

CARSON CITY REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

Minutes of the September 14, 2005, Meeting

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A regularly scheduled meeting of the Carson City Regional Transportation Commission was held on Wednesday, September 14, 2005, at the Community Center Sierra Room, 851 East William Street, Carson City, Nevada, immediately following the regularly schedule meeting of the Carson Area Metropolitan Planning Organization that began at 5:30 p.m.

**PRESENT:** Chairperson Richard S. Staub, Vice Chairperson Charles Des Jardins, and Commissioners Shelly Aldean, Larry Hastings, and Michael Zola

**STAFF PRESENT:** Community Development Director Walter Sullivan, Transportation/Transit Planner Michael Dulude, RTC Engineer Harvey Brotzman, and Recording Secretary Katherine McLaughlin (CAMPO 9/14/05 Tape 1-0010.5)

**NOTE:** Unless otherwise indicated, each item was introduced by staff's reading/outlining/clarifying the Request for Action Report and/or supporting documentation. Staff members making the presentation are listed after the Item's heading. Any other individuals who spoke are listed immediately following the staff listing. A tape recording of these proceedings is on file in the Clerk-Recorder's office. This tape is available for review and inspection during normal business hours.

**I. ROLL CALL AND DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM (1-0010.5)** - Chairperson Staub convened the meeting at 6:10 p.m. Roll call was taken. The entire Commission was present, constituting a quorum.

**J. APPROVAL OF MINUTES - REGULAR SESSIONS OF 7/13/05 AND 8/10/05 AND A SPECIAL MEETING OF 8/25/05 (1-0022.5)** - Commissioner Hastings corrected the spelling of Dewayne Sousa's name to be "Duane" Sousa in the August 10 Minutes and moved to approve the Minutes of July 13, August 10, and August 25, 2005. Commissioner Aldean seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0.

**K. MODIFICATION OF AGENDA (1-0053.5)** - None.

**L. PUBLIC COMMENTS (1-0060.5)** - None.

**M. DISCLOSURES (1-0068.5)** - Commissioner Des Jardins explained that he had been overseas working and vacating at the time of the August 25 meeting. He commended the Commission on awarding a three-year contract to MV Transportation and the selection of a logo for the transit program. He approved the logo and, with a strong endorsement, joined the 4-0 vote of the Commission.

Commissioner Aldean noted the presence of Dave Morgan. They had discussed Item N and concerns about the function of sidewalks and cross walks on East Winnie. She suggested that this item be agenzized for a future meeting. Chairperson Staub advised that he had a similar discussion with Mr. Morgan on that item. Commissioner Zola explained that he had heard from several individuals about the Roop Street project. They had commended the City on it. He, however, felt that the lane design was confusing and that earlier signage on the need to change lanes is needed for both directions. Chairperson Staub indicated that he had received similar comments about it. He agreed that the striping is challenging. He felt that the traffic on this short section of roadway has turned the stacking lane into a passing lane. The traffic is also traveling at a higher

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rate of speed in that area. He noted that Chief Deputy Steve Schuette is present and suggested that he have the Deputy Sheriff's patrol the area. No formal action was taken on any of these items.

**N. PUBLIC MEETING ITEMS - STATUS REPORT AND ACTION TO DIRECT STAFF REGARDING PEDESTRIAN TRAFFIC ALONG EDMONDS DRIVE BETWEEN US 50 TO FAIRVIEW DRIVE AND EAST 5TH STREET BETWEEN EDMONDS DRIVE AND EAGLE VALLEY MIDDLE SCHOOL (1-0162.5)** - RTC Engineer Harvey Brotzman, Transportation/Transit Planner Michael Dulude, School District Director of Operations Michael Mitchell, Chief Deputy Sheriff Steve Schuette - Chairperson Staub explained that Deputy City Engineer John Flansberg is out of town and his contact with Mr. Flansberg regarding the item. They believed that the RTC needed to consider the item due to the gravity of an accident in that area and the location of the Eagle Valley Middle School.

Mr. Brotzman explained his role in the process which started with a request from the City Engineer to relocate a traffic signal to Desatoya. This request was generated after a discussion among the City Manager, the Sheriff's Office, and School District Personnel. As a result of Mr. Brotzman's discussion with the City Engineer, a cross walk was painted at Desatoya and the curb was replaced. Justification for leaving the flashing school warning signs at their current location was explained.

