

November 11, 2011



Flagstaff Biking Organization
PO Box 23851
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<http://www.flagstaffbiking.org>

Amy Rosar
c/o Doney Park Study
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4545 E. Shea Blvd, Ste 210
Phoenix, AZ 85028
Sent via electronic mail.

Dear Ms. Rosar,

Thank you for this opportunity to comment on the Draft Doney Park Multimodal Study.

Background on Flagstaff Biking Organization

Flagstaff Biking Organization (FBO) is a group of cyclists who came together to “promote bicycling as a safe and attractive means of transportation and recreation in Northern Arizona.” Our initial project was to put on a Bike to Work Week for our community in May 2002. Building on the success we started to expand our efforts to keep people informed of cycling related issues and galvanize support for better and safer facilities, trails, and trail access. Please see <http://flagstaffbiking.org/about-fbo/> for more information.

Please consider our comments as generally representative of our 200 + paid members’ concerns.

Concerns with substantial changes in the Draft from information at April meeting

We are greatly concerned about some substantial differences in the content of the Draft and the information presented at the public scoping meeting held on April 28, 2011.

Many of these changes would adversely impact safety and accessibility for bicyclists and pedestrians.

Shared use pathways removed from many routes

In the April presentation most roads that feed from and too major thoroughfares had shared use pathways on them. The Draft shows many of these removed and replaced with equestrian paths. While we agree that there may be a need for separated equestrian paths, we feel strongly that there is an even greater need for shared use pathways in order to accommodate pedestrians and slower wheeled traffic, such as strollers and young children on bicycles. It is our understanding that Stardust and Slayton Ranch Roads see 2000 and 1000 vehicles respectively each day. Expecting young children and parents with babies in strollers to use a striped lane on the roadway shared with motor vehicle traffic on streets with this much traffic volume is unsafe and will lead to many people choosing to drive rather than walk or choosing to not allow their children to ride throughout the neighborhoods.

In addition, it is important to recognize that this approach may in fact be contrary to direction laid out in the Regional Transportation Plan for the Flagstaff Metropolitan Transportation Organization. This Draft's proposed solution for multimodal traffic on these roads falls below the minimum level of service guidelines set by the Regional Transportation Plan for rural collectors and arterial roads. The minimum standard calls for sidewalks. Shared use pathways would meet this minimum requirement.

Use cost-tiered implementation approach

We speculate that the removal of certain aspects of the plan, such as the shared use pathways, may be as a result of concerns about budgeting for both construction and maintenance. We suggest that rather than presenting the cheapest approach as the only option for eventual implementation, to provide options starting at the minimum standards as called out in the Regional Transportation Plan and progress upwards in added amenities should budgeting at the time of implementation allow. Providing for a FUTS-mix packed dirt/gravel shared use pathway as a minimum standard, but upgrading to paved in a better budget scenario would be one example of this strategy.

Our community would be better served if this study were aspirational in nature. Setting the bar high would allow for better multimodal facilities should budgets allow. As currently written, this study would preclude the possibility for the best scenarios in the future regardless of budgets and community needs and sentiments in the future.

Concerns regarding improper planning to address perceived "rural values"

It is our understanding that the removal of paved shared use pathways was in part in response to the input of some citizens regarding their perceptions about maintaining a rural “feel” in these neighborhoods.

Proper planning for multimodal transportation is not counter to rural values. The ability to travel on foot, bicycle or horse is part of long standing rural tradition in our country. Providing pathways to allow the safe and desirable use of foot, bicycle or horse is just good responsible community planning.

We do recognize that full curb-and-gutter design may not be appropriate in some of these neighborhoods, but safe facilities for all traditional forms of non-motorized transportation is vital.

We hope you will reassess some of the changes that were made to this study. Please keep us informed of any updates and changes. We are available to meet and discuss our concerns should you feel that necessary.

Sincerely-

s/Anthony Quintile

for the Board of Flagstaff Biking Organization

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