broadway. The ballot called out a 150' cross width, all aligning to the north. That's a significant change if you're one of the people who has made investment decisions on south side businesses and now finds out that staff is proposing an alignment that eliminates your place of business. Also, the proposed 6 lane alignment has a projected cost of \$92M if the one proposed to minimize building impacts is used. The bond budget is \$71M. The City is the lead agency and so is on the hook for costs above the bond amount. The presentation we, and the CTF received begs the question: "Are we being told that if we don't do the alignment coming from the RTA TAC, we'll lose \$32M, and that if we do that alignment we'll have to potentially pay up to \$21M over the project budget."

What exactly is the CTF being "allowed" to design? What authority do TAC, RTA and the County have to withhold money from the project if they don't agree with the design alternative the City eventually agrees to? What is our role in directing design, and ultimately controlling the funding

*sources? On Tuesday, Staff asked for direction as to what to tell the CTF our recommendation for design is. While the apparent answer to the questions I've listed above is that we lose the dough, and we don't have much say in that, I'd prefer a broader discussion of the legal options before handing to the CTF a M&C directive that it's 6 lanes or nothing. With that in mind, on Tuesday we gave direction to Staff to continue with all options but one and present them at the upcoming public forum on the corridor. At that forum it must be unequivocally stated what finances are at risk if one alternative over another is chosen. But until there's more clarity on the legal process we're facing, the 4 lane option needs to be left on the table...*

#### **APRIL 28<sup>th</sup> 2014**

*...The CTF has been meeting for over a year. You've read about this project multiple times in this newsletter. The basic truth is that until an alignment is established, none of the businesses along the corridor have any incentive to invest. What will be unveiled on Wednesday will show how individual businesses will be impacted. It's not the intent of staff to offer this as a final solution, but represents a big step towards advancing the discussion towards that end.*

*It can't be offered as a "solution" or we'll continue down the path of delivering a message of distrust to the public. Something along the lines of "come join our task force and we'll do this to you and your input after your having served for a year..."*

#### **MARCH 5<sup>TH</sup> 2014**

*...Remember this? It's the traffic projection model used to sell the voters on the need to significantly expand Broadway between Euclid and Country Club. It was compiled in 1987 and the projected growth numbers have never materialized. Note the comment in the middle of the chart: "Doesn't reflect recent research on new transportation trends." In the last quarter of a century, we've changed our patterns to more alternate point?*

*The Broadway RTA project appeared on the ballot as a \$71M project that was going to the RTA (\$42M), Pima County (\$25M), the City (\$3M), and PAG (\$1.2M). The citizen's task force continues to work on design and alignment options. They hope to have a final proposal near the end of the year.*

*Last week there was a presentation of several alignment options ranging from 4 lanes up to 8 lanes. Rough order of magnitude cost estimates were offered for each. They bear no relation to what was on the ballot. The property acquisition estimates now range from \$75M up to over \$100M. The original budget has that figure at \$43M. I have emails into the project management team to get an explanation. The whole process has gone on too long, has frustrated the stakeholders (residents, business operators and others), and now we see these excessive numbers at a time when the RTA has made it very public that they are not realizing the revenue projections they anticipated at the time of the 2006 vote on the Plan.*

*I'll make sure you know how this unfolds. I occasionally write about the fact that government has lost the confidence of the people. If the direction this has taken continues, both from a cost*

*and delay standpoint, the blow back on both the City and RTA planners will be damaging to their ability to gain public support for any extension of the Plan or taxing authority.*

### **Dec. 18<sup>th</sup>, 2013**

*... following a discussion on demolitions and related issues of not moving more quickly...*

*The solution to the Panda...*

- a) The rational result would be demolition of the building*
- b) But only if an aesthetically pleasing next step that will activate the space is designed*
- c) That means funding – RTA can pay for demo / design of the next phase is the question. Our TDOT director offered funds to get the site to a stable and aesthetically ok condition-  
-but that's not going to be the solution.*
- d) Stop early acquisition of properties until the citizen task force has designed the alignment and the governing bodies have approved it*
- e) Stop telling prospective tenants that in 3 years the properties will be condemned.*
- f) Get the Broadway alignment decided – pronto.*

*Before Real Estate can demolish a building they'll have to come to M&C to get money transferred from the RTA to do that. When/if that happens with respect to Panda, it will be for that building only – not a wallet full of money that might send the message along the Broadway corridor that we're sending in the wrecking balls for all City owned properties. Some may be salvageable and usable – once prospective tenants know what the alignment will be.*

*The RTA tax forecasts show that they'll be short of cash by a not insignificant amount. That means we should be doing creative planning on all of the voter approved RTA projects-meeting the intent of the ballot measures, even where that might mean trimming back on some of the specific wording. Keep the promise-save money where we can. The Broadway is most immediately in the position to achieve that and hopefully serve as a template for other projects so we're not spending unwisely, but still meeting our commitments to the voters. We can do both. It will take the City working with the RTA, working with the County, and working with the residents and businesses impacted by construction and design. That would be an integrated planning process.*

