



CITY COUNCIL MEETING

STUDY SESSION MEETING MINUTES

TUESDAY, JUNE 25, 2019, 1:00 PM

Council Chambers, 201 South Cortez Street
Prescott AZ 86303
(928) 777-1272

	Greg Mengarelli, Mayor	
Billie Orr, Mayor Pro Tem		Jim Lamerson, Councilman
Steve Blair, Councilman		Alexa Scholl, Councilwoman
Phil Goode, Councilman		Steve Sischka, Councilman

MINUTES OF THE STUDY SESSION MEETING OF THE PRESCOTT CITY COUNCIL HELD ON JUNE 25, 2019, in the COUNCIL CHAMBERS LOCATED AT 201 SOUTH CORTEZ STREET, PRESCOTT, ARIZONA.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Pro Tem Orr called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL

Greg Mengarelli	Mayor (Excused)
Billie Orr	Mayor Pro Tem
Steve Blair	Councilman
Phil Goode	Councilman
Jim Lamerson	Councilman
Alexa Scholl	Councilwoman
Steve Sischka	Councilman

3. DISCUSSION

A. Presentation on General Traffic and Transportation Operations and Improvements.

City Traffic Engineer Ian Mattingly provided a presentation to Council regarding traffic and transportation operations and improvements in the City of Prescott.

Mayor Pro Tem Orr asked if the information and inquiries that Council submitted to staff from their constituents will be addressed in this presentation.

Mr. Mattingly confirmed that some of the items that were submitted would be included in the presentation.

Public Works Director Craig Dotseth also commented that additional information will also be presented at a future meeting as staff is still working closely with the Pedestrian Bicycle and Traffic Advisory Committee (PBTAC).

Mr. Mattingly continued the presentation with an overview of what will be discussed, including:

- * Factors affecting traffic growth and flow
- * Background policies and regulations
- * PBTAC role and accomplishments
- * Traffic signals
- * Speed Limits
- * Downtown Traffic & Parking
- * Striping and other concerns

Growth & Traffic Flow

- * Strong economy
- * Prescott and regional growth
- * Job and retail attractors
- * Tourism and special events
- * Build out of major roadways is nearly complete
- * Expansion through annexation occurring in north Prescott

Traffic is growing at a higher rate than CYMPO Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) predicts (2010 123k to 210k in 2040). Since 1990 Prescott has grown 30%, but growth in Chino Valley and Prescott Valley is much higher which impacts our traffic.

Councilman Goode commented that CYMPO projections were based on retrospective growth which seems to affect the projections not being as accurate as they could be with the actual growth.

Policies & Regulations

- * Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices
 - Striping and Signing Guidelines
 - Traffic Signal Warrants
- * A.R.S. Chapter 28 (State of Arizona)
- * Traffic Calming Policy (Council)
- * Prescott Street Classification Map and List (Council)
- * General Engineering Standards (Council)
- * PBTAC

Councilman Sischka arrived to the meeting at 1:10 p.m.

PBTAC Role & Accomplishments

- * Review city projects and developments in design stage
- * Consider and provide recommendations on traffic items
- * Monitor the city's traffic collisions for severe injury, fatalities, trends and bike and pedestrian crashes
- * Bring safety concerns related to pedestrian, bike and traffic issues to staff to address
- * Meet with the public to assist with difficult traffic issues like speeding, traffic calming and alternative transportation modes.

Mayor Pro Tem Orr thanked PBTAC members members for their work.

PBTAC Accomplishments

* Traffic Improvements

- Williamson Valley Road and Iron Springs Road restriping
- 4-Way Stop at Mt. Vernon and Carleton
- Share the road artwork for SW Trucks

* Pedestrian and Bike Improvements

- Bike detection improvements
- SR89 at Willow Lake Road roundabout RRFB installation
- Bile lanes added (Commerce, Willow Creek Road, Walker Road, Smoketree Lane, W. Gurley Street and Thumb Butte Road)
- Handrail and signing prohibiting crossing at Sheldon and Cortez

Mayor Pro Tem Orr also pointed out that the PBTAC has applied for and received "bicycle friendly" status for Prescott.

