Pima County Bond Advisory Committee

Re: Pedestrian Safety and Comfort Bond Proposal

To whom it may concern:

Southern Arizona Transit Advocates, SATA, would encourage the Pima County Bond Advisory Committee to recommend the inclusion of the $25,000,000.00 bond proposal advocated by the Living Streets Alliance.

Southern Arizona Transit Advocates is a broad based advocacy group that began as Tucsonans for Sensible Transportation and our political arm, Citizens for Sensible Transportation. One of our current projects is Friends of the Tucson Streetcar.

Our citizen coalition led to the creation of the Citizen’s Transportation Initiative of the early 2000’s with a comprehensive plan of transit improvements and alternative mode enhancements. Our work directly led to the inclusion of the modern streetcar, enhanced bus service, and alternative mode enhancements in the regional transportation plan that was approved by the voters. By working together on a comprehensive multi modal plan the voters of Pima County approved a historic regional plan and funding source.

We support a comprehensive multi modal transportation system as well as efforts to fund the implementation of a comprehensive system. Our members are actively involved in virtually every transportation issue in the region and we represent a very broad spectrum of the community.

There can be no question that Tucson and Pima County have a major infrastructure deficit and a need for walkability enhancements that vastly exceed this modest bond proposal. Instead of reiterating all the reasons for supporting these projects I will focus simply on the reason for including these projects in this bond proposal.
Tucson and Pima County have for too long deferred needed projects such as these until some future unspecified time or until some future as yet unknown funding source is identified or created. The RTA election and the City of Tucson street maintenance bond program have addressed some of the deferred needs but they did not provide for the mid level projects outlined in this proposal. Quality projects such as the ones proposed are caught in the middle of larger scale projects and neighborhood reinvestment projects. These orphan projects should not always need to wait for the prospect of some future plan or funding source. We are paying the price for past decisions to delay or defer and because this bond election is the only funding project concretely moving forward at this time some portion of the bond election should be devoted to this crucial need.

It is our belief that these projects will serve as model projects that will generate support for future City of Tucson or Pima County bond elections, future funding source discussions and plans and for increasing the likelihood of a successful extension of the next round of RTA funding.

Thank you for your consideration.

Best regards,

Clague A. Van Slyke, III

On behalf of Southern Arizona Transit Advocates