



Friends of Carefree, prior to the full council meeting on May 5th, we'd like to give you an update on the final two budget workshops that were held on April 15th & 21st as well as the ADOT Bike Lane project.

The first draft of the line item budget was presented by Jim Keen on 4/15. The council discussed details, asked questions, and then agreed to meet again on the 21st to review changes/corrections to that draft. The second version, which was reviewed during the workshop on 4/21, will move forward for public discussion at the May council meeting. Highlights include:

- ◆ Revenue from all sources is currently budgeted at **\$7.068M**, with Expenses projected in an equal amount;
- ◆ Sales tax income of \$1.867M is actually a decrease from the present year *forecast* of \$2.058M, and only slightly higher than the approved FY14-15 figure of \$1.853M. There are also some minor changes, up or down, in other State shared income categories;
- ◆ Bottom line to bottom line, the proposed budget for next fiscal year is approximately \$250K higher than the *approved* current fiscal year budget (after adjustment for un-realized income). However it will be \$1.523M higher than current year actual, primarily due to potential capital improvement projects;
- ◆ The council acknowledged that the \$1.5M allocated for the capital improvement projects under consideration is essentially a place-holder for specific expenditures which will be discussed and voted on in public meetings during the next fiscal year.

The budget can be a complex organism which must anticipate all expenses in a given fiscal year. By Arizona statute, once the bottom line dollar amount of the budget is approved by the council (in May I believe) it cannot change. Money can move from category to category but the bottom line cannot be exceeded. The final budget will be adopted at the June council meeting.

Joint Cave Creek/Carefree/ADOT Bike Lane Project Update - once the final (100%) engineering specifications are received, contract bidding will commence. *Construction is now expected to begin early August.* A copy of the presentation to the Town Council on March 3rd is posted in our Archives. You should take a look, as the project will impact you during construction this summer through December/January, and then going forward. Many residents still remain unaware of specific details.

Questions and issues posed by Jim Van Allen [JVA] at the April 21st budget workshop generated different responses than previously stated in public sessions. We were now told that traffic lanes would remain essentially unaltered and there would be minimal changes to medians in a few limited areas. However, review of the 95% complete engineering specifications by JVA on April 23rd told a different story. At least 50% of the medians will be affected [narrowed] to some extent. In several places the medians will be eliminated altogether. While Cave Creek is salvaging many dozens of

native plants, Carefree is saving none. At present there is no separate budget line item to buy any replacement vegetation for medians.

It appeared that traffic lanes would remain at their current width, which varies along Tom Darlington. In conjunction with median reductions, additional pavement will be added along the current Town right-of-ways (shoulders) in order to accommodate the 5 foot bike lanes. Unfortunately that additional pavement will leave little to no room for an adequate shoulder, in the event motorists experience an emergency or have the need to pull off to make phone calls or send text messages [as future AZ laws may require].

JVA pointed out that a potential public safety hazard will exist where the southbound bike lane along Tom Darlington will abruptly end between Meander Way and Leisure Lane. At that point Scottsdale becomes responsible for the roadway and they have no current plan to continue the bike lane for the short distance south to Carefree Highway. JVA suggested that Carefree staff contact their counterparts in Scottsdale to discuss a remedy. Where the bike lane is planned to end in Carefree, with nowhere else to go, it will be very dangerous for cyclists to suddenly be dumped into a traffic lane for the remaining half mile to Carefree Highway. There are no bike lanes south of Carefree Highway until the Summit Shopping area.

Paul Basha, the Town's former traffic engineering and transportation consultant with nearly 40 years of experience, is now Transportation Director for the City of Scottsdale. His prior relationship with, and fondness for, the Town of Carefree would seem to suggest a level of receptiveness for a reasonable solution to this potential public safety issue. As of Paul's most recent traffic study in Carefree, **7,000 vehicles a day pass through the intersection of Tom Darlington and Cave Creek Road and another 15,000 vehicles a day use the intersection at Tom Darlington and Carefree Highway.** No matter how you look at this, it's clear that safety concerns are well founded.

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Respectfully submitted by Jim Van Allen and John Traynor

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