

Pedestrian Area Assessment Report

Submitted by



landscape architecture / environmental design, inc.

May 8, 2003



Submitted to:

City of Surprise & Maricopa Association of Governments



Task 3.C – Pedestrian Area Assessment Report



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1. Level of Pedestrian Area

Pedestrian Levels are defined in the MAG 1995 report, “Pedestrian Area Policies and Design Guidelines”. The level of pedestrian area describes its qualitative characteristics. The North Original Townsite Trail study area of Surprise fits the description for a Level One Pedestrian Area. Level One area is used by pedestrians by necessity, including people who cannot drive such as youth, elderly or people who do not have access to a vehicle. Level one pedestrians have an intrinsic sense of security based on their familiarity and sense of belonging. Pedestrians are local, primarily daytime users and are numerous on weekday mornings, evenings and weekends. Pedestrians are walking for basic necessities or may be walking for recreation or for social interaction. Pedestrians and vehicles are equal in importance. Pedestrian use is an important mode but not necessarily well provided for. Traffic volume is light to moderate intensity, less than 1,500 to 8,000 vehicles per day. The intensity of pedestrian uses is low.



Pedestrian Level One

2. General Range of Policies

The general range of policies are documented in pedestrian design reports, including “Pedestrian Area Policies and Design Guidelines”, MAG, 1995. This report, written to discover the needs and expectations of pedestrians in this region, highlights Pedestrian Area Policies and Design Guidelines that are intended to assist local government and other interested entities in the creation and redevelopment of pedestrian areas and corridors throughout the region.

General policies for a Level One pedestrian area include the following:

- Security – This category represents steps that should be taken to foster either an intrinsic sense of personal security, or to enhance actions that may increase pedestrian security. These steps can help promote a more secure environment:

Establish regular car patrols by police; Establish and encourage neighborhood Block Watch programs and/or community and district policing.

- Planning – This category describes planning policy which is necessary to encourage or allow pedestrian areas to develop or renovate: Establish a proves to reinforce the existing character of the pedestrian area and its surroundings; Encourage development of a compact walking scale district served by a pedestrian area, and clustered neighborhood facilities, rather than allowing large, single use retail developments to occur at the fringes of the community.
- Priority of Implementation – This category addresses what needs to be determined in order to establish priorities for meeting the needs of particular types of pedestrians: Establish a pedestrian-by-necessity overlay to identify non-accessible routes, and determine first priority retrofitting of improvements.
- Community Participation – This section describes events which can foster a greater sense of community and encourage people to get out, walk around, and discover their city on a level other than the automobile: Encourage frequent community events co-sponsored by merchants, with pedestrian activities such as street entertainers, vendor cards and sidewalk sales.
- Pedestrian Education – This category addresses ways to improve pedestrian safety through additional knowledge: Educate new residents or tenants about valuable architectural or cultural features.

General Design Guidelines for a Level One pedestrian area include the following:

- Walkway Width: Provide five to six feet as a minimum effective walkway width.
- Walkway Separation from Traffic: When a rolled or barrier curb is present, separate pedestrians from traffic by five feet with a vertical or horizontal element such as landscape buffer, parking space, or bicycle lane; If roadway is wider than 30 feet or speeds are greater than 25 miles per hour, separate pedestrians from traffic by 12 feet minimum width.
- Intersections: Construct ADA accessible ramps in sidewalks, or provide intersection crossings free of obstacles; Create curb extensions such as bulbing or medians for refuge to reduce crossing distance where streets are greater than two lanes wide.
- Adjacent Roadway Width and Traffic Calming Techniques: Maintain a two-lane maximum roadway width; Reduce the typical radius at street corners to deter use by large vehicles; Consider traffic calming techniques; Use stop signs rather than traffic lights.
- Walkway Character: Orient building entries toward the pedestrian route to street, adjacent to the walkway; Limit curb cuts to one per street per business; Design parking lots perpendicular rather than parallel to street to provide easier access; Encourage front yard patios, courtyards, and the use of low walls and other treatments to allow visual access to the pedestrian route, without allowing physical access to private property; Encourage resident or adjacent business owners to plant and maintain street trees or provide other shade elements.
- Walkway Furnishings: Establish trash receptacles/pickup at pedestrian gathering places/nodes such as transit stops and mail boxes.