Traffic Signals

* 51 city owned traffic signals

- Most operate stand alone
- Favor mainline operation
- In ground detection

* Two existing interconnect systems

- Downtown System (Gurley, Marina to McCormick and Montezuma) which uses timing offsets, peak directional flow
- Sheldon/Montezuma/Whipple/Willow Creek Road System (Sheldon at Marina to Willow Creek Road at Gail Gardner Way) which uses timing based/limited progression

Councilman Sischka asked if we have increased capabilities for our signals to add functions like a flashing yellow before it turns red, etc. He stated that he has seen many red lights being run and believes things like this would help to avoid those issues as he has seen it work well in other locations.

Mr. Mattingly stated that we do have those types of capabilities, and it would be possible to do lagging or leading lefts, etc. as an option. He agrees that there are benefits to come from changing the way we do left turns in the city. Many of our roadways and intersections will not expand so we need to figure out other ways to make them more efficient. However, he is not sure if through movement flashing is an approved use, and will follow up on that.

Councilman Blair discussed his aggravation with left turns at intersections like Lowe's off Highway 69, where the red arrow stays for much longer than it should and a flashing yellow would be good in that location. He also commented on issues at the Cortez/Gurley intersection where there is not enough lag time for pedestrians to walk across because hand turns red right before light changes, and the backup on Montezuma St when it gets backed up from Gurley through Goodwin because of pedestrian traffic. Additionally, he discussed issues at Rosser and Willow Creek Rd and

asked if some of those enhancements to the lights could be beneficial there, and the lack of striping and markings on Lee Boulevard.

Mr. Mattingly said that we can certainly improve efficiencies at intersections like Rosser and Willow Creek Rd with “time of day” programs and timing patterns. There are also other options for efficiency measures.

Mayor Pro Tem Orr stated that Lee Blvd. is an Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) intersection, and staff has reached out to have striping and modifications done in the area.

Mr. Mattingly confirmed that ADOT is responsible for the Lee Blvd. intersection as it is an ADOT intersection all we can really do is make requests for improvement. He also commented on striping issues at Copper Basin crosswalk and West Gurley striping modifications which staff is working to address. Improvements have been made in these areas, but there are still items that need to be done.

Additional Areas of Concern

- * SR89 widening in the Dells
- * Overnight RV parking on streets
- * Rosser Street (cross town connector)
- * Enforcement

Efficiency Measures In Use

- * Right turn overlaps
- * Permissive and protected permanent lefts
- * Favor main line movements
- * Time of Day (TOD) timing patterns

Challenges to Overcome

- * No grid system, uneven blocks and close intersection spacing
- * Uneven volumes and demand from side streets
- * Side street and left turn green time impacts
- * Communication between signals

Councilman Sischka asked if there is a way to meld common sense with warrants, for example the improvements that were done on Robinson Drive, throughout Prescott so things can be more efficient.

Mr. Mattingly said yes, and commented on another good example is the improvements at Carleton and Mt. Vernon. He also said that even with the warrants there is good engineering judgment which needs to be taken into consideration.

Councilman Blair stated that another issue area is the left on Sheldon onto Montezuma and people trying to avoid the backup on Gurley, and improvements that need to be done on Willis and Granite improvements.

Mr. Mattingly said that particular area does need some balance and potential parking removals but that is a sensitive issue as well. He did state that he is a big fan of permissive and protected permissive lefts.

Councilman Sischka stated that citizens express concerns during campaign time and one of those things is always traffic and we have to improve the flow of things in this city because that is something that we can control and be smarter about how we move people. We must be forward thinking.

Mr. Mattingly said that tying signals together is important particularly in areas like Willow Creek, etc. Moving forward implementation of the Willow Creek Rd Corridor Intelligent Transportation Systems Project (14 signals).

