

**SONORA CITY COUNCIL  
CITY OF SONORA  
JANUARY 22, 2019**

A Meeting of the City Council of the City of Sonora was opened this date in the Council Chambers at City Hall, 94 North Washington Street, at 5:00 p.m. with the following Members present: Mayor, Jim Garaventa, Councilmembers Mark Plummer, Colette Such, Matt Hawkins and Connie Williams; City Administrator Tim Miller, Deputy City Attorney, Robin Baral, Administrative Services Director, Chris Gorsky, Community Development Director, Rachelle Kellogg, Police Chief Turu VanderWiel; and, Fire Chief, Aimee New.

**REPORT ON POSTING OF THE AGENDA**

City Administrator Miller advised the Council that at 11:45 a.m. on the 18th day of January, 2019, the Agenda for the City of Sonora Council Meeting was posted outside City Hall for public view.

**APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

No Changes

**PRESENTATIONS**

Due to their unavailability, presentations for Jeff Davis, Sonora Trading Post, and Tony Benites, Benites Enterprises (Day-O), originally agendized for this meeting will be rescheduled.

**PUBLIC COMMENT (NON-AGENDA ITEMS)**

**BZ Smith**, discussed the need to have "systems" and a broader involvement to address the homeless problems in the City and County.

**CONSENT CALENDAR**

1. Approval of the Minutes for the meeting of January 7, 2019;
2. Approval to pay invoices of previously budgeted expenses on January 23, 2019
3. Approval of disbursements in the amount of \$140,620.96 on January 18, 2019 for payroll, inclusive of employee salaries, employer and employee taxes and retirement contributions, and miscellaneous voluntary employee deductions.
4. Approval of an Amendment to the Tuolumne County Economic Development Authority Joint Powers Agreement reducing the Notice of Withdrawal from 180 days to 120 days.

Councilmember Such had questions/comments regarding items 1 and 2.

**Motion by Councilmember Williams, seconded by Councilmember Plummer, and unanimously carried by a 5-0 vote, items 3 and 4 were approved.**

Councilmember Such requested that the minutes regarding the Red Church Intersection project reflect her thanks to Sharon Marovich along with Mr. Fuccillo and Ms. Suess; and, that item 5 of the Council consensus be clarified as Washington and Snell Streets.

**Motion by Councilmember Williams, seconded by Councilmember Plummer, and carried by a 4-0-1 vote, with Councilmember Hawkins abstaining, item 1 was approved.**

Councilmember Such asked for clarification regarding payments to Keenan and the Central San Joaquin Valley Risk Management Authority. Information was provided by the City Administrator.

**Motion by Councilmember Williams, seconded by Councilmember Plummer, and unanimously carried by a 5-0 vote, item 2 was approved.**

#### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

None

#### **PUBLIC HEARINGS**

None

#### **NEW BUSINESS**

**1. Review and possible direction to staff regarding the Stockton-Washington Corridor-Downtown Transit and Accessibility project plans**

**Rachelle Kellogg, Community Development Director,** presented her staff report requesting that the Council provide staff direction for any revisions before the consultant prepares the 65% plans. She provided background information; reviewed the public noticing; and, meetings held with the Bank of America, Trado's and the Sonora Inn and their support of the project and offer to maintain landscaping. In response to a question from Councilmember Such, City staff provided information regarding landscape maintenance options.

**John Pulliam, project manager, Kimley-Horn** described the status of the plans and that the 35% drawing is based on additional field work, previous Council comments and CalTrans comments and direction. He introduced **Daniel Carley, Project Engineer Kimley-Horn.** Mr. Carley reviewed the project details including the relocation of the southerly station; the station details including lighting, cameras, accessibility and sizing; traffic

lane configurations; curb extensions for turning movements; the HAWK system, crosswalk locations and gateway feature.

Councilmembers questioned the bus stop platform sizing and elevation changes, pedestrian access and steps, lost parking and elimination of a westbound lane. Additional discussion ensued.

**Mr. Pulliman** concluded by stating they are wrapping up the 35% plans and would be moving forward to final design including refining truck turning movements, sight distance and crosswalks; and, adding vertical design.

The Council offered additional comments concerning the two northerly lanes on Stockton Road heading west, the right turn at Washington and Stockton, and the Sonora Inn sidewalk width and appearance.

