

**THE WORKSESSION OF THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL  
OF BENSON, ARIZONA HELD SEPTEMBER 10, 2007  
AT CITY HALL AT 6:00 P.M.**

**MAYOR FENN  
OPENED THE MEETING AT 6:00 P.M WITH  
THE PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE.**

**PRESENT WERE: MAYOR FENN, VICE MAYOR KING,  
COUNCILMEMBERS LODZINSKI, McGOFFIN, SACCO, SUAGEE, and TIPTON**

Presentation on a  
Proposed Interstate  
Highway by Dale  
Buskark, Arizona  
Department of  
Transportation:

Dale Buskark, Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) gave a power point presentation on the Proposed Interstate Highway. Mr. Buskark stated the project is to ascertain if a bypass is needed in the future and that the planning on this proposed project is very preliminary stating the target dates would be the years 2030 and 2050. Mr. Buskark stated public meetings on this project had been held and a draft presentation will be completed in October, 2007, after which, more public meetings will be held in November, 2007 for further public participation. Mr. Buskark said a final presentation should be presented to the State Board of Transportation in December, 2007. Mr. Buskark stated throughout the first public meetings, a message to avoid the "San Pedro Valley" was heard and that some corridors were refined to exclude preserved lands, protected lands, land ownership, threatened and endangered species, urban development, entitled lands and parks, but not all areas or corridors were refined.

Mr. Buskark then went on to state ADOT's first priority would be to expand Interstate 10 (I-10) in it's current right of way and that preliminary studies were currently being conducted for the ultimate build-out of I-10.

Questions raised by Councilmembers included the accurate forecasting of population growth and alternate modes of transportation. Mr. Buskark stated that accuracy is difficult when projecting population growth so far into the future, noting Arizona is currently the fastest growing state in the United States; however, he said in the past ADOT's forecasts have been very conservative. With regards to alternate modes of transportation, Mr. Buskark stated the bypass as originally perceived would cater to trucks traveling to different states. He stated Union Pacific is committed to double tracking in Arizona and they may capture a lot of freight transportation.

Mayor Fenn then asked for clarification on the changes or adjustments that were made after the first round of public participation meetings. Mr.

Buskark then confirmed that no corridors were removed, just adjustments were made, i.e. moved farther away from archeological/wildlife paths, etc. Mayor Fenn then thanked Mr. Buskark for his presentation.

Presentation on a  
Proposed Interstate  
Highway by the  
Cascabel Working  
Group:

Bob McClure then gave a presentation on the Proposed Interstate Highway on behalf of the Cascabel Working Group (CWG) stating most routes for this project were planned to go through the San Pedro Valley and that CWG is organized specifically to oppose the I-10 bypass. Some of the issues that CWG has with the project are ecology, the environment, history and archeology, open space, agriculture and others. Mr. McClure stated CWG feels the bypass would create urban sprawl, light pollution, water depletion and other negative affects. Mr. McClure then went on to address the many historic and archeological sites stating that ADOT had agreed to move from the known sites, but was concerned about the unknown sites.

Mr. McClure then spoke regarding the cost of the proposed project stating based on CWG's calculations, the project would cost \$8.4 billion to construct. Mr. McClure then addressed the four objectives ADOT has in constructing this project. The first objective being to relieve congestion in Phoenix and Tucson. Mr. McClure stated the traffic in those cities stays in those cities and therefore won't be relieved. The second objective was to create a shorter route for trucks. Mr. McClure stated the routes looked at were designed to save approximately 25 miles. CWG felt this was not a big enough difference in route distance to justify the project or to have trucks choose to utilize the proposed route. The third objective was to have an alternate route for construction, incident, etc. Mr. McClure stated that for this objective to be met, the bypass would need to be accessible. The fourth objective was for population growth and Mr. McClure stated the projected population of Arizona was between nine and sixteen million, but questioned sixteen million being remotely reasonable considering water, land and other issues. Mr. McClure feels ADOT's population projections are wrong and that most growth is where ADOT has projected it; between Phoenix and Tucson. Mr. McClure concluded his presentation stating none of the four objectives ADOT had would be met with this proposed project and encouraged the public to contact CWG, ADOT, the media and local and state government officials to oppose this proposed project.

Questions from Councilmembers included the possibility of a simple two lane road through the area and whether it would be sufficient, how much truck traffic is going into Tucson and Phoenix and what could be done to encourage cities and towns to have depots for trucks. Mr. Buskark, ADOT addressed these questions stating the priority would be to complete the I-10 build-out. Mr. Buskark recognized that Arizona is a bridge state for freight as well as an interstate, but did believe Tucson was attempting to form a major distribution point for trucks. The

question was raised regarding ports at the state's borders for off-loading freight and Mr. Buskark stated this is "piggybacking" and is already occurring. While he expects it to increase in the future, incentives to expand would be through the Arizona Legislature. Vice Mayor King commented the current Council's decisions would affect future generations and though he realizes growth is coming, he hopes to find middle ground on the issues facing the City.

Mayor Fenn then asked Mr. McClure what option(s) would CWG support. Mr. McClure stated expanding I-10 and using trains to transport freight would be projects CWG would be supportive of.

Mayor Fenn then confirmed there will be more public participation meetings that will include Benson sometime in November, 2007.

Adjournment:

Councilmember Lodzinski moved to adjourn at 6:57 P.M. Seconded by Councilmember McGoffin. Motion passed 7-0.

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Mark M. Fenn, Mayor

ATTEST:

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Vicki L. Vivian, City Clerk