

San Carlos Apache Tribe / White Mountain Apache Tribe Transportation Partnership Steering Committee Notes

Wednesday, April 24, 2019

10:00 A.M. – 2:30 P.M.

Hon-Dah Casino & Conference Center

PURPOSE –

- Better understand the goal of bringing back the Seneca store and park
- Understand possible transit opportunities at Seneca
- Better understand the goal of upgrading the Amos Wash Road
- Provide updates specific to partnership achievements, goal achievements, upcoming funding or learning opportunities
- Determine next meeting and meeting agenda items



ATTENDEES

Angelo Belvado, Nnee Bich'o Nii Transit Services Dispatcher
Bernadette Goode, SCAT Tribal Council/Transportation Board
Bernadette Kniffin, Nnee Bich'o Nii Transit Services Director
Brannen Parrish, WMAT Legislative Assistant
Brian Jevas, ADOT Southeast District/Assistant District Engineer
Cassie Kenton-Garcia, WMAT Fort Apache Transit Manager
Charla Glendening, ADOT Statewide Planning Manager
David Francis, Nnee Bich'o Nii Transit Services Fleet Supervisor
Dawnafe Whitesinger, Navajo County Board of Supervisors
Don Sneed, ADOT Planning Program Manager and Tribal Liaison
Elisabett Vargas, ADOT ROW Coordinator
Ermalinda Gene, ADOT Tribal Planning Program Manager
Hugh Moses, SCAT DOT Financial & Budget Analyst
Hutch Noline, SCAT TERO Director
Jason Bottjen, ADOT Planning Program Manager
Jerold Altaha – WMAT District II Councilman and Tribal Council Liaison
John Antonio Jr., SCAT Tribal Council/Transportation Board Chair

ATTENDEES CONTINUED

John Osgood, Navajo County Public Works Director
Kathy Borquez, Pinal County Public Works Director
Mark Tessay, WMAT Fire Department
Marvin Mull, SCAT DOT Director
Mary Tapija, SCAT DOT Secretary
Michael Carter, ADOT Partnering Office Administrator
Morey Cole, WMAT Police
Tara Chief, WMAT DOT Director
Terry Jones, SCAT Consultant/7-Mile Wash District
Steve Aday, BIA San Carlos Agency Roads Supervisor

Facilitator

Linda Ritter
Julia Voight (Assisting)

Welcome

ADOT Partnering Facilitator, Linda Ritter, opened the meeting. Jerold Altaha, WMAT District II Councilman and Tribal Council Liaison provided the opening prayer. WMAT DOT Director, Tara Chief, provided a welcoming address, expressing her appreciation to the committee for taking time out of their schedules to attend the meeting and collaborate on transportation issues. Linda asked committee members to introduce themselves, stating their roles in their various tribes, agencies and organizations. After introductions, Linda went over the day's agenda.

Issue Resolution Ladder

- Team members were asked to review the Issue Resolution Ladder and submit any updates to it. The document serves to allow committee members to have quick access to key contact information in the event of any issues or emergencies.

Seneca Park Discussion

- Background: The potential redevelopment of the Seneca Store and Park is a major committee goal developed at the August 2018 SCAT WMAT Annual Transportation Partnership Meeting. This goal serves to benefit both tribes economically, and the park location could potentially serve as an important transit hub.

At the November 2018 Steering Committee meeting, there was interest expressed by the committee to have a presentation on Seneca (overview, history, current photos, current plans). San Carlos Tribal Council leaders were not in attendance at the meeting; therefore, WMAT Councilmember Jerold Altaha offered to get in touch with SCAT Tribal Council to discuss the interest the committee expressed in learning more about Seneca. When Councilman Altaha arrived at a SCAT Council Meeting to discuss the interest in a Seneca presentation, there was an Active Shooter situation under way and Councilman Altaha was not able to meet with the Council.

- SCAT Councilmembers, Bernadette Goode and John Antonio, Jr., let the committee know that SCAT has been in the process of developing Seneca revitalization plans for some time. Terry

Jones, a consultant for the 7-Mile Wash District, was introduced. He has been hired to work on the plans. The plans may include items such as a convenience store, restaurant, cabins, an RV park and a water park. The tribe is open to any input and is reaching out to Gila County for any assistance and is also looking to the City of Phoenix for any connections that may help make the plans a reality.

- SCAT DOT Director, Marvin Mull Jr., will be placing the request for Seneca information on the agenda of the SCAT Transportation meetings, which are held the first Wednesday of every month. San Carlos Tribal Council will also be made aware of the interest the committee has expressed in learning more about Seneca, and there may be an opportunity in the future to have a presentation on Seneca at a SCAT WMAT Transportation Partnership Steering Committee meeting.