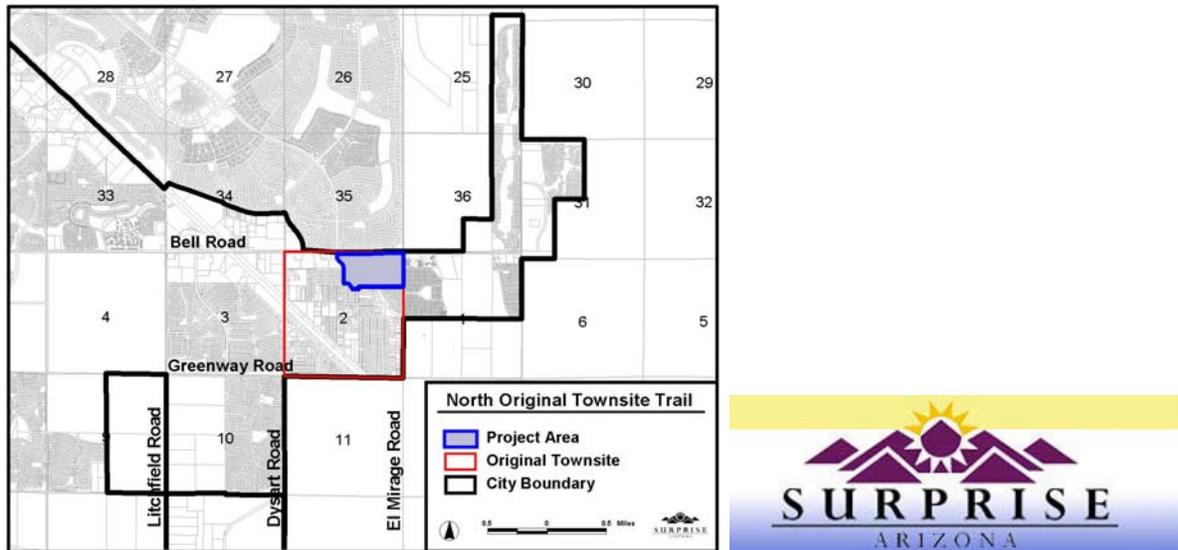
- Walkway Shade: Establish 50% shade along pedestrian routes and at gathering place locations.
- Parking: Encourage on-street parking on all streets as a buffer to traffic.
- Lighting: Provide local standard street lighting level or a minimum of 1 footcandle; Provide pedestrian level lighting, separate from roadway lighting.
- Signs: Provide pedestrian-scale entry signs at edges of pedestrian areas.
- Bicycle Access: Provide shared use facilities.
- Transit Access: Provide pedestrian connections to the regional transit/bus system.

Pedestrian area support programs include:

MAG Pedestrian Area Design Assistance; TEA-21 and Tea-3 Pedestrian Enhancements; City of Surprise Planning, Engineering and Streets Department, and Parks and Recreation Department, as well as private developers and adjacent land owners.