### **OCTOBER 10<sup>TH</sup> 2013**

*...In addition, we've gotta stop hearing "the original ballot language" when now we all know both the head of the RTA and their attorney have agreed we should be more creative in design and save taxpayer money. We've also gotta stop having quarter-century old traffic projections tossed out as controlling when now we all know that they were grossly inaccurate and therefore the voters were not casting their ballot on good data. Had the projections proved to be anywhere close to being accurate, and then fine, we go with them. But if I'm planning a holiday meal for 20 guests and 10 of them call to say they're not coming, I don't cook for 20. That'd be a waste. The original projections want the Task Force to cook for 20 and I guess hope that people*

*will emerge in cars to fill the vacant lanes. That's irrational and unresponsive to the voice of the community.*

*If at every meeting Staff continues to toss out changes in the rules of the game by which the Task Force is being told to design, then the roadblocks being put in front of creative design are simply going to back them into the corner of the original 150' cross-width configuration. And the frustration and confusion will continue.*

*Before we see the Task Force members who are feeling a bit resentful simply get up and leave when the changes are proposed, thus leaving the group short of a quorum and unable to continue, I want to pull the parties into a meeting to talk about these misunderstandings. I'm hopeful that both sides will agree. That necessarily has to include members of the public who have been to the vast majority of the meetings, but who are not specifically on the CTF. They represent the public I opened this section with; those who are seeing "trust issues" creep up in different issues around town. We have to earn, and keep their trust on this one, or the impact will flow into the others.*

### **SEPTEMBER 30, 2013**

*...The wider implications for Broadway are the demolition of 115-120 businesses (the tax base) and homes along the north side of the road, between Euclid and Country Club. The alleged need for this, as described in the 2006 RTA ballot language was based on quarter century old traffic projections, none of which have been borne out. Since that rally, both the County Administrator and the RTA attorney have joined in saying that we should consider creative alternatives, as long as we preserve the functionality of the roadway. That can save millions of taxpayer dollars to be used in areas where it is more genuinely needed.*

*Ok, back to Thursday and Friday's meetings. I floated around from table to table, listening in on the conversations. From what I overheard, there wasn't much we haven't heard already over the past year at both other open house settings, and at the Citizen Task Force calls to the audience. That is, preserve as much of what exists as you can, don't take down buildings that are not absolutely needed for road improvements, focus on intersections first, save money, and create a destination node in that corridor that encourages multimodal transit and bike lanes, and walking/biking from nearby neighborhoods to commercial outlets in the area. The businesses are just telling the project team to make a decision, much sooner than is now being programmed into their schedule. The lack of certainty is killing them, and nobody will invest until they know what the alignment is going to be.*

### **AUGUST 7TH, 2013**

*...During a recent presentation by the RTA Attorney to the RTA Board, a power point was shown that included some more confirmation that the mantra of "you have to build 150', and it can only go to the north" on Broadway has been set aside. The Citizen Task Force that is designing*

*the Broadway project has heard from the Mayor and Council that they're empowered to design with creative criteria in mind, they last week heard it from the Project consultants, and now this from the RTA...So there's acknowledgement that as conditions change, so can design. Those conditions can include not only traffic projections, but also awareness that modes of travel are changing, and peoples' desire for destination nodes close to their homes are increasing in popularity. The CTF is looking at all of that as they work to keep the roadway functional. So, what's "functional?" Per the RTA..." capable to perform functions." Somebody has to decide what function the road is being asked to perform. Circular? A bit, but also to the point related to creative design. They also note that the design impact on modes of travel is going to be weighed. That'll include all modes, including walking to a restaurant or other shopping opportunity from an adjacent neighborhood. It's all in the mix, and now all three of the bodies that will ultimately weigh in on the final design proposal have affirmed that...*

### **JULY 30TH, 2013**

*At last week's Citizen Task Force meeting there was what I'd describe as a fundamental change in the discussion...staff and the consultants finally advised the CTF that they are no longer bound to considering designs and cross width dimensions that are "what appeared on the ballot" (150' and only expanding to the north.) The task force may now look at any cross width and also take the south side of the roadway into consideration for the purpose of expanding the Right of Way. A year and a half ago when multiple neighborhoods met at the Assembly of God church parking lot and rallied in opposition to the demolishing of 115 - 120 homes and businesses along the north side of Broadway in order to accommodate the 150' cross width that the RTA was hanging its hat on, the immediate push back from the then leadership of the Authority was that the voters 'had approved'...Things have changed for the better – for the rational. The CTF was shown cross widths last week that ranged from 67' out to 175', and were told that the roadway could "snake around" back and forth from north to south in an effort to avoid hitting any businesses. The word "impact" was used as a euphemism for demolishing them - but the CTF members clearly understand that they have the purview to propose designs that minimize 'impacts' of any kind, as long as the net result is a functional roadway that the City (Lead Agency) and RTA can demonstrate meets the needs of the community. To that end, we also discussed new design criteria that will be a part of the ultimate proposal. Those included items such as this being a gateway that needs to reflect the mid modern historic architecture that gives this section of Broadway a sense of place, and that expresses a relationship between it and the downtown core. Pedestrian environment, visual qualities, walk able amenities and those sorts of characteristics are also now a part of what the CTF is going to be able to include in their ultimate design proposals. They're all connected to the criteria the M&C approved several months ago, but to have staff and the consultants include them in their presentation to the committee was a very important step in the direction of ending up with a proposal that preserves, and in fact enhances what this corridor can and should become at the end of this process...*

