

SCOTTSDALE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION REPORT



To: Transportation Commission
From: Greg Davies, Senior Transportation Planner
Subject: Scottsdale Road and Camelback Road
Meeting Date: December 18, 2014

ITEM IN BRIEF

Action: Information

Purpose:

Provide information on path connectivity options along the Arizona Canal at the Scottsdale Road and Camelback Road intersection.

Background:

Downtown Scottsdale is one of the most acclaimed tourist areas in the state with a mix of retail, dining, nightlife, and residences. Streetscape features exist throughout downtown to encourage pedestrian travel, such as wide sidewalks, seating, and landscaping. In the past ten years, the Arizona Canal has become an integral part of the Downtown activity. The multi-use path adjacent to the canal provides direct connections to Phoenix, Tempe, and the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community. By Spring 2016, the longest remaining unpaved segment of this multi-use path, from Chaparral Road to Indian Bend Road, is anticipated to be paved.



The 2008 Transportation Master Plan recommended that the southeast corner of Scottsdale Road and Camelback Road be improved to include sidewalks, aesthetics, furniture and wayfinding.

This year, the pedestrian plaza on the southeast corner of Scottsdale Road and Camelback Road was substantially enhanced using 2000 Bond funds. In partnership with Salt River Project, seating, landscaping, signage, and art on the canal bridge was installed.

Existing Conditions:

Currently, pedestrians utilize the marked crosswalks at the Scottsdale Road and Camelback Road intersection. The Transportation Department considered four types of crossings to provide continuous connectivity along the canal. These potential crossings consist of a Rapid Reflecting Flashing Beacon (RRFB), Pedestrian Hybrid Beacon, conventional traffic signal, and grade separation.

Initial Evaluation Results:

The proximity of the canal path to the intersection poses safety issues for at-grade crossings. The canal path is approximately 155 feet east of Scottsdale Road and approximately 250 feet south of Camelback Road. For comparison, the Pedestrian Hybrid Beacon on Scottsdale Road north of Butherus Drive is approximately 400 feet from an adjacent signal.

A Rapid Reflecting Flashing Beacon, Pedestrian Hybrid Beacon, or traffic signal would compromise both pedestrian and motorist safety. The most similar circumstances to this location with traffic signals are Shea Boulevard between 70th Street and Scottsdale Road, and Shea Boulevard between 90th Street and 92nd Street. Both segments have very closely spaced traffic signals. These two segments of Shea have the 4th and 5th highest collision rates respectively of the 311 major street segments in Scottsdale

If a beacon or signal were installed for the Arizona Canal Path at the Scottsdale Road or Camelback Road, drivers traveling in either direction on both Camelback Road and Scottsdale Road would have visibility constraints due to the combination of traffic signal mast arms and mast heads at the crossing and at the intersection. These visibility constraints are magnified because of the elevation change created by the Arizona Canal bridges. Additionally, current vehicle queuing extends beyond the potential crossing locations on both Scottsdale Road and Camelback Road. Therefore, a beacon or a signal would create confusion for both pedestrians and drivers.

A grade separated crossing would be physically impossible due to the immediate proximity of the Arizona Canal. Structures either above or below the roadways would be impossible to design and construct to provide safe operation.

Solutions:

A traffic signal provides the highest level of vehicle and pedestrian control. The traffic signal at the Scottsdale / Camelback intersection requires vehicles to stop to allow pedestrians and bicyclists to cross Camelback Road or to cross Scottsdale Road. This intersection is approximately 155 to 250 feet from the Canal path.

The Transportation Department is considering signs to direct pedestrians and bicyclists from the Arizona Canal path to the Scottsdale / Camelback intersection.

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