Chairperson Staub explained his concern about the precedent established by the changes and the lack of oversight by the Commission who is responsible for the City's streets. Warrants used to justify the placement of signs, crossing, etc., are the established industry standards. He recognized the difficult situation which had occurred prompting the need for immediate action and commend the individuals who had been involved. There is, however, a process which should have been followed for making the changes. He also indicated that he had been told that the school zone may be expanded. Mr. Brotzman was not aware of this proposal. Mr. Dulude explained his understanding that during the meeting concerns about the pedestrian traffic and the number of recent accidents in the vicinity were discussed. It was suggested that the cross walk be installed just south of Desatoya. He believed that Development Services Director Andrew Burnham had been in attendance at that meeting and had made the decision to do the cross walk. Discussion had also determined a need to relocate the school zone signage south of the Desatoya cross walk. The overhead flashing lights were not to be moved. Mr. Dulude had been out of the office for two days last week. During that period Mr. Flansberg had discussed the signage with staff and a determination was made to not move it. To Mr. Dulude's knowledge, no further discussions have occurred regarding the signage, lighting, etc. Chairperson Staub emphasized his concerns about the lack of communication with the RTC regarding the entire matter. He directed that future decisions of this type include participation of a Commissioner.

Discussion pointed out that the agenda indicates a broader area than has been discussed. Mr. Brotzman was aware of only the one cross walk. Chairperson Staub felt that the Commission/staff was not prepared to discuss the broader area. The concern is related to actions taken regarding the cross walk and relocation of some signage for the school zone. Public comments were then solicited.

Mr. Mitchell explained that he had participated in the meeting with the Sheriff's Office and City regarding the cross walk. The discussion and decision were made based on an accident at the path crossing Edmonds at Snake Hill. There is a crossing guard there. They felt that the crossing should be moved to Desatoya and be within the 15 miles per hour school zone. They felt justified in expediting the crossing and immediately

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relocated the crossing guard. He then explained his belief that the second part of the issue which should be discussed is the congestion at Fifth Street and River Road. The number of parents taking their children to the Eagle Valley Middle School is creating gridlock/road rage at that intersection. Reasons the School District had eliminated busing of students within its "walkable" zones, creation of the pathway behind Snake Hill, the School District's creation of a second drop off point, and elimination of a "directional traffic cop" at the intersection were explained. He asked that an item be agendaized to discuss this area and potential solutions. He also indicated that a resident had approached him with concerns about access/egress from the area during the high traffic periods and, particularly, if an emergency occurs. The closure of the roundabout at Fifth and Edmonds was cited to illustrate the safety concern. Chairperson Staub agreed that there is a need to have a discussion regarding these issues. He reminded the Commission of the discussion that had been agendaized previously by a resident who had suggested converting the pathway along Snake Hill into a roadway. He also pointed out that a lot of money had been spent on the Snake Hill crossing and that a decision regarding it also needs to be made.

Commissioner Aldean explained that the streets are typically engineered based on what is perceived to be the best solution. She suggested that the children be observed and the pathway constructed where they travel. This will encourage them to use it and not take other routes. She also asked if the parents were being involved in the discussions and encouraged to car pool or use other transportation means.

Mr. Mitchell explained that the Snake Hill pathway was part of a City park program which the School District had attempted to jointly use. The pathway was installed before the District decided to change the bus routes. He also explained his efforts to get the State to close/fence its area near Fifth and Edmonds due to potential hazards in that location for the children who are crossing it to reach the school. They have discussed the issues with the parents without any successful results. Examples were cited to illustrate the efforts. He reiterated the concerns about having only one access/egress into the area and his belief that it needs to be resolved. Commissioner Des Jardins explained that he lives on Hells Bells Road and has had many of the same concerns. He commended Mr. Mitchell/the School District on its grasp of the problem. He felt that they could work together to find a solution. Mr. Mitchell then suggested several temporary fixes that could be undertaken that could mitigate the problems on a short term basis. They require enforcement, curbs, and signage. None were felt to be adequate long term solutions but may provide time to find a permanent solution.

Commissioner Zola reminded the Commission/staff that Fifth Street and River Road are State routes and owned by NDOT. Their safety personnel should be involved in the discussions. Mr. Mitchell concurred and explained that the School District had obtained the right-of-way permits from NDOT for the student drop off location. Chairperson Staub advised that the roadway may become Carson City's in 2010.

Discussion pointed out that expanding the school zone may increase the driver frustration level. The School District was willing to accept whatever distance is determined appropriate and will support whatever is determined is the "right thing to do". They believe that the current cross walk should be within the 15 miles per hour zone. Chairperson Staub's personal observation of the location was explained and supported his belief that it should be in the school zone. Mr. Brotzman explained the traffic policy that indicates if you are within 300 feet of a sign, the driver should react and observe the signage. Chairperson Staub pointed out that the drivers' reaction does not occur until they reach the marked zone. Mr. Brotzman advised the technical issues are supposed to be left to staff. The school zone is a technical issue. It complies with the Statutes.