### **MAY 30TH, 2013**

**Broadway Update:** *By way of review, the Broadway Citizen's Task Force is empowered by the*



*M&C to design the Euclid to Country Club segment of Broadway in a “Context Sensitive” manner; that is, considering both roadway and land use criteria in the process. Those criteria will lead to a “functional” corridor – as is required by the ballot measure – and will include items such as simply moving vehicles, moving other modes of transportation, land use consumption, mixed land uses and others found in the EPA Guide to Sustainability. What we’ve asked them to do is to take the lead on designing this segment in a way that respects and demonstrates community values relating not only to transportation, but also to land use, historic preservation, the environment and generally ending up with a destination, not just a pass-through portion of the road. There is no engineering definition of functionality, so taking all of these items into consideration simply makes sense. The CTF members are on their way and seem to have their eye on the ball.*

*At the recent Citizen’s Accountability for Regional Transportation meeting, the RTA attorney joined in the chorus of progressive thinking related to this project. His comments were along the same lines as County Administrator Huckelberry from last year, speaking of the need to respect the money being invested, and acknowledging that over a 20 year planning horizon, things change and we should not be locked into outmoded ideas about design and transportation/land use thinking.*

*He agreed that there can be changes from what appeared to be the direction of the 2006 ballot measure – 150’ cross-width and 8 lanes – as long as there is no substantial change to the element (the roadway element – ‘substantial change’ meaning over a 10% cost escalation.) The CTF is headed in a cost-savings direction, so all’s ok on that front. This merging of thinking between the CART/RTA leadership and the CTF is sound stewardship of your resources.*

*There remain a couple committee members on the RTA/CART side who seem locked in the 2006 language. The CTF will design the project – the M&C as the lead agency will react to it, and all’s going to end well. Affirming the basis for this change in design from the explicit ballot language are the following realities related to traffic volumes and projections*

*You can see the data isn’t headed in the direction that the voters were sold that it would (correct word – “sold”, not “told” – that was intentional.) From a recent Broadway Citizen Planning Task Force memo, a variety of potential cross widths were described. They looked at the possible lane configurations, number of through traffic lanes and if there are dedicated transit lanes. In addition, they looked at the range of potential cross sections for each configuration. The staff overseeing the CTF know that some of the stakeholders on the Task Force believe that Broadway does not need to be widened, the four lane options, while others favor the project definition of six lanes plus dedicated transit that was defined through earlier planning and design efforts for Broadway. As the graph shows though, those earlier design efforts are based on flawed data. Here are variations in what Staff is presenting:*

<b><u>4 lane:</u></b>	<b><i>potential 92’-130’ Right of Way (Option A: 97’ / Option B: 119’)</i></b>
<b><u>4 lane &amp; transit lanes:</u></b>	<b><i>potential 116’ -154’ Right-of-Way (Option A: 121’ / Option B: 150’)</i></b>
<b><u>6 lane:</u></b>	<b><i>potential 114’ -152’ Right-of-Way (Option A: 125’ / Option B: 152’)</i></b>
<b><u>6 lane &amp; transit lanes:</u></b>	<b><i>potential 138’ -172’ Right-of-Way (Option A: 143’ / Option B: 172’)</i></b>

*And by way of reminder, the 150' cross width will take out 115-120 businesses and homes along the north edge of the roadway / the tax base being assumed for paying debt service on the bonds paying for the project. So, the design discussions continue, and the data continues to tell the story of how the ballot measure misrepresented actual growth patterns. The few people who blindly say we should do what we said in 2006 need to understand the damage that narrow vision would have to the credibility of the RTA and to the City if it ended up reflecting the design of this corridor.*

### **APRIL 24<sup>TH</sup>, 2013**

*"The Broadway Citizen's Task Force continues to plow through a mountain of information being presented to them by staff from the City, RTA, Citizen's Accountability for Regional Transportation committee (CART) and outside groups and consultants. My hat goes off to them or assimilating all that they're being given. What would be helpful is if all of what they were being told was factual. In the most recent two meetings, that has not always been the case.*