**Darin Grossi, Executive Director, TCTC**, commented that the plan met the service needs of the transit system and provides enhanced stops which are ultimately needed in the north, south and central part of town and that the proposed stops would reduce impacts at Courthouse Park. These new stops are anticipated to serve YARTS, the ski bus and possibly charter buses in addition to the normal transit routes. Mr. Grossi noted this was a grant funded project using transit bond money and CMAQ funds totaling approximately 1.8 million dollars. Council members questioned whether the Courthouse Park stop would be eliminated, current YARTS stop relocated, Visitor Bureau input and if the transit users were surveyed. Mr. Grossi responded there would still be limited use at Courthouse Park, the YARTS stop would be relocated, that riders were not surveyed and the Visitors Bureau as far as he knew had not seen these plans.

Council discussion and questions continued regarding the appearance of the HAWK system, in roadway flashing lights and the Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons (RRFB); the sign on Washington at Stockton, and its height and design for seating; concrete seat walls at the shelters; need for benches or seats for riders; and, other design considerations including bicycle racks.

Mayor Garaventa asked for public comment

**Jerry Fuccillo**, speaking as a City resident, provided written comments to Councilmembers (see Exhibit A). His stated his concerns that the project lacked any public benefit, would create more congestion and safety hazards, more maintenance responsibility and liability issues. He further stated that the elimination or shortening of traffic lanes would reduce capacity

and eliminate stacking and the plans should have an independent review by a traffic engineer and CalTrans Operations and Safety. He concluded that the project is out of place and should be located somewhere else.

**A member of the public** commented there was a lot happening that has not been discussed yet. She highlighted traffic turning movement and pedestrian crossing conflicts, that the Stockton west bound lane should be retained, and the right turn at the Sonora Inn should be evaluated for use as a second lane. She also suggested that arches at the Sonora Inn should be modified and the decorative sign be moved to the train engine location.

**Sharon Marovich** of the Tuolumne Heritage Committee, stated that the Sonora Inn is historic and one of the remaining areas that has granite curbing. She suggested making the project as unobtrusive as possible, similar to the Red Church project; to keep things simple and eliminate the sign as it is not warranted since one already exists.

**Cindy and Steve Zelinsky**, stated they did not like the project and that the City does not have "systems" to address problems that would come up. She stated they were not contacted regarding the project and had not seen the sign design. They expressed opposition to the sign and a bench that would attract homeless.

**Jim Davis**, stated that the plans are fixing something that is not broken, that the Council should listen to Jerry, and not eliminate lanes. He further commented that the project will hurt businesses, that two bus stops are not needed nor is a project that will eliminate 9 parking spaces.

**Elena Linehan**, stated she felt more public notice should be provided and that she agreed with the prior speakers. Written comments for the Council members to be included in the record were submitted (see Exhibit B). She further stated she objects to the use of Kimley-Horn and also suggested the relocation of the bus stop and possible use the parking area at the lower Save Mart area (Dambacher property).

Being no one else to speak, Mayor Garaventa closed public comments and asked for Council comments.

**Councilmember Such** stated while there may have been good intentions the bulb outs limit traffic circulation, the transit stops do not fit the location and it has not been demonstrated that they are needed. She stated she feels the design is a mess and cannot support the project.

**Councilmember Williams** reminded the Council that they directed the transit stops to Stockton Road. She noted that the sign was not needed and was concerned about the reduced westbound lanes at the bridge which is an issue. She also asked for clarification of the bus platform. She noted that she personally talked to Ms. Zelinsky and also talked to Lisa Mayo, Visitor's Bureau Executive Director who was not able to attend tonight's meeting but was very positive about the bus stop.

**Councilmember Plummer** noted there was a lot to be considered including whether downtown transit service is needed and if so what is best location. He indicated he preferred a different location and was concerned about pedestrian conflicts but the sign was not needed.

**Councilmember Hawkins** stated that the project has snowballed and is bigger than needed and has concerns about pedestrian safety and congestion. He commented that it's like fitting a square peg in a round hole and does not support the project and that it's not the right fit for the street or historic character.

**Mayor Garaventa** stated that Stockton Road at Washington is not a gateway and sign is not needed. He commented on the changes in lane configuration on Stockton Road and the west bound lanes becoming one lane at the bridge. He noted that heading east there appears to be room at the southerly bus top to extend the second lane and provide more stacking. He stated that public transit is needed and a better stop to serve downtown than Courthouse park is needed. He asked whether the use of the Dambacher lot was discussed to which Councilmember Williams responded that the property is now owned by the owner of shopping center. He concluded that this location is the best option there is for downtown and would support it if the issues that have been raised can be addressed.

