

SAN CARLOS APACHE TRIBE CONSULTATION SESSION
MEETING SUMMARY NOTES
 THURSDAY, OCTOBER 6, 2022
 11:00 AM TO 12:30 PM

MEETING ATTENDEES

- Barney Bigman, *DOT Deputy Director, San Carlos Apache Tribe (SCAT)*
- Bernadette Kniffin, *Nnee Bich’o Nii Services Transit Director, SCAT*
- Jason James, *LRTP Project Manager, Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) MPD*
- Don Sneed, *Planning Program Manager/Tribal Liaison, ADOT MPD*
- Paula Brown, *Planning Program Manager/Tribal Liaison, ADOT MPD*
- Todd Emery, *District Administrator, ADOT Southeast District*
- Scott Omer, *WSP*
- Chris Joannes, *Kimley-Horn (KH)*
- Kristen Faltz, *KH*

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

Jason James welcomed attendees and introduced the Project Team.

2. P2P OVERVIEW

Jason James provided an overview of ADOT’s performance-based Planning-to-Programming (P2P) process, which is used to prioritize projects on the state highway system. He explained that performance-based planning is federal law and is also required by State statute.

- Jason shared a flowchart that provided an overview of the annual P2P timeline. P2P starts with the planning process, which includes project nominations and prioritization. Following prioritization, the top performing projects are added to the 5-year program following State Transportation Board approval.
- Jason provided a detailed explanation of P2P scoring for pavement preservation, bridge preservation, modernization, and expansion projects, as well as annual investment target amounts. He also provided a breakdown of the scoring percentages for technical, district, and policy components.
- He mentioned that a Tribe can nominate projects by submitting them directly to him, through the ADOT District Engineer/Administrator, or the Tribe’s regional council of governments (COG) or metropolitan planning organization (MPO). Project nominations need to be supported by data and are scored based on how well they meet the P2P scoring criteria.
- Barney Bigman asked if the month timeframes are consistent year-to-year in the P2P planning process graphic.
 - Jason responded that they are consistent on an annual basis.

3. LRTP OVERVIEW

Jason provided an overview on ADOT’s Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) and the update that is specific to this tribal outreach effort.

- Barney asked how the public will be made aware of the virtual public survey.
 - Jason responded that he will provide social media content to all COG/MPO/tribal partners to advertise the survey.
 - Scott added that ADOT has a very robust email list of stakeholders who will be provided with the information; however, no radio or newspaper advertisement.

- Barney asked if the LRTP will discuss electric vehicle (EV) infrastructure along state routes – will tribes be included in that deployment?
 - Jason responded that the State EV plan was done a couple of months ago but will need to be updated to incorporate rural EV infrastructure in the future. However, the LRTP will document the need for EV infrastructure in rural areas and how much funding is anticipated for EV infrastructure deployment.
 - Barney added that the Navajo Nation recently acquired electric school buses and he thinks those types of initiatives will be expanded to other tribal lands so there will be a greater need.
 - Bernadette Kniffin added that the range of electric buses is not sufficient for most of SCAT's transit routes.

4. SCAT PRIORITIES/COMMENTS

The Project Team led an open discussion on priorities specific to SCAT and any additional questions or comments attendees had.

- Jason asked if there have been requests for additional hours of travel for transit.
 - Bernadette stated that the tribe currently operates transit vehicles Monday through Friday from 5:30am to 2:30am. SCAT also operates 24/7 casino employee shuttles. SCAT has also provided vans to local churches to provide their own service on Sundays.
- Bernadette stated that SCAT is looking into hybrid electric buses and necessary charging infrastructure. Also, the transit system is working on a commercial driver's license (CD)L training program to fill the need for additional drivers.
- Bernadette provided current transit priorities, which are outlined in the SCAT Transit Asset Management (TAM) plan
 - Long-range transit plan
 - New transit maintenance and administration facility
 - Bernadette will send Don Sneed the latest TAM plan
 - There have been increasing requests for non-emergency medical transport – SCAT is going through the process to get approvals and training to operate this type of service. Bernadette is looking to do a pilot program in the Bylas area.
 - Don stated that ADOT's Arizona Tribal Transportation website has contact information for non-emergency medical transport, but ADOT does not provide direct transport assistance for that type of service
- Barney provided additional challenges facing SCAT:
 - Environmental preservation is a major concern of the SCAT tribal elders so Barney is glad that ADOT is engaging tribes as part of the LRTP and other projects to push the envelope on EV implementation.
 - SCAT hosted a State Transportation Board meeting in August 2022 and brought up needs on US 70:
 - Guardrail installation along various areas
 - Turn lane improvements at various locations (Old Winkleman Road, Apache Burger Restaurant)
 - Lighting improvements at the Apache Gold Casino entrance
 - Jason asked if the lighting improvements are being funded through the Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP)
 - Todd responded that it is an HSIP-funded project
 - Frontage roads in the Beverly Hills and High School areas (studies are potentially upcoming)
 - Road Safety Assessment along US 70

- Todd stated that the Southeast District has submitted an application to do the Road Safety Assessment (RSA) from the western SCAT boundary through the east side of Peridot
 - Access at the Country Store area
 - Access at the San Carlos Apache Healthcare – built within the last 10 years, the turn lanes should be lengthened or a traffic signal should be added
 - Speeding issue measures
 - Railroad crossings
 - Airport upgrades
 - Transit status
- Don asked if there are any major economic development projects that SCAT is pursuing that may impact the state system
 - Bernadette has a list of economic development projects for the next three years that she can provide to Don.
 - Bernadette stated that SCAT has received funding for design and construction of new bus shelters.
 - Barney added that SCAT is investigating adding commercial air service to the SCAT Airport in Cutter – a draft study has been done. They are also looking into improving the airport facilities.
- Barney stated that they just completed the Tribal LRTP and it was accepted by the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA). BIA also provided some funding to develop a safety plan, which will be shared with ADOT after completion.
- Jason asked, if you were in charge of determining the priorities for the statewide LRTP, what would the top three priorities be?
 - Bernadette’s top priorities
 - Maintaining the existing highways
 - Developing a long-range transit plan for intercity service
 - Implementing the intercity passenger rail (Phoenix to Tucson)
 - Barney’s top priorities
 - More tribal consultation
 - Improvements to railroads
 - Rural highway improvements

5. CLOSING REMARKS

The Project Team thanked Bernadette and Barney for their participation in the Consultation Session.

6. ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

The following links provide additional resources:

- [State Long Range Transportation Plan](#)
- [Planning to Programming Information](#)