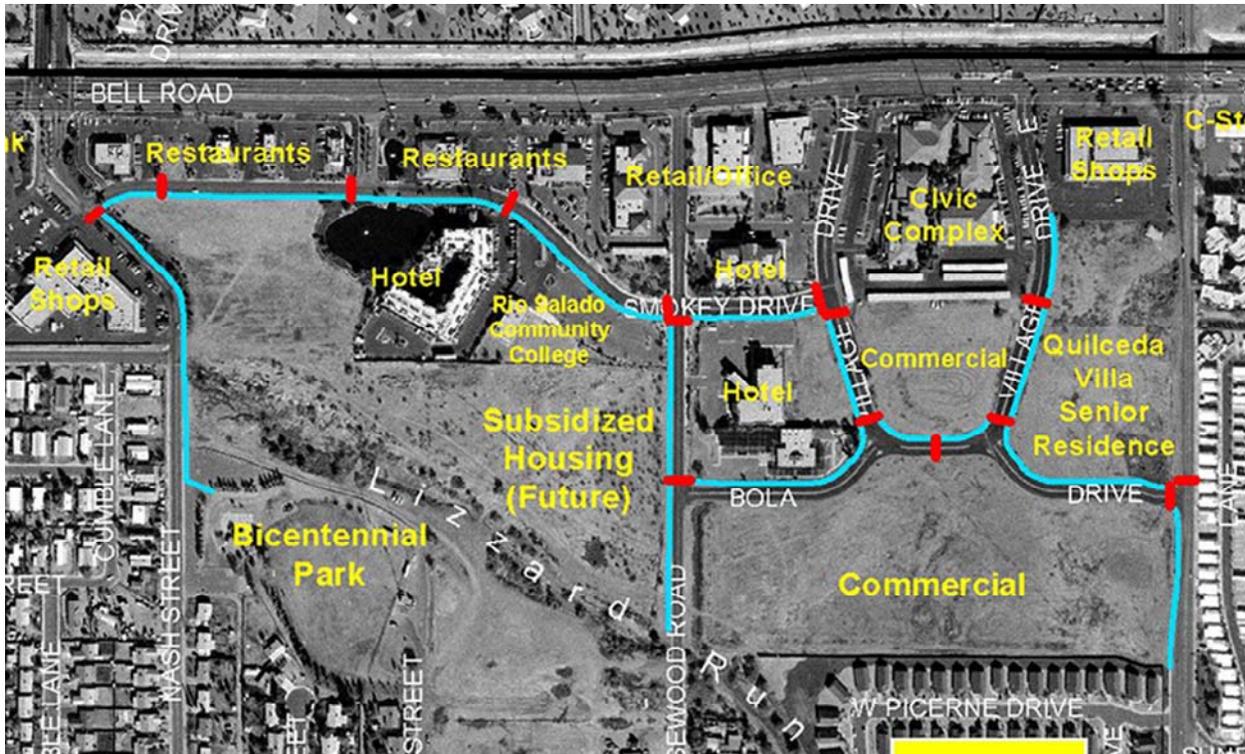
Facilities required, to create a successful pedestrian project include:

Walkways and crosswalks with corner ramps of concrete or other appropriate paving materials to accommodate ADA accessibility criteria; Pedestrian lighting; Recreational facilities such as picnic tables and an exercise equipment course; Street furniture including benches, water fountains, waste receptacles and bicycle racks; Signage and information.



3. Existing Conditions

The Surprise North Original Townsite Project Area is an area south of Bell Road, between El Mirage Road and Nash Street (linking with Crossroads Boulevard, and R.H. Johnson Boulevard, and Sun City, north of Bell Road). The project area is about one-half mile long (east-west), and about one-quarter mile wide (north-south). The adjacent areas south and east of the project area includes existing residential properties. The adjacent area north and west of the project area includes retail commercial uses.



North Original Townsite – Project Area – air photo of existing conditions, showing initial trail/sidewalk idea

The project area includes existing public and private roads with limited right-of-way space. Most of the existing roads do not have sidewalks. Existing land uses within the project area include the City of Surprise Civic Complex, three hotels, Rio Salado Community College, Bicentennial Park, Restaurants, Retail/Offices along Bell Road, and Retail Shops west of Nash Street and Crossroads Boulevard.

The existing land within the project area is partially developed. Most land is undeveloped and vacant, with proposals for housing and commercial uses. Quilceda Villa Senior Residence is currently under construction at the east edge of the project area. A multi-family residential housing site is being planned at the southeast corner of Bola Drive and Greasewood Road. A subsidized housing project is in discussion at the southwest corner of Bola Drive and Greasewood Drive, with a proposal for a possible park along the north side of the Lizzard Run wash.