Other Traffic Signal Solutions Moving Forward

- * Flashing yellow arrow or trailing left implementation
- * Upgrade signal detection and timing at intersections
- * Implement more TOD timing plans
- * Opportunities for future coordination and expansion.

Councilwoman Scholl commented that we can discuss and identify all of the areas with traffic issues, but we need a way to systematically identify the specific problem areas and use data to show if improvements are having a positive impact and doing what we need them to do.

Councilman Goode commented that over a year ago the option of a traffic study was discussed but the cost to do such a study was nearly a quarter of a million dollars, so while he agrees with Councilwoman Scholl that we need the data we have to figure out a way to get the data without that kind of cost and have a comprehensive plan rather than just band-aids in particular areas.

Mayor Pro Tem Orr echoed Councilwoman Scholl and Councilman Goode's comments. She also asked why the striping at Lee Blvd. is taking so long, and if it would be possible to do that type of work in-house.

Mr. Mattingly said that TSI is the only major stripper in Northern Arizona and they are our primary company to contract with but there are no time frames built into the contract and as busy as they are/with the limited striping timeframe for work it is difficult to get them to complete them when we want them. Additionally, he stated that we would not be able to do this type of work in-house because of the expense of the equipment.

Councilman Blair asked if it would be possible to contract with the State of Arizona for the striping projects.

Mr. Mattingly said that would definitely be an option. He also mentioned that we do have the capability of looking at individual signals and generate new timing systems to see what kind of difference that would make with analysis software.

Speed Limits

- * Prima-facia speed laws (25 MPH)
- * Local Ordinances (15 MPH in alleyways)
- * Arterial Speed Zone Policy
- * Standard Practice/Engineering Judgment
- * 85th percentile for speeds
- * Roadside zoning and development
- * Geometrics, sight visibility and pedestrian & bike facilities

Council and staff discussion regarding speed on Rosser and the classification of that road. Additional locations to be reviewed for speed limits include Sheldon, Copper Basin, Williamson Valley, Iron Springs and Willow Creek.

Councilman Goode commented that as we are not able to expand our roadways any further we need to look at whether we can move traffic more quickly in a safe manner and consider what the maximum safe speed is.

Parking

- * Don't fit, don't park signage
- * 2 or 3 hour parking
- * Parking garage
- * All-way pedestrian crossing at Gurley
- * Delivery truck parking (Cortez three lane concept)

Council and staff discussion regarding the issues with through movement in downtown being slowed by pedestrians and there not being any right turn lanes around the square. Would it be possible to simply not allow right turns surrounding the square?

Mr. Mattingly stated that he thinks that this would be a very good solution, however, they would need to consider whether businesses around the square would have any issue with that.

City Manager Michael Lamar stated that he believes a solution like that would likely increase the use of the downtown parking garage as well.

Mr. Mattingly said that staff will research this option further and changes like this can be very beneficial.

Mr. Lamar asked Council if they would like to have a follow up dialogue regarding these matters in a few months at a study session meeting.

Mayor Pro Tem Orr stated that would be a good idea and reiterated the importance of continuing to work on and discuss these items, but also to stay on top of actually doing them.

Councilwoman Scholl stated that she feels it is important to have long term solutions and plans.

Mr. Dotseth informed Council that staff will put together a comprehensive list of the items that have been discussed to be worked on.

Mike Ammons, Prescott Resident addressed Council regarding his suggestion of a change to the intersection at Gurley and Montezuma as a free pedestrian crossing with an "X" concept, he said that we do need something different at that intersection even if it is just for a test period. He also commented on issues with detection of motorcycles and that needs to be addressed.

Fred Oswald, Member of PBTAC and Certified Bicycle Safety Instructor addressed Council regarding the safety concerns that he has brought before the Committee which have not been addressed including, steep downhill graded roads not being suitable for bike lanes and traffic loops controlling traffic lights are not properly marked and therefore not being used. All intersections need to be inspected and necessary adjustments made.