*Briefly – there was the claim from both a member of the CTF and from a speaker that there is a motive afoot to try to "kill the project". I spoke to the CTF several months ago and specifically said that nobody was trying to kill the project. What many of us are trying to do is to make it a better project, one that meets travel needs based on current projections, alternate modes, changes in driving trends, living habits and wrapped up in that, giving consideration to the land use adjacent to the corridor. The City Council representing the Lead Agency (the City) empowered the CTF to determine a design that preserved the functionality of the roadway and adjacent land, and to do so using the EPA Guide to Sustainability metrics for defining that term ("functionality"). That's not trying to do away with the project – it's asking for some critical thinking that will yield a better result for the whole community, taxpayers and nearby neighbors and businesses.*

*Last week another statement was made that was simply factually wrong. It was stated that the term "substantial change" is not clearly defined; that is, the RTA is wrestling with how to apply that term to possible changes in the design made by the CTF. It was also stated that if there were a "substantial change" to the Broadway project, it would have to go back to the voters for approval. The fact is that the term "substantial" is very clearly defined by Statute, and the statement that the voters have to approve some level of change for each project is false.*

*Section 48-5309 of the enabling statute for the RTA says:*

*1. The regional transportation plan may not be amended to add or delete an element or substantially change an element without prior approval of the electorate... Then, "substantial change" is defined as "based on data in the transportation improvement program, results in one or more of the following conditions": The language then describes present worth expenditures that exceed estimated revenues available to the plan (no problem – they can float more bonds to cover costs / and they have) but then this statement:*

2. An estimated cost to complete one or more elements of the regional transportation plan that exceeds the expenditure limitations of the plan by the following or greater percentages:

- a) ten percent for a single element of the plan
- b) Fifteen percent for any two elements of the plan
- c) Twenty percent for three or more elements of the plan

So, what's an "element"? Here's how they appeared on the ballot and are defined on the RTA web site:

The plan has the following main components:

- Roadway Improvement Element (RTA funding: \$1.2 billion - Other funding: \$334 million)
- Safety Element (RTA funding: \$180 million)
- Environmental and Economic Vitality Element (RTA funding: \$115 million)
- Transit Element (RTA funding: \$534 million - Other funding: \$75 million)

The Broadway project is one of several that are contained under the "Roadway Improvement Element." That carries a \$1.2B cost. The language does not say that each 'project' must come in under the costs, but that the costs are looked at under the wider umbrella of each "element." While one could make the case that based on current engineering estimates, the Roadway element exceeds the 10% threshold for going back to the voters, that's not the goal of those of us trying to work towards a design that preserves homes, businesses and in fact enhances the experience of travelling through that segment of the Broadway corridor.

CART member Bob Cook shared some thoughts at the last CTF meeting. Here's a little of what he had to offer:

The 2006 RTA Plan is essentially a plan to increase the regional capacity for safe modes of mobility. While economic and political constraints did limit acceptable RTA projects to correcting deficiencies in the existing system, PAG and regional jurisdictions in 2006 were anticipating high future growth, up to 50% increase in population near the end of the Plan period. One RTA campaign piece warned voters that a 550% increase in vehicular congestion would result if the Plan did not pass.

Needless to say, this and many of the original assumptions did not play out and most probably will never play out, in particular driving behavior due to high vehicle fuel costs indefinitely. Indeed, we have observed significant changes in travel mode preferences as well as population growth rates. Walking, biking, car sharing, and bus ridership have all increased much more than proportionally and population movement to urban centers has been significant.

Interpretation of the voter will as expressed in the 2006 election results therefore should come down to implementation of "equivalent functionality". This means that what we plan and build for the Broadway Corridor Project, as well as any RTA project for that matter, should reflect the ballot plan in terms of equivalent "trips" summed over all modes rather than simply car lane capacity. Bob Cook CART

And so we're back to functionality and who is responsible for designing the corridor within the meaning and intent of that phrase. The City is the Lead Agency. The M&C voted 7-0 to empower the CTF to design to the criteria noted above. We have that authority according to the terms of the Regional Transportation Plan. It states: "the lead agency will be responsible for all

*aspects of project implementation, including but not limited to: planning, project management, risk management, design, right of way acquisition and construction”: Based on comments made by the RTA representative last Thursday, they’re still of the opinion that that language gives them the ability to design, or at least exercise the final determination as to whether or not the lead agency designed to their preferences, even to the point of withholding RTA money from the City (or other jurisdiction) if they don’t like the design the CTF presents, and M&C approve.*

*I continue to believe that we’ll get to a good result in this project, but having to backpedal week after week is both a waste of time for those involved, and confusing to the CTF members. One of them urged his fellow CTF members to simply design according to what they believe is the best way to achieve a functional destination and not try to design to some perceived desire of the RTA or City planners. I agree with that. The City has given them that authority. To lap the track month after month with people who have been given a standing opportunity to address the CTF is getting old. I applaud those who join me in exercising self control while sitting and listening to misstatements.*