The following photos illustrate highlights of the existing conditions in the project area. The photos were taken on a walk along the south side of the project area from El Mirage at the east to the Nash Street at the west side of the project area, and returning east along Smokey Drive at the north side of the project area.



Sidewalk at El Mirage, east side of project area



Back of Residences wall along W. Picerne Drive



View of vacant undeveloped land in project area



Streetscape at Bola Drive, view of Sunflower Resort



Narrow ROW, at construction of Senior Residence



Existing sidewalks along part of Smokey Drive



Narrow ROW along north side of Bola Drive



View of Lizzard Run Wash from Greasewood Road



View of Lizzard Run Wash from Bicentennial Park



Playground, sports fields, Bicentennial Park



Retail shops, west of Nash Street



Nash Street curves into Crossroads Blvd



Biker along Smokey Drive



Smokey Drive, sidewalk limited by drainage



Amenity Lake at Hotel along Smokey Drive



Biker along Smokey Drive



Senior Jogger, Smokey Drive to Greasewood Road



Surprise Civic Complex courtyard

4. Issues and Needs

The core team members, stakeholders and the public voiced their issues and needs at a series of meetings. A public stakeholder meeting was held on April 28, 2003 at the Surprise Municipal Complex. The purpose of this meeting was to inform the public about the project and listen to their comments. The team started to develop a preferred concept option from the consensus at the meeting.

The scope of the project was presented with a Pedestrian Framework Diagram showing various pedestrian route options for discussion. Options included Smokey Drive sidewalk improvement alignments and Lizzard Run trail alignment. The following issues and needs were expressed at the stakeholder meeting.

Issues:

The issue of target budget was raised, and who will fund construction. Various options were discussed, including civic funding from the Townsite group. The pedestrian transportation concept of linking origins to destinations was discussed as a goal. The stakeholders consensus was to develop a unique recreational trail concept rather than a narrow sidewalk along a street. Safe, improved crosswalks with stop signs are desirable. The issue of vandalism was expressed, and it was agreed that the City recreational staff will maintain the project.

The issue of land ownership was discussed, as a constraint, since many of the streets and open space right-of-ways are private. Recommendations may have to suggest acquiring additional 20 to 30 feet of right-of-way space for a trail and amenities. The goal of a safe and clean facility was expressed. The timetable for construction was discussed to meet the growing demands of development. While capitol funding is not yet in place, the City Original Townsite Committee needs to budget for construction funds.

Needs:

The major needs expressed was for senior citizens to take a leisurely stroll for recreation, fitness and exercise, as well as link to shopping and restaurants. Walking is good exercise, especially for seniors. While needs were expressed for young people and families to also use the pedestrian trail for a walk to school and the park, Bicentennial Park provides active recreational facilities. Benches in the shade are desirable for seniors and young people. Thus, a recreational concept with benches, picnic tables, exercise stations and lighting for safety and security was discussed, and agreed upon by all.

The new Senior Residential site owner expressed a need to provide walking opportunities and amenities, referring to new urbanist ideas to link housing with commercial uses, while providing rest and recreational nodes along the way. The path needs to have appeal, to attract seniors for a stroll. Bikes and golf carts should be on the streets not the

path. Active seniors from Sunflower Resort and the new Quilceda Villa want safe and convenient pedestrian linkages from home to shopping and recreation at park nodes.

A new multi-family residential housing project at the southeast corner of Bola Drive and Greasewood Road is being planned. This project will increase the demand for people to link with a walking trail. A new high density housing site in the future, along Lizzard Run wash is negotiating a park that will provide for senior needs, including an outdoor events area.

Trail surfacing was discussed and it was agreed that a 10 foot wide concrete path would be the most acceptable to use and maintain for all users. A desire was expressed to improve the concrete color and texture to make it more interesting than standard concrete.

5. Opportunities and Constraints

Analysis of the data and review of the Pedestrian Framework Diagram helped generate opportunities and constraints to creating a successful walking environment. The Pedestrian Framework Diagram included various pedestrian route options, including the initial idea to create and improve sidewalks. A route options explored included a northern east-west sidewalk route along Bola Drive and Smokey Drive. Another route option explored included a southern east-west trail route along Bola Drive and Lizzard Run Wash.