B. Presentation of Proposed Water Policy Changes

City Attorney Jon Paladini introduced the panel discussion presentation regarding water policy discussions and outlined the upcoming schedule for the balance of summer stating that the target adoption date for the City's new policy is the September 10 Voting Meeting. He also reiterated that this policy is in draft and being presented publicly in order to receive input from the public and allow them to participate in the process. The ultimate goal is to simplify city processes.

Policy Changes

* Scope - this policy is intended to be a long term plan to direct City staff in managing the City's finite water supplies and to assure potential applicants that they can rely on a consistent set of rules when applying for water service. This document applies to all new applications for water service of any type.

* Water Conservation Policy - the City of Prescott should continue its role as a leader in conservation of water resources and utilization of non-groundwater sources. City staff shall actively seek ways to improve the City's conservation measures and develop new ways for the city to reduce its net groundwater use.

* Water Use Tracking Tools

- Water Resources Management Model (WRMM)
- Water Conservation Trends (Woodard Model)

Public Works Director Craig Dotseth continued the presentation reiterating that this policy update is simply a draft and the purpose of these discussions is for Council and the public to review and discuss as well as suggest changes as necessary. The City wants to continue to be the conservation leader and staff actively seeks ways to improve the conservation measures and develop new ways to reduce net groundwater use.

Water Connection Policy

- * Water service needing less than 5 acre-feet (af) per year may be approved administratively
- * A water demand analysis may be required for any project whose service needs are greater than 5af/year. Performed at the applicants expense
- * Water will be provided, but no specific amount of water will be allocated to any project through separate contract
- * A cost benefit analysis may be required at applicants expense
- * In the event a property applying for water service has an existing entitlement to water from the City, that entitlement must be fully utilized before the City will make additional water available for the property
- * Water service will be subject to compliance with City Codes and Policies, including those requiring connection to the City's sanitary sewer system

Water Application Procedure

* Within City Limits

- Less than 5af/year: contact Community Development Department to verify the project can proceed to a building permit, submit all required applications and permits (if the project is otherwise approved, administratively or by Council action, water is also allocated to the project), and abide by all City Codes and Policies

- Projects over 5af/year: Council approval, contact Community Development Department for instructions on how to proceed, attend pre-application conference, submit all required applications, complete the platting process as required, Council will vote on the proposed project and water use, abide by all city codes and policies

* Outside City Limits

- Contact Public Works Department, if the project has an existing entitlement to water follow "City's Within City Limits Process", if the project does not have an existing entitlement to water service may be available if the project is within the City's Expansion Zone, submit a PAC application that includes a feasibility analysis and cost benefit analysis, the PAC application will be reviewed by city staff

- After staff review is completed, the application will be forwarded to City's Water Issues Subcommittee for a recommendation, following the recommendation the application will be forwarded to Council for approval determination. If approved, the project will be subject to the City's "within city limits" process

Councilman Goode asked how af usage will be determined, he expressed his concern that the incentive for developers to use high efficiency fixtures will be lost with these changes.

Mr. Paladini said that the WRMM is used to determine the likely water usage, the real difference is that allocations will not be on paper. The purpose of the water service agreements is internal calculations.

Mr. Dotseth reiterated that all usage can still be tracked through the WRMM.

Councilman Goode stated that if we are not doing this until after the fact the incentive for builders is gone.

Mr. Paladini commented on the fact that we are losing the most water through unsewered and external usage and making these changes would help alleviate these issues.

Councilman Goode expressed his concern that we are overly focusing on recharge, we have a good regulatory system in place now and we would be losing it.

Councilman Lamerson asked for clarification on how many gallons 5af actually is.

Mr. Dotseth confirmed that 5af is equal to approximately 325,800 gallons per af and the average consumer uses 0.17af/year. A multi unit project is where this amount of water usage would be a consideration.