### **DECEMBER 12TH, 2012**

*regarding the ...cover sheet from the “concept plan” related to the Broadway corridor that was adopted before the RTA even existed in 2006. Note the word “recommended” – that’s significant as the Citizen’s Task Force works through the eventual cross-width for the Euclid – Country Club section...What staff has been saying is that they’re bound by the 150’ cross-width. Our Planning Department tells potential builders that they can’t build into the future Right of Way. TDOT has, until now taken the same position. And yet, we’re telling the CTF that their work is valued and they can use their creative juices to come up with some design concepts that save the \$43M it will take to demolish and acquire the properties along the north side of the roadway. Here are some quotes that come from the same document:*

*“Effects on neighborhoods and historic districts shall be considered in determining the impacts of street widenings, new transportation routes, and reclassification of streets. Such projects shall be sensitive to and compatible with the specific neighborhoods and historic districts they pass through and serve (GP, Section 3, Policy 4.B. and Section 10, Policy 1, N)”... “ The maximum width of an arterial street shall be no more than six lanes in the mid block, except where the additional lanes are designated for buses, bicycles, and high- occupancy vehicles. Where traffic volumes create the need for additional capacity, inter- section modifications should be pursued prior to further widening”.*

*Remember, the design was based on some unproven traffic projections. This comment also appears in the material adopted back in 1987 that formed the basis for our present day design discussion: By the year 2005, the population of the Tucson metropolitan area is anticipated to increase by 648,000 (118%) Not only did we not hit those numbers by 2005, we still haven’t, and don’t appear to be headed in that direction any time soon. The study also suggested some design criteria in addition to the 150’ width of the road- way. Consider these: The Corridor Concept Plan is comprised of four major elements:*

*1) Widening of Broadway to provide a minimum (150 feet of right-of-way;*

2) Buffering of adjacent residential areas;

3) Grade separations at warranted locations; (Note: The candidate locations for grade separations were Euclid, Campbell, Alvernon, Swan, Craycroft, Wilmot, and Kolb.) and 4) Further study of a major transit capital investment component.

Let's take a look at what would happen to the 50 plus year old church at Campbell and Broadway if we expanded to 150'...the building is gone if that's the eventual design that this process results in. The point is this. We're not doing any of the seven proposed Grade Separations. Based on the traffic and population projections, we don't need the 150' cross-width. And the study suggested intersection work to preserve functionality and to preserve historic structures. In the game of picking and choosing which of the 1987 criteria we're sticking to, staff seems to have landed on 150' but is ignoring the others. For the study session of 12/18, I've requested a two-part item. One part will be a presentation of the historic, mid-modern structures that lie along the northern border of the corridor. It will identify many more than the church I've shown above. They will be demolished if the project continues on its present path. The second part of the agenda item will be to discuss the "recommendation" that we go to 150'. Scroll back up to the cover page – that word is prominent in the title. Words have meaning. We'll seek to clarify that on the 18<sup>th</sup> so the Task Force is yet again given the message that they have the authority, granted by the Lead Agency to propose design concepts that are not bound by what is still being presented by staff as a requirement. If that's not the case, then let's start designing the Grade Separated Interchanges at those seven intersections and really comply with the 1987 Plan. Lisa Nisenson, working in what was then known informally as EPA's Smart Growth Office, in her publication entitled *Density and the Planning Edge* cites a survey that shows the top three reasons why Americans oppose development. Those are a) Protecting community character b) Protecting the environment, and c) Too much traffic.

We can address each of those by turning the CTF loose on this project, unconstrained by design criteria that were guess work over 25 years ago, and allow the group to employ ideas such as adequate park space, bus pullouts to preserve roadway functionality, tree canopy retention, etc. All of that is to say that when/if we end up with a design that does not take up 150', we will at that time need to be able to defend why what we are building is better. We are now going through the public process that is geared towards ending up with wide public buy into the eventual design. I think that's something that our project management team will agree with as a desired direction.

### **NOVEMBER 26TH, 2012**

...Very early in the year when I first proposed that we take a hard look at the RTA ballot language related to Broadway and reassess what we were about to do, the initial response from the RTA Board, TDOT and others who had simply assumed that we were going out to 150' on the cross-width was pretty clear resistance. The common refrain was that we had said one thing on the ballot, and we were not going to deviate.