Opportunities:

- To provide a pedestrian recreational route for senior citizens to walk, stroll, and exercise to improve health and fitness;
- Existing and proposed senior residences provide a strong demand for senior use of a trail concept;
- New Quilceda Villa Senior Residence, under construction, will provide 72 new residential units with an interest in walking to shops and recreation;
- To provide a safe, secure and clean facility;
- To improve the landscape character and provide shade trees along a walkway;
- To provide a new park for seniors adjacent to future housing site along Lizzard Run wash;
- The sidewalk option is a recognized route along existing streets;
- The trail option would be a special recreational route along an open space;
- Residents along the trail are a desirable asset and help create eyes on the trail for defensible space;
- Open space complementing the trail is an amenity and would be a benefit for property owners along the route;
- To develop a long range connectivity to future transit stop at Bell Road;

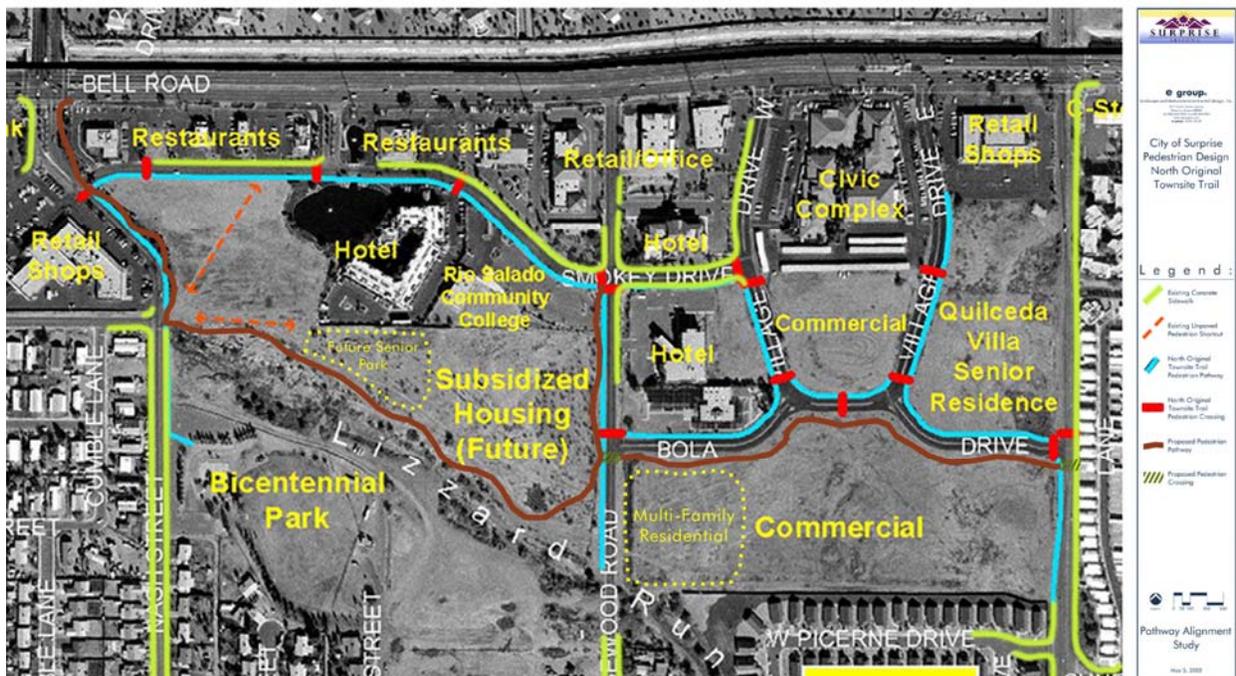
- To fund construction from City of Surprise, Townsite Committee;

Constraints:

- Challenge to acquire right-of-way land along private property;
- Challenge to acquire right-of-way along private streets;
- To accommodate a sidewalk along streets with a narrow right-of-way;
- Challenge to create a safe, secure, clean, well lighted pathway;
- Challenge to accommodate all users, walkers, joggers, bikers, etc.
- To address vandalism and maintenance, City needs to commit resources;
- To protect Lizzard Run wash and maintain its’ natural landscape character;

6. Pedestrian Framework Diagram

A draft copy of A Pedestrian Framework Diagram was provided at the stakeholders meeting for comment to assist in the development of design concepts for the study area. The feedback was used to assess issues and needs to consider in planning a pedestrian route, pedestrian crossings and facilities. The aerial photo diagram (shown below), illustrates pedestrian route options, including: 1) Initial Pedestrian Pathway (shown in blue, with red crosswalks); 2) A Trail Pathway option (shown in brown, with green hatched crosswalks). The diagram also shows existing concrete sidewalks along streets (light green), and future land development sites and land uses (yellow).



Pedestrian Framework Diagram, Pathway Alignment Study

A preferred route was selected at the stakeholders meeting. This route, unanimously supported by the group, includes a separated path concept, distinct from the existing sidewalk at the street curb. The preferred path route starts at the southwest corner of El Mirage along Bola Drive to Greasewood Road, then along the Lizzard Run wash to Nash Street, and north to Bell Road. The overall distance is over one-half mile. The existing sidewalk along Smokey Drive could be a secondary loop back to Greasewood Road, and link with the main pathway at Bola Drive.

Right-of-way for the eastern portion along Bola Drive needs to be negotiated with the future developer to gain space for a landscape buffer to separate the path from the street curb edge. Since a Multi-Family Residential development is being planned at the southeast corner of Greasewood Road and Bola Drive, this area along the proposed development should be a priority to acquire right-of-way space for the path.

Right-of-way for the western portion along the Lizzard Run wash needs to be acquired from the land-owner, and negotiated with the future Housing development to gain a space for a path route that provides a linear park character along the wash. The opportunity for a future Senior Park, in the triangle west of the Housing site would greatly add value to the linear park character of the project, plus it will add a great amenity benefit to the developer.

Right-of-way for the two north-south paths needs to be confirmed, to achieve a curved path separated from the streets. These sections include Nash Street and Greasewood Road. The path north of Nash Street links with Retail Shops and the future bus stop at Bell Road. The path north along Greasewood Road, between Bola Drive and Smokey Drive will provide a linkage to the sidewalks along Smokey Drive and access to the Civic Complex, Retail/Office and Restaurants.

7. Recommendations

In order to achieve a concept described above, the next step will be critical to finalize a concept plan of drawings, a report, a budget and definition of a contract document package for construction of a first phase. Concept plan tasks are outlined in task 4 of our scope. The target timeline to complete the concept is June 2003.

Final steps in our scope will produce plans, specifications and estimates for construction. Tasks are outlined in Task 5 and 6 of our scope. The target timeline to complete design drawings, specifications and an estimate for construction is December 2003.

Critical Steps in the design process includes action, as soon as possible on the following:

- Receiving an electronic survey base drawing of existing conditions, showing road right-of-way spaces and land ownership, suitable to undertake construction drawings, to be provided by the City as defined in Task 2A: Data Collection of our Scope of Services.
- Confirming the acquisition of right-of-way, and land ownership for the preferred pedestrian route described.
- Confirming consensus of the City of Surprise and its' budget allocation for construction from the North Original Townsite Committee.

8. Conclusions

This Pedestrian Area Assessment Report is based on the information collected to date. It describes the level of pedestrian area according to the MAG Pedestrian Area Policies and Design Guidelines. It identifies the general range of policies, support programs, and facilities required for a successful pedestrian environment. Existing conditions are documented, including existing pedestrian routes and corridors, which connect to the project area, and key generators of pedestrian activity that need pedestrian facilities in the project area. Issues and needs are documented, as voiced by the core team, stakeholders and the public. Opportunities and constraints are identified to create a successful walking environment.