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Chairperson Staub indicated his intent to not step on any toes and for everyone to know and understand the process. Mr. Brotzman felt that he would have designated a location for the cross walk during the meeting and justified that location. Technically the crossing should have been located 40 feet further north than the current site. It is, however, enforceable at the current location.

Commissioner Aldean suggested that staff be directed to work with the School District, the State, and the Sheriff's Office to develop recommendations for pedestrian and vehicle issues for both the discussed site and the rest of the community and bring the recommendations to the Commission for review. She recognized the need for an immediate response to the accident, however, a global view of the community also needs to be considered. Mr. Brotzman concurred with her suggestion.

Chief Deputy Schuette advised that he had been in attendance at the meeting. He felt that the individuals who had attended the meeting had their "hearts in the right place". For that reason they had moved the crossing. The Sheriff's Office can enforce the school zone. For that reason they want the crossing where it is easiest to enforce, particularly, if taken to court. They would like to extend the zone. They will enforce the laws wherever the crossing is placed. The current location is better than the original crossing was. He did not have an opinion regarding the traffic at the middle school. Its solution is up to the School District and RTC. The Sheriff's Office will adapt and enforce the laws pertinent to it.

Commissioner Zola pointed out that the roundabout had operated for many years without any pedestrian-vehicle accidents. Everyone wants to protect the children. They may have over reacted for the sake of the children and the media.

Chief Deputy Schuette reiterated his/the Department's support for having the crossing located at Desatoya. He explained his review of the computer statistics for the area which indicated that during the 180 school day period of last year from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. there had been only nine accidents in the stretch from Highway 50 to Hidden Meadows. which is a larger area than the school zone. Justification for not using citations as an indication of concern was based on their subjective nature and the inability to provide consistent enforcement. Also, the number of accidents in the area makes it a low priority for enforcement. There had been 177 citations issued during the stated timeframe. Discussion indicated that 133 of the citations were for speeding. Commissioner Des Jardins felt that more than 6-7 accidents have occurred in the roundabout. Mr. Brotzman then explained a resident's personal efforts to determine compliance with the school zone's speed limit which had indicated that 92% of the drivers complied with it. Chief Deputy Schuette reminded the Commission of the timeframe for his statistics and pointed out that more accidents and citations could have occurred outside those parameters.

Chairperson Staub stated that he had forgotten that Park funds had been used to create the cross walk and pathway. For that reason the pathway will remain. He thanked everyone for the update and indicated that he was satisfied with their explanations. We must think outside the box and be cautious about establishing a precedence to avoid forcing the staff and Commission to do something in the future. Better communication is also advisable. Changes should be made based on sound judgment.

Commissioner Aldean moved to direct staff to work with members of the School District, Carson City Sheriff's Department, and the State of Nevada to develop recommendations to address vehicular and

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pedestrian traffic issues wherever they occur within the Carson City School District. Commissioner Zola seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0. Discussion indicated that it may take six months to develop the recommendations. Chairperson Staub asked that the school bus stops on Edmonds be included in the discussions due to his safety concerns for the children who must cross Edmonds to catch the school buses and the driver's lack of knowledge regarding the stopped buses. He suggested consideration be given to picking the children up on alternative streets. He thanked the audience/participants and Mr. Sullivan for attending the meeting.

**O. INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS - FUTURE**

**AGENDA ITEMS (NON-ACTION ITEMS) (1-1338.5)** - Commissioner Aldean suggested pedestrian issues on North Roop at Winnie be agenzized for discussion/action. People are using the sidewalk on Lone Mountain, turning the corner as the sidewalk leads them in that direction, and walking in the street rather than crossing to the other side of the street. Chairperson Staub indicated that he had discussed this situation with Mr. Flansberg and that it should be agenzized. Commissioner Zola explained his personal observation of a young mother who was pushing a stroller over the rocks along Roop Street. A sidewalk or pedestrian area needs to be constructed along the there before Walmart opens or someone is hurt. He suggested that grindings be used if another solution cannot be found.

STAFF COMMENTS (1-1410.5) - RTC Engineer Harvey Brotzman explained that additional roadway markings designating a left turn lane and a through lane are planned for the widened portion of Roop Street.

**P. ADJOURNMENT (1-1413.5)** - Commissioner Aldean moved to adjourn. Commissioner Zola seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0. Chairperson Staub adjourned the meeting at 6:52 p.m.

The Minutes of the September 14, 2005, Carson City Regional Transportation Commission

ARE SO APPROVED ON October 12, 2005.

/s/  
Richard S. Staub, Chairperson