

# Village Planning Committee passes statement of ‘strong disapproval’ against Pecos alignment



## Site of future Pecos Road alignment

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**Village Planning Committee passes statement of ‘strong disapproval’ against Pecos alignment** By James Gingerich  
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The Ahwatukee Foothills Village Planning Committee (AFVPC) has released an official declaration of disapproval regarding the Pecos Road alignment which, as it stands, has construction of the Loop 202 highway slated to begin this summer.

The committee voted Jan. 25 to denounce the planned route for the roadway, which will join Interstate 10 by developing Pecos Road into an eight-lane highway. The final vote in the committee was 12 for and one vote against the official statement that has the AFVPC “strongly disagreeing” with the planned route.

Phoenix City Councilman Sal DiCiccio, who is both a part of the committee and responsible for appointing most of the members, said that it is an important step for the AFVPC at a critical juncture with the start of construction only a few months away and an ongoing lawsuit.

“It reaffirmed the position that we have had before in the past — and that our community has had,” DiCiccio said. He went on to say that, although the city of Phoenix actually has no direct influence on

when or where the highway will be built, it is, nonetheless, important for him and the other representatives of Ahwatukee on the AFVPC to make their position clear.

“The city of Phoenix has no say on this freeway, none at all. Everyone thinks we do, but we don’t; it is all up to the state,” he said. “As a community, however, I believe we should at least be able to voice our opinion on where we stand on this roadway.”

More importantly, DiCiccio and the AFVPC are hoping that their official statement of disapproval will resonate in the courts where a lawsuit against the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) is being heard. The plaintiffs in the lawsuit, namely the Ahwatukee-based Protecting Arizona’s Resources and Children (PARC) and several local homeowners associations, are, in part, represented on the AFVPC.

However, even DiCiccio concedes that community opinion on the highway is deeply divided, particularly along geographic bounds.

“We have a very divided community on this freeway issue — the farther north you go toward Warner and Elliott they are more supportive of this freeway and the further south you go the less supportive they are,” DiCiccio said.

With construction so close, DiCiccio acknowledges that at a certain point there may exist the need to work with ADOT and the state, if only to ensure that the potential problems caused by the highway can be lessened.

“We are going to continue to oppose the alignment, but at the same time you want to be at the table so we can work toward noise and pollution mitigation and anything we can do to lessen the impact this highway could have on our community,” DiCiccio said. “We will continue to be opposed to the alignment while looking at how we mitigate noise, how to deal with 50,000 cars a day traveling across Pecos and how we limit their impact on Ahwatukee.”

Of particular concern to DiCiccio is the groundwater that Lakewood and the Foothills HOAs rely on, which he said may be jeopardized by the planned construction. DiCiccio said that, along with state Rep. Jill Norgaard, he has been in talks with the state concerning the future of water in those associations’ areas.

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