

City Talk Column for Oct. 11, 2023
Public Works Department
Kurt Harris, Public Works Director/City Engineer

Projects to look forward to

As your newly hired Public Works Director/City Engineer I'd like to first introduce myself to you and then provide some quick updates from the Public Works Department so you can be an informed resident.

Here is my bio so you understand my background:

- I'm an Arizona native.
- I have a Bachelor of Science in Geological Engineering from the University of Arizona.
- I've been a Professional Civil Engineer since 1997, and worked at ADOT for 10 years.
- I began at the city as the Engineering Supervisor for 10 months.
- I've been in my current role for four months.

Did you know the traffic congestion issues were raised and made a priority starting in 2016, ultimately leading to completing the Transportation Master Plan in 2018? Half-way through this 10-year plan, project by project, we are making headway on traffic solutions through an effort called Sedona in Motion (SIM). Currently, one of the big projects up for discussion is the Uptown Parking Garage, which will come to a city council vote this November 10th to decide if they want to move forward or not. Up first though is a public meeting on October 19th from 4 to 6 p.m. at The Hub at Posse Grounds Park, where we will share the findings of a six month process in which a group of residents, parking experts and city staff collected parking data during last spring and reexamined prior parking studies in order to make current data driven decisions and determine what viable options exist moving forward. We hope you'll join us at one or both of these upcoming meetings to hear the latest information on this project.

Next up, you may be wondering what is happening with the Forest Road Extension Project. After utility relocation work took longer than expected, we are happy to welcome the contractor back on site this month. Expect to see lots of construction activity, including localized