That was the start of the conversation. Then came a fresh look at traffic projections, identifying the impact to homes and businesses along the north side of the roadway if we didn't reconsider

*in light of the new traffic needs, an April 30th rally outside the First Assembly of God church in which 24 neighborhood associations came together in support of some new and fresh ideas – the fruit of which was the formation of the Broadway Coalition – and I sense that the staff members who had initially felt bound by ‘the way we’ve always done things’ decided that they might not want to put themselves in the position of having to forever answer the questions that would inevitably be tossed in their laps if the demolition process was started prior to a serious look at alternatives...*

*... Proposed “Safe Harbor Ordinance”*

*With the Downtown Links, Grant Road, and 22nd Street projects nearing, I propose we adopt an ordinance that would have the effect of allowing businesses to remain in place and fully functional, permitting changes of use until construction forces them to move. Along the Grant Road corridor alone, 113 businesses and residences are in the alignment and will be impacted by the construction. This policy will:*

- 1. Minimize the “Ghost Zone” effect along major roadways.*
- 2. Minimize vandalism, graffiti and other crime associated with abandoned buildings.*
- 3. Allow businesses to continue in operation, creating jobs, and generating tax revenue that pay for City services.*

### **NOVEMBER 21ST, 2012**

*...There are 39 “tax codes” represented in what the City now owns along Broadway, between Euclid and Country Club. That amounts to 18 actual properties. Some of it is vacant land, some of it’s not habitable, and some of it could be used if someone was willing to put in some tenant improvements. We had a spirited discussion about how to identify appropriate uses, and how to responsibly use taxpayer money on the properties. There will be a different answer to each of those issues pretty much on a property-by-property basis.*

*The opening attitude on these properties has to be how we can get to a “Yes” in terms of activating them. It needs to be said that staff has not been buying these properties on their own without any direction from mayor and councils dating back over the last two-plus decades. What has been assumed is that we’re just going to widen the roadway and therefore we’ll buy properties when they became available. Late last year, I asked that we cease that practice until we have a cross-width identified.*

*Coming out of the meeting last week was direction to staff to make a concerted effort to maintain the properties so they don’t drag down the appearance of the corridor, and to actively market those properties that have the potential for commercial (or non-profit) uses. There were several business owners and other interested residents present at the meeting and what we’re going to do is to organize some Open Houses at some of the properties and invite prospects to come and tour them with an eye towards how they might fit a vision that City staff isn’t able to*

*see. That's not an insult to staff, it's just a new and different set of Tucson's Birthday eyes.*

*Along this same line, I've requested a study session presentation for December 4th by the Drachman Institute on the topic of Context Sensitive Solutions. That's a design concept in which the context of the roadway – necessarily including the surrounding land uses – guides the discussion of how a given corridor is designed. It's more of an outside-in approach than one that assumes autos first, and the remainder of the corridor design falls in behind that assumption...*

### **NOVEMBER 15<sup>TH</sup>, 2012**

*...the Drachman Institute offered some design ideas relative to the Broadway corridor that included a 100' cross-width. The current width is in the 75' range in the areas the Citizen's Task Force is studying. At that presentation, City staff indicated that they're operating under M&C direction to consider only a 150' cross-width. I know that some of our staff reads this, so in as much as I've said this multiple times, the M&C voted to allow for consideration of other than 150' widths, now let me put it in print. **No, we did not give direction to the project team to only consider 150'. We specifically did not when we proposed a broadened definition of 'functionality' than what was previously under consideration.***

*Driving home that message over and over is really wasting the CTF's time, mine and that of the many citizens who are trying to move this discussion along in a productive manner. Zero time has been invested in simply looking at how bus pullouts could be used to keep traffic flowing and maintain cross-width and functionality. Zero time has been allowed for the discussion of intersection design that will include single or multiple turn bays to keep traffic flowing. That topic came up in the context of "Level of Service," but not in the context of how we actually design this segment of the roadway. Broadway already has some good bike lanes out to the east. Improving them here is an easy design alternative. I realize that this isn't Europe, but here's what's happening in some locales over there: <http://rendezvous.blogs.nytimes.com/2012/11/12/making-the-bike-as-logic-a-choice-for-commuters-as-the-car-bus-train-or-metro/>*

*At the risk of using a bad metaphor, many of the task force members are already feeling as though they're spinning their wheels, hearing conflicting messages from the governing body and staff. One hundred and fifty feet is not etched on stone tablets. Our task force members are bright enough to think of alternatives. There are financial challenges. There are traffic counts that do not justify what staff continues to push. For example, look at this chart and try to figure out how one can justify the vast difference between projected growth and historic trends: [http://cms3.tucsonaz.gov/files/ward6/Traffic\\_Charts.pdf](http://cms3.tucsonaz.gov/files/ward6/Traffic_Charts.pdf)*

*Look at these properties the City has bought and now owns along that corridor. Remember to join us on Friday @ 3:30 at the Ward 6 office to hear the conversation about our obligation to preserve and maintain those until a width is identified for the corridor:*

*[http://cms3.tucsonaz.gov/files/ward6/BwayAcquisitions\\_11-7-2012.pdf](http://cms3.tucsonaz.gov/files/ward6/BwayAcquisitions_11-7-2012.pdf)*

*And look at the budget for the project and the amount of money that is being earmarked to buy up Right of Way:*

[http://cms3.tucsonaz.gov/files/ward6/Bway\\_FinancialSchedule\\_9-30-12.pdf](http://cms3.tucsonaz.gov/files/ward6/Bway_FinancialSchedule_9-30-12.pdf)