The report is complemented with a Pedestrian Framework Diagram, which identifies the preferred pedestrian route option, crosswalks and destination points that could enhance pedestrian access to transit routes, existing and planned residential areas, and connections to other trails and facilities.

The concept should link with the MAG Bikeways for Metropolitan Phoenix Area, as shown on the most recent map for bikeway facilities. While this concept is related to the project area, it can and should eventually link with the larger regional trail system.

The Science of Health Promotion identifies critical issues and trends, in health promoting community design. *"We are becoming a sedentary nation because our choices to be active have been restricted, and the quality of life and economic impacts have been alarming."* The Director of the Active Living by Design National Program Office, a National Program of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

The concept for this pedestrian design project for the City of Surprise, North Original Townsite will be a forerunner in the Valley to reflect the new values of our active senior citizens. Walking, taking a stroll, and biking are growing trends for seniors to recreate and participate in physical activity and health promoting fitness.

APPENDIX

- Task 2.B – Stakeholder & Core Team List
 - Task 3.B – Problem Definition

Task 2.B – Stakeholder & Core Team List

Stakeholder List:

From sign-in sheet at April 28, 2003 meeting

Margaret Espinoza-May
Ron Poe, Sunflower Resort
Jan Poe, Sunflower Resort
Harold Lundberg
Dan Lundberg, City of Surprise
Lisa Blunck, City of Surprise
Desmond McGeough, City of Surprise, Planning Division
Scott Phillips, City of Surprise, Planning Division
Rachel Villavueua
Pete Chalopsky, Quilceda Villa Senior Residence

Core Team List:

Maureen DeCindis, Transportation Planner, MAG	602-452-5073
Dawn Coomer, Transportation Planner, MAG	602-452-5009
Scott Phillips, Planning Manager, City of Surprise	623-875-4318
Daniel Lundberg, Community Initiatives Director, City of Surprise	623-583-0653
Desmond McGeough, Planner, City of Surprise	623-875-4306
Brian Lisa Blunck	623-583-1088
Ron Tatasciore, e group	602-462-9000
Tona Alanis, e group	602-462-9000

Task 3.B – Problem Definition

The consultant, e group, attended a stakeholders meeting on Monday evening April 28, 2003, organized by the City of Surprise. Core team members met with stakeholders to discuss identified facility needs and solicited comments to assist in the development of design concepts for the study area. e group provided a draft copy of a Pedestrian Framework Drawing Diagram, with alternative options for pedestrian routes and linkages. The diagram was used to assess issues and needs to consider in planning pedestrian routes, crossings and facilities.

The group identified the need to create safe pedestrian linkages in the Surprise Original Townsite Area. The focus is to provide facilities for Senior Citizens to take a stroll, walk for fitness to exercise, walk for recreation, or walk to shopping. The need was also expressed for young people and everyone in the community to exercise for recreation, have a picnic lunch or sit on a bench and wait to meet parents or friends.

Discussions identified that the walkway should connect specific destinations. Connections should be made from the Sunflower Resort Community, and the new Quilceda Villa Senior Residence, under construction, at the east edge of the Townsite, and future Apartment Complex at the south edge of the Townsite. Connections should be made to the Lizard Run wash and the commercial uses south of Bell Road and the retail uses at the west edge of the Townsite. Thus, the key generators of pedestrian activity that need pedestrian facilities include residential housing, open spaces and commercial retail, with a primarily east-west walkway, with secondary north-south linkages.

The stakeholders felt the walkway needed to have a natural theme. The character was envisioned to be a special walking experience, rather than a walk along a sidewalk adjacent to the street. They expressed unanimous support for a natural recreational experience and character of walking along the existing open space of the Lizard Run wash at the south edge of the Townsite.

The problem is to improve pedestrian access, and develop an east-west walkway trail through the project area, defined as the North Original Townsite of Surprise. The challenge will be to identify an appropriate route and acquire the land for a right-of-way corridor to accommodate a ten-foot wide concrete shared-use path, with pedestrian amenities.