City Manager Michael Lamar stated that there is nothing "magical" about 5af or less, Council could make this number higher or lower, and the suggestion is that if the usage will be under 5af the paperwork is done at an administrative level rather than at the Council level.

Mr. Paladini echoed Mr. Lamar's comments and stated that it ultimately becomes a point of policy for Council's approval and whether they want the water management policy to examine growth.

Council Sischka commented on the fact that if we are allocating a certain amount of water to a project and they are not using that they additional units could be added to a subdivision.

Mr. Lamar commented that one of the flaws with the existing system is that the allocations have typically been significantly high than actual usage and we are therefore limiting ourselves.

Mayor Pro Tem Orr commented that the goal is to reduce some of the bureaucracy and streamline processes so it is important to keep that in mind as well.

Community Development Director Bryn Stotler continue the presentation with further discussion regarding the proposed changes to the application process.

Councilman Lamerson stated that our current policy states that we do not service or deliver water outside of city limits and he wants to know why we would change that.

Mr. Dotseth clarified that if there are existing contracts and under some exceptions we do deliver and service outside city limits.

Mr. Paladini stated that the main reason for this change is the unsewered recharge would be returned and the customer would have to follow policies regarding outdoor water use, as of now a development going in outside of city limits uses the same aquifer supplies but nothing is returned or recharged.

Mayor Pro Tem Orr asked for confirmation that the cost of infrastructure would be born by the developer.

Mr. Paladini confirmed.

Mr. Dotseth provided the example of Williamson Valley neighborhoods with adjoining properties and being able to get the recharge from those policies.

Councilman Goode said that his initial feeling is that as we remove some of the regulatory review of projects coming in we might be creating too liberal a growth opportunity and that the threshold for af needs to be reduced so we can monitor and see how the change actually works.

Councilman Blair echoed Councilman Goode's comments, he said that he is concerned about the amount of change and that perhaps 2af rather than 5af and an annual report regarding how that is working would be beneficial.

Mr. Dotseth said that could be done.

Ms. Stotler also commented that all proposals coming in would be vetted appropriately through the Planning & Zoning and Land Use process, these changes are getting away from the paper accounting regarding water usage.

Councilman Blair said that we are still accountable to the public to know how much water we are giving out.

Mr. Dotseth said that we are still going to keep track of that but it will be done in a different manner.

Councilman Lamerson said that Mr. Woodard told us how well our current policy is working and if "it ain't broke don't fix it".

Mr. Lamar said that it is acceptable to find a more happy medium on usage numbers rather than moving to swiftly with the changes.

Mayor Pro Tem Orr also stated that it is important for us to be clear about why we are making these changes.

Howard Mechanic, Prescott Resident addressed Council stating that he things the proposed policy has good concepts and the public should be congratulated on their conservation efforts, however, he does not agree with the reaction of Councilmembers that we are protecting our depleting groundwater this is a serious issue. Safe Yield has not been mentioned in any of the proposals and that is concerning for him. He said it is important for Prescott to get together with the other jurisdictions in the AMA to discuss the groundwater issues and be the leader.

Leslie Hoy, Prescott resident addressed Council regarding the public process and that she would like a copy of today's slides accompanying the presentation. She said that even though these items are being discussed in public the information going out before the meeting is too vague, the public needs more details to prepare and should be allowed more than 3 minutes to address Council on complex issues.

C. Presentation on Groundwater Recharge.

Council ran out of time in the Study Session and was not able to discuss this Item.

4. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to discuss, Mayor Pro Tem Orr adjourned the meeting at 3:13 p.m.

GREG MENGARELLI, Mayor

ATTEST:

MAUREEN SCOTT, City Clerk

CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that the foregoing minutes are a true and correct copy of the minutes of the Study Session Meeting of the City Council of the City of Prescott, Arizona held on the 25th day of June, 2019. I further certify the meeting was duly called and held and that a quorum was present.

Dated this ____ day of _____, 2019.

AFFIX
CITY SEAL

Maureen Scott, City Clerk