*Many of us thought the message as to 150' vs. creative design had been delivered pretty clearly. Many of us will continue to try to achieve that. In the meantime, the width has to be item #1 on the task force agenda so we can properly address the status of the buildings that may or may not be in the eventual Right of Way...*

### **OCTOBER 24<sup>ST</sup>, 2012**

*...at last weeks Broadway CTF meeting, much of the agenda was affirming the City Council's motion that gave the authority to the task force to consider performance measures beyond the time it takes to traverse an intersection. In fact, it was pointed out that "Level of Service" as that relates to time lags at intersections isn't even being considered as a "performance measure". TDOT and the RTA are calling it a "measure of operations" – a significant difference in as much as it is performance measures that will be used by the CTF to determine whether their ultimate design proposal enhances or diminishes "functionality". We had affirmation that 'functionality' will be measured by the tools laid out in the EPA Guide to Sustainability – the very same document I included in the M&C motion that passed the expanded purview over to the CTF. The presenters from the project team indicated that they had had those standards in mind all along. Taking that at face value, I'm glad to hear that we have been on the same page, and that much of the early confusion should have been unnecessary. But, we're there now, and so I'm grateful for the clarification from the project team.*

*Comments made at the meeting – from the RTA / "developing a multi-modal corridor needs to look at all modes of transit when defining 'functionality'." From the County Administrator when defining "functionality" – "we'll know functionality when we see it." And the Technical Management Committee of the RTA charged their policy subcommittee with working to define "functionality" so they can bring back some specific metrics to the CTF.*

*Less than a month after our vote at M&C, there seems to be quite the interest in how that term is defined. The good news is that using the EPA performance measures has been identified as the chosen set of metrics. Broadway currently meets or exceeds the simple LOS standard; that is, you don't sit in gridlock. When discussing transit projections, it was interesting to note that now the RTA is saying they're expecting a 30% increase in vehicle travel along that corridor by 2040. Back in 2004, they projected a 52% increase by 2025. It's not a science. What the changed projections more likely reflect are changes in our own behaviors, demographics and preferences.*

*Example; we're getting older (some of you are) and so we'll drive less. With more student housing, we should expect fewer vehicle miles travelled. Survey's I've shared demonstrate more use of transit and alternate modes when mixed use development is encouraged. The 2040 study highlighted the goal of Tucson to become a Platinum rated bike community – that means more bikes, fewer cars. Imagine Greater Tucson surveyed thousands of residents and reports a desire*



*to develop land use design that encourages a decreased need to drive long distances / more walk-able urban life styles.*

*The take-away from the meeting was that the CTF, after having been empowered by the M&C vote, is now re-affirmed as having the right and authority to define “functionality” according to a set of performance measures that may indeed reflect a new paradigm in how we think about roadway design. There’s more to the “roadway” than what’s between the curb lines. That’s a big step forward, and is one I’m looking forward to watching evolve as the CTF engages this project..*

### **SEPTEMBER 20<sup>TH</sup>, 2012**

*...I asked for this study session item in order to allow the Lead Agency (the City) to weigh in directly with the Citizen’s Task Force on how the Broadway corridor can be enhanced and retain its “functionality.” That term is key to how the RTA and TDOT are giving direction to the CTF. So far, nobody has defined what it means beyond one tired metric called Level of Service (LOS).*

*That simply means the length of time it takes to get through an intersection. In the transit item above I mentioned that how you frame the question drives you to a given conclusion. If LOS is your standard for defining “functionality” you will end up with a solution that simply says, expand the roadway so you can move cars more quickly. But if the Lead Agency says it wants a broader, more creative definition of that phrase, the design options for the corridor are necessarily expanded. On Wednesday, that’s what we did.*

*The issue plays directly in with the transit item. Do we want to overbuild corridors for the 2 hours of peak travel per day, or do we want them to function differently; that is, in ways that incentivize people to become discretionary transit riders, to use bikes, walk to destination nodes along the route and decrease auto travel, or other similar descriptors that may better reflect how we as a community want our road corridors to work? If we limit the CTF to design options framed by LOS, we lose the ability to even consider any of the other possibilities. M&C agreed on Wednesday to send to the CTF, through our representatives with TDOT who are overseeing the Broadway meetings, an out of the box opportunity to let their creative juices flow and present us with ways we might want to design Broadway that meets our existing RTA funding capacity and that respects the private businesses and residences along the corridor.*

*It’s my hope that this process will serve as a model – template – for other design teams we put together. We’re not travelling like we did 30 years ago, cars are smaller, there are, work-from-home schedules, our awareness of the environmental impacts of too many cars is greater, and more. We gave the CTF the direction to begin thinking about growth, density and transit in concert. Here’s the motion we adopted and that will be carried back to our 13 representatives on the CTF.*

*The Mayor and City Council, as governing body for the Lead Agency in the Broadway design*

project, directs TDOT to agendaize for the next Broadway Citizen's Task force meeting the following:

a. Clarify the legal parameters that relate to Open Meetings Law and how that affects the right for CTF members to meet and discuss the project outside of scheduled meetings.

b. Give direction to the Broadway Boulevard Citizens Task Force to conduct their work under a definition of functionality that allows for consideration of performance measures detailed in the EPA's "Guide to Sustainable Transportation Performance Measures." These measures necessarily go beyond simply looking at LOS.