**City Administrator Miller** clarified that notices were hand delivered to businesses Wednesday and mailed to property owners that same day; that the bulb outs proposed are to meet truck turning movements at each of the corners; that the crosswalks are provided to move pedestrians east and west along Stockton to the transit stops and north and south across Stockton for pedestrian safety and access to the transit stops; that the City staff did met with Caltrans operations for comments and did meet with owners of the Sonora Inn, Trado and Bank of America who were all supportive of the design and improvements. He noted that this project evolved from the Vision Sonora Plan and was originally planned for Washington Street but the study area was expanded to include Stockton Road which was selected by the Council. He noted the location presents challenges to accommodate the design and address pedestrian safety and that

the funding allocated was for the Washington Street or Stockton Road location. He noted a decision to move forward to next level of design still does not commit the Council to approve the project and if there is not Council support at this time staff needs to know.

Additional Council comments included Councilmember Williams wanting to continue to the 65% plans without the sign; Councilmember Plummer stating he disliked the aesthetic and historical look but unless there is something better on the table he would support the project absent the sign; Councilmember Such stating she did not support the project, that it is a bad design and does not fit, that it is crowded, unattractive, an eye sore, not an enhancement, and the wrong location; Councilmember Hawkins stated the stops are ok where they are, that he does not like the HAWK system, that public transit is needed, that the Sonora Inn bulb out is too big, there is a loss of parking and would only support the transit stops but not the other improvement on the plans.

In response to a question regarding alternatives to the HAWK system, that Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon (RRFB) signs could be installed and that the cost of the HAWK system would cost between eighty to one hundred thousand dollars.

Following a motion to approve moving forward to the 65% plans without the sign, Council discussion continued. Councilmember Plummer stated that the project was a more agreeable alternative for public transportation; Councilmember Williams talked about the use of the bus stops for ski season, Pinecrest, YARTS and tour buses and would attract locals to downtown; Councilmember Such questioned how locals would be attracted; Mayor Garaventa noted tours buses already come downtown and questioned what discussion items would be considered when completing the 65% plans. City Administrator Miller responded to the extent the engineers can they will look at issues raised by Council. It was clarified that the no frills version would not be looked at but the HAWK vs RRFB systems will be looked at. Staff informed the Council that plan costs to date are approximately 150 thousand dollars and costs to the 65% plans would range between 40 to 60 thousand dollars to as much as 80 thousand dollars. With no further Council comments, the Mayor called for a vote.

**Motion by Councilmember Williams, seconded by Councilmember Plummer, approved on a vote of 3-2 moving forward with 65% design and eliminate sign, with Councilmembers Hawkins and Such dissenting.**

**2. Consideration to confirm the Mayor's appointment to the Executive Committee of the Central Valley Division of the League of California Cities**

The Mayor announced that he would serve as the appointee and selected Councilmember Williams, who volunteered, as alternate.

**Motion by Councilmember Such, seconded by Councilmember Plummer, approved on a vote of 5-0, to confirm the Mayor's recommendation for the League appointments.**

**MONTHLY REPORTS**

1. Community Development Department
2. Fire Department
3. Police Department
4. Public Works Department

There were no comments by Councilmembers or public.

**VISION SONORA COMMITTEE REPORT**

The January 10, 2019 committee report was continued to the next regularly scheduled Council meeting.

**COMMUNICATIONS**

1. None

**COUNCILMEMBER/DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORTS**

Councilmember Williams noted that the Cocoa with a Cop was a very successful event. Councilmember Such reported that she attended the Point in Time training, Women's March, Martin Luther King Celebration, assisted with the homeless count, met with Chief VanderWiel regarding pedestrian safety and suggested that the Homeless issue be added to the Council agenda for a monthly report. Councilmember Hawkins apologized for missing the last Council meeting. Councilmember Plummer complimented the Police Department for their Cocoa with a Cop event. Mayor Garaventa noted he attended the TCTC meeting, Chamber Mixer, Vistor's Bureau meeting and Martin Luther King event.

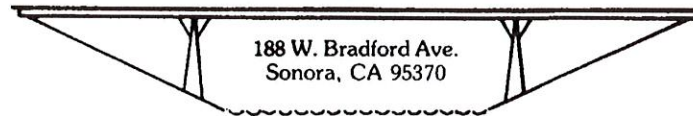
**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

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Timothy A. Miller, City Administrator

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## **GJF Engineering**



Date: January 21, 2019  
To: Rachelle Kellogg, Sonora Community Development Director  
From: Gerard J. Fuccillo, Sonora Resident  
Subject: **Comments to the Stockton-Washington Corridor - Downtown Transit & Accessibility Project -Plan Review, City Council meeting of January 22, 2019**

Here we go again with a plan coming out for review on a Friday afternoon for hearing on the evening of the next business day. If you want to review a paper copy of the report and plan, you need to pick it up late Friday afternoon or the morning of the meeting. One wonders if the City really wants any public comments on this project.