Examples of Transit Facilities

- Charla Glendening, ADOT Statewide Planning Manager, provided a PowerPoint presentation on various transit facilities within the state. The presentation served to provide the committee with a basic understanding as to what may be involved in the development of a new transit hub. The PowerPoint is posted on the AZ Tribal Transportation website:
<http://www.aztribaltransportation.org/sca/index.asp>

Transit Updates

- Cassie Kenton-Garcia, WMAT Fort Apache Transit Manager, provided a PowerPoint Presentation on Fort Apache Transit. Since its inception in June 2017, the transit system has grown remarkably in the short period of time in routes and ridership. It is providing a much-needed service for tribal members.
- Bernadette Kniffin, Nnee Bich’o Nii Transit Services Director, updated the committee on transit operations with a PowerPoint presentation. Services continue to expand in areas of most need. More and more elders/senior citizens are riding the bus. Transit is a service that not only gets tribal members where they need to go, but offers the opportunity for those, such as the elderly who may otherwise stay home all day, to get out and socialize.
- Both PowerPoint presentations are posted on the AZ Tribal Transportation website:
<http://www.aztribaltransportation.org/sca/index.asp>

Amos Wash Presentation

- Background: Amos Wash Road connects the San Carlos Reservation with the White Mountain Reservation through 58 miles of rugged roadway. Currently SR 77/US 60 serves as the 112-mile main connecting route between the two tribes, with many miles winding through Salt River Canyon. The development of the Amos Wash Road was discussed at the August 2018 Annual Meeting as a possible key goal that would serve to connect the sister tribes in a shorter, faster way. It was agreed that not only would this serve as a quicker, easier connection between the tribes and potentially boost the area’s economy, but would also serve as an important alternate route in emergency situations. There was concern expressed by San Carlos tribal members at the Annual Meeting that elk hunting, a significant recreational activity within the roadway’s area, would be affected by any development that increased traffic in the area.

- Tara Chief, WMAT DOT Director, began a presentation on the Amos Wash Road with a drone video that overviewed the roadway and the bridges along it. Tara also provided a PowerPoint presentation on Amos Wash Road. She outlined potential next steps which could be one of the following:
 - No roadway improvement
 - Gravel and culvert enhancements
 - Full reconstruction
 - Black River Crossing Bridge.
- The committee agreed that the development of the Amos Wash Road is in the best interests of both tribes, especially in light of improving emergency services to the area. In emergency situations, the only roadways connecting the two tribes are Route 6, which is frequently flooded during rains, and also US 70 (which connects to SR 77/US 60), which is also prone to flooding.
- It was discussed that elk hunt mitigations would be possible with any roadway improvements.
- Interest by the Steering Committee in Amos Wash Road development will be brought to each of the tribal councils.
- The drone video can be viewed through the following link: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1qizkONC7OT1HmdkDXi-BzXWwxA6E7LMi/view?usp=drivesdk>
- The Amos Wash Road PowerPoint presentation is posted on the AZ Tribal Transportation website <http://www.aztribaltransportation.org/sca/index.asp>

Goals/Action Items

- The Goals/Action Steps developed at the Annual Meeting were provided to the committee. The Goals/Action Steps document is updated and posted on the AZ Tribal Transportation website: <http://www.aztribaltransportation.org/sca/index.asp>
- At future Steering Committee meetings, members will continue to provide updates regarding goal achievements or steps taken to ultimately achieve goals.

Partnership Updates

Team members who wished to have the updates they provided included in this Meeting Summary briefly summarized their discussions on a “Partnership Update” form.

- Hugh Moses
 - Route 6 Second Phase “Project C1-C2-C3”
 - Two miles of road construction starts April 15.
 - Show Low Construction has been awarded the project.
 - The projects will cost \$7 to \$8 million
 - Long-range Transportation Planning
 - Jacob Engineering is the consultant for the long-range plans.
 - Private roads and BIA roads will be researched.
 - Street names will be identified and named.
 - 7-Mile Street Lights Funding
 - CAG is funding this project.
 - It will end in FY 2020
 - All research and planning has been ongoing and will be completed soon.

- Hutch Noline
 - Amos Wash Road
 - Hutch expressed that the Amos Road presentation was clear and well understood, and it gave an in-depth interest to all parties.
 - The road will bring the tribes closer physically and land-wise.
 - The road will be a shorter distance between the two tribes and will be good for travelers and the area economy.

Other items mentioned during the Update session included the following:

- Tara Chief
 - A new DOT facility will be built. It will take about 18 months to complete. The team will be moving to temporary offices soon.
 - Productive bi-monthly meetings continue to be held with the ADOT Northeast District. Valuable meetings are also held with Navajo County.
- Councilman Altaha
 - There is a Cellular One tower in the Salt River Canyon. WMAT is currently working to get a Verizon signal in the Canyon.
- Ermalinda Gene
 - The Rural Transportation Summit last October was successful. The yearly Rural Summit is a good networking opportunity to reach out to other transportation leaders.
 - The Pavement Preservation Peer Exchange is an opportunity for State DOTs to share experiences and lessons learned about pavement preservation treatments with other state DOTs and local road agencies. The information discussed by the participants will be collected by the facilitating team conducting the peer exchange. The information will be used to populate a database of good practices utilizing quality materials and construction techniques for pavement preservation projects and prepare a Technology Brief that summarizes the peer-to-peer exchange.

When

- Thursday, May 2, 2019; 8:15 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.
- Friday, May 3, 2019; 8:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Where

ADOT - Human Resource Development Center; 1130 N. 22nd Avenue; Phoenix, AZ 85009

Next Meeting

- Date to be selected and announced
- Location will be Hon-Dah Conference Center or Sunrise Park
- Agenda **(Agenda items are needed now; please submit ideas for presentations & discussions)**
 - Road safety studies in the SCAT and WMAT regions and how to apply for funding.
 - Overview of the ADOT Partnering Office and its role.

Closing Prayer

The closing prayer was led by Bernadette Kniffin, Nnee Bich’o Nii Transit Services Director.

The meeting adjourned at 2:30 p.m.