Some of those performance measures include design metrics such as Transit Accessibility, Alternate Mode Share, Vehicle Miles Traveled per Capita, Average Vehicle Occupancy and others contained in the referenced EPA guide.

[http://www.epa.gov/dced/pdf/Sustainable\\_Transpo\\_Performance.pdf](http://www.epa.gov/dced/pdf/Sustainable_Transpo_Performance.pdf)

Being designated Lead Agency carries with it the obligation to fund the project over the RTA level of funding. Remember, under the initial cost proposals, just land acquisition was to cost \$43M – that's more than the RTA is committed to for its entire obligation to the project. With the new direction to the CTF we have a chance to change how we design transit corridors, and how we incent alternate modes in this, and future projects. Land Use Code Revisions...

### **SEPTEMBER 6<sup>TH</sup>, 2012**

...On the heels of the M&C flip on the WUNA building height vote, the Broadway Citizen's Task Force members are wondering whether or not the investment of the next 24 months of their lives is going to amount to a 130' tall hill of beans when they give their final recommendation, or if the City and/or RTA are simply going to move ahead with some preconceived notions of how the corridor should be designed and blow off their suggestions. They're right to be wondering. So am I. To that end, I have asked for a study session agenda item for September 18th in which I will be asking for a few very specific points of clarification:

**A) Open Meetings Law.** At the last CTF meeting the City Attorney's office gave the members some heavy handed, and incorrect counsel on what they are allowed to do in regard to communicating with one another. They were told they should not interact outside of the CTF meetings. That is not a correct reading of the OML, and I will make that point on the 18th. If your goal is to stifle communications, tell people that they are subject to getting fined if they talk to one another. That's what was said.

**B) Level of Service/definition of "Functionality".** The RTA and TDOT are required to adopt a final design for the corridor that does not reduce its functionality. While that term is never explicitly defined, the usual way it is framed is by what is called Level of Service (LOS.) That is very simply a data driven measurement of how long it takes people to traverse an intersection

of the corridor. LOS measures are rated from A-F (“A” being free flowing, and “F” being gridlock.) There are other ways to consider functionality that are gaining favor in other communities. If we are going to get beyond simply creating streets designed to accommodate more automobiles, we need to start to embrace some of the more creative design alternatives that will necessarily incentivize changes in our travel behavior.

Doing that is a way to define the ‘function’ we’re after for a given corridor – examples being to create distinct destinations along the route so people are actually driving less, rather than more. Define the function of the area, not the road. Here’s a site that further describes how other communities are working this sort of thinking into their planning.

<http://sf.streetsblog.org/2009/01/26/paradise-lost-part-i-how-long-will-the-city-keep-us-stuck-in-our-cars/>

I’ll be putting together a proposed definition of functionality and will work with some on the council to adopt that in order to give some direction to the CTF, and by extension to TDOT in how we’re allowing this group to move ahead. What a few of us have found is that if we leave this sort of stuff to assumption, we get buried under 130’ of other “stuff”.

**C) Funding.** I have a 2004 memo signed by the then Mayor and by Sharon Bronson that states the City will take on the burden of funding the County portion of the \$25M obligation to the Broadway project. I also have a letter from 2 weeks ago from the County DOT stating that they’re ready to fund that same portion at the end of FY’14. Both can’t be true. So, we’ll sort out which is right, and perhaps offer the suggestion that we design to the RTA allocation (\$42M) and use that other money to enhance the River Rd mess we helped to exacerbate. To that end, in some recent correspondence between the HOA’s along River and the County, the County Administrator is now taking the position that, irrespective of County ownership of the River/Craycroft intersection, they’re no longer involved or responsible for design and/or funding of solutions. The County is certainly responsible for staying engaged in that process – and as the proud new owner of some of the roadway, so is the City. Here’s a foothills newsletter that expresses the need for those residents to get involved with laying pressure on the elected officials, staff, and candidates for office to get together and fix this mess:

<http://cms3.tucsonaz.gov/files/ward6/9-6-12September2012finalred.pdf>

**D) Public Safety.** I’ve given background on this in previous newsletters – on Wednesday we had the briefing from staff. Here’s the validation that we need to be proactive in planning on staffing, increasing our general fund budget capacity for those agencies, and also give strong consideration to our compensation packages for police, fire and communications workers: In fy’13 and beyond, TFD will take on an added \$267K for managing our metro medical. After the WUNA vote, Karin and I both warned about the way that decision would negatively impact public trust in our processes. Between Broadway and how we respond to the River/Craycroft issues, we have a chance to regain some of that trust – or not...