I did specifically pick up a copy of the agenda and this plan last Friday afternoon and did a review of it. To me the project is just an overkill and has no public benefit, only detriment with increased traffic congestion, potential safety hazards, with more maintenance and liability on the City.

I don't know if anyone realizes it, but the plan shows a raised concrete platform for a bus stop in front of the Rodeway Inn on Stockton Street which takes up the parking lane. Additionally there is a concrete bus pad (buses only) which takes up one traveled lane. This reduces the westbound traveled lane in front of the Rodeway Inn to one 11' wide lane with a loss of 6 parking spaces.

The revised plan also adds a pedestrian signal system crossing Stockton Street at Green Street. Whether or not this is coordinated with the main signal system is unknown, but it does serve to reduce available stacking space at the existing signal light at Washington Street.

With the combination of the transit stop relocation on the south side, Stockton Street will be brought to a two lane street, with reduced two lane stacking space to the Washington Street signal (200' vs 500' at present). This means that you will see Stockton Street back up a further distance from Washington Street, and be at the same unacceptable Level of Service as Washington Street.

This whole project is definitely out of place in Sonora, and unneeded for the bus service we have in this County. The plan would be more appropriate to Market Street in San Francisco.

It is requested that the City give a little more time for the public to review this plan, and perhaps give it an independent Traffic Engineering review along with a review of Caltrans Operations and Safety staff, prior to proceeding to the 65% plans. I do also see a number of bus turning, safety and operational problems that I would be happy to share with Caltrans.



Gerard J. Fuccillo  
Civil Engineer, RCE 22007

cc (by email)  
Timothy A. Miller, City Administrator  
Sonora City Council Members



## EXHIBIT B

### Comments Elena Linehan re Washington / Stockton Bus Stop on 1/22/2019

I have grave concerns about the proposal for the bus stops on Stockton Street as well as the process used for this project and for the other Vision Sonora proposals. I also have concerns over the City of Sonora's insistence on using Kimley-Horn as a consultation on these projects.

1) Let's start with the public notification process. Once again the city has announced a major alteration to the downtown on the Friday night of a three-day holiday weekend. As I have said to you before, this leaves the impression that you are trying to sneak something past us.

Your standard response is that you are doing all that is required of you.

Please understand that you are doing the least that is required of you. There is much more you could do. You give lip service to wanting public input, but your actions show us something else. You have the power to direct your staff to announce a proposal at one meeting and then bring it up for public comment at another meeting two weeks down the line.

This gives the opportunity for interested parties to learn about the plan and provide input.

2) Another thing you must stop doing is saying "Some people don't want to see change." I've heard Connie Williams say this. I've heard your planner Paula Daneluk say this and I've heard your consultants from Kimley-Horn say this. It has got to stop today.

Nothing could be further from the truth. And once you use that blanket phrase to discount anything that is said, it becomes impossible for us to give you any input and believe what we say will be heard. So stop it. Stop it tonight.

3) As for the proposed project, you've placed the bus stops in the wrong spot. They need to be moved further west to the spot where Stockton Street widens. It is the logical spot and won't disrupt the traffic at the corner of Washington and Stockton Streets.

A better location and a better use of \$2 million of taxpayers money would be to place the bus stop inside the parking lot between the former bank and the Adventist Health property. One bus stop with ample room for the coaches to pull in and out, regardless of which route or direction they bus will continue when they leave the lot.

I advise against any project under consideration that includes landscaping. The city has a terrible record of maintaining public landscaping and there is no evidence that this will get any better. If you don't like what is there right now, you are really going to hate seeing the dead plants, weeds and trash that will welcome visitors with this new Vision Sonora project.

Why is a "Welcome to Sonora" sign included in a bus stop a block away? When you asked for input on what the sign should look like, you got as many or more comments that no sign was needed. And yet, here is that sign again. And why are you using gas tax money to put in a sign when those funds should be used for road repair? You are losing sight of what the public needs and wants, and are being led by what Kimley-Horn wants to sell you.

Kimley-Horn is famous for not including input from schools regarding a bus turning radius, or getting input from the local trucking companies. And here again we find an impractical design that creates greater difficulties in a congested intersection than it does solutions. Why eliminate a lane of traffic West bound on Stockton Street between Washington and Green? Is there a licensed traffic engineer that would sign off on that foolish idea?

4) And finally, stop using Kimley-Horn as a consultant for these projects. They have proven to have no understanding of CalTrans traffic requirements. They constantly push their designs rather than accept input from businesses and residents. They are wasting taxpayers dollars and city staff's time.