



## 1. Call to Order/Roll Call and Announcements

The meeting was called to order at 3:03 p.m. There were 9 members present at roll call.

Chair Torres announced that the city's budget season is about to begin and budget hearings will begin in April. Chief Sustainability Officer Mark Hartman added that the trial budget will be available March 15<sup>th</sup>.

## 2. Review and approval of January 11, 2022 Minutes

### **ACTION:**

Vice Chair Myers mad a motion to approve the January 11, 2021 minutes. Subcommittee member Bettis seconded the motion. The motion carried 9:0.

## 3. Public Comments

This item was taken out of order after item 5.

Stacey Champion suggested the ability to comment after each agenda item or moving public comment to the end of the meeting. She has noticed tree maintenance and watering in certain areas, specifically the North Central Corridor, and that there is disparity that exists. She commented that the subcommittee should not be sunsetting and that heat issues are getting worse. The subcommittee is doing important work and is one of the few that she is aware of that is continuing to accomplish work. She thanked subcommittee members for their hard work. She also asked if meetings can be recorded if they are not.

## 4. Streets Projects: Green Infrastructure/Low Impact Development

Street Transportation Special Project Administrators Christopher Kowalsky and Leticia Vargas presented on how Street Transportation uses the Greater Phoenix Green Infrastructure Handbook and upcoming projects that will incorporate green infrastructure and low impact development (GI/LID). Kowalsky shared that city design standards are in the process of being added to the Maricopa Agents of Government (MAG) city supplement and a new city manual. Vargas shared a project at 3<sup>rd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> Street and Durango Street, with the possibility to extend to Central. This project is in the early stages and they have identified areas of drainage concerns where GI/LID would be beneficial.

Subcommittee member Bettis asked about opportunity spaces for accelerating GI/LID and what the upcoming work is going to look like. Kowalsky said there is a need to classify streets in Phoenix and determine which are appropriate and can be adapted with GI/LID. He also mentioned that conversations with developers often ask for incentives, such as permitting benefits and flexibility for other requirements if they include GI/LID in their projects. This will require changing Chapter 12 of the downtown code.

Chair Torres asked if the city design standards only apply to city owned streets. Kowalsky confirmed that the city's control only applies to city streets, however there are some guidelines that private streets must follow. They are not as strict and focus primarily on ADA accessibility and minimum access for utilities.

Subcommittee member Rodriguez asked for clarification on "internal public review" and asked when Complete Streets language will be added to the design manual. Kowalsky clarified that internal review includes review from other city departments to ensure

changes align with other existing city code and policies and incorporated new national standards, if applicable. The last design guideline update was in 2009 so the Complete Streets language will also be added as a reference document through this update.

Subcommittee member Halperin asked if all 10 strategies from GI Handbook are included in the design guidelines. Kowalsky confirmed that 8 of the 10 designs are approved by Street Maintenance Division and will be included. The two excluded are still in the process of being vetted for durability, including permeable pavement.

Chair Torres asked if MAG workgroup standards that are in development will be considered for adoption. Kowalsky is unsure as he is not on the committee. There is city representation on the workgroup so it is likely being addressed through another department.

Chair Torres asked how the Durango Street project got started and what began the process. Vargas stated it happened organically through conversations between staff about areas of need for greenery and connectivity and concerns for flood and stormwater drainage.

Subcommittee member Rodriguez recommended that Streets was coordinating with the Heat Office in upcoming projects. There are great resources that exist and the Heat Office can provide contacts and hopefully expedite projects through coordination with other organizations and cities doing the same work.

Chair Torres agreed that the Heat Office will be a great resource for identifying additional areas of need and asked if there was funding in Streets for doing more projects in other areas and completing projects more often. Vargas highlighted upcoming bond programs and federal funding opportunities. Streets is actively working to find additional opportunities for funding and want to take advantage of all possible sources.

Subcommittee member Esposito suggested a similar program to San Francisco where after 3 years mature trees in privately owned right of way become the responsibility of the city to maintain and asked if the bond program could accomplish this. Vargas stated that bonds usually are limited by a timeframe, often 5 years, where the money needs to be completely spent. Projects would need to be short term to ensure completion. Long-term projects could be funded by the T2050 sales tax initiative or the highway state tax.

Subcommittee member Halperin stated that projects like these would fall under cool corridors and the subcommittee has strong interest and investment. It is important that these be included in that initiative too. Chief Sustainability Officer Hartman mentioned that Chris Ewell in Streets will be providing an update on the Cool Corridors Program at the February EQSC meeting if subcommittee members were interested.

Subcommittee member Rodriguez expressed that there is frustration that projects are often discussed as demos/proof of concept or future work when it should be expedited and should have been done already.

Subcommittee member Berisha asked about the community involvement for projects and wants to ensure projects are communicated with residents. Vargas shared that the principal planner for the Durango project has been heavily involved through the mobility studies and has spent many hours over the last 2 years discussing projects with residents. Residents are excited to see the project come to reality.

Chair Torres thanked the presenters and asked subcommittee member for their thoughts for memo content and recommendations for GI/LID.

Subcommittee member Rodriguez recommended that there is a need to move quicker for projects and implementation. Subcommittee member Esposito recommended for additional budget and funding options for projects and especially funding for schools for not only trees, but water and maintenance. Subcommittee member Halperin agreed that funding for maintenance is important. Subcommittee member Chandler recommended a tree maintenance plan for city trees after they are planted.

Subcommittee member Rodriguez asked if EQSC members could help take the work on that the subcommittee often covers. Additional engagement will be needed from them once UHITS sunsets. Chair Torres agreed and if future study needs to be done EQSC will need to take it on, such as recommendations for private vs public utilization and recommendations.

Subcommittee member Halperin offered to take the lead for writing a memo and subcommittee members Chandler and Rodriguez offered to help review before the next meeting.

## **5. Update from the Heat Office**

Office of Heat Response and Mitigation (OHRM) Admin Assistant Michelle Litwin provided an update on their heat response planning, the hiring process for the remaining 2 positions, the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) possible funding for heat work, and the public engagement with OHRM and Village Planning Committees. Litwin asked the subcommittee to provide any comments on their work and their input on the purpose and outcomes of future public engagement.

Chair Torres asked what the timeline for hiring the remaining staff members was. Litwin stated that the Built Environment Specialist job posting is still open and the Urban Tree Program Manager position is expected to be hired within the next two months.

Subcommittee member Esposito recommended an annual progress update on trees and a way to track and monitor progress on tree goals. Hartman added that the Parks Department is in the process of beginning a tree inventory and this will allow for monitoring as well as identifying areas of need and missing trees that have died or been removed.

Subcommittee member Bettis asked how the present change in tree canopy will be measured and if both single and multifamily residential properties will be targeted. Litwin stated that the tree inventory data will be used as well as additional study through NASA Develop projects. Litwin was unsure about all of the targeted areas, and she will discuss with Director Dr. Dave Hondula. They are open to suggestions and thoughts as they finalized project details.

Subcommittee member Esposito asked about tree size for planning and recommended 15 gallons as they are easier to plant. Litwin is advocating for 24-25 inch box tree options with a minimum of 15 gallons.

## **6. Adjournment** – The meeting was adjourned at 5:02 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Katrina Gerster, Environmental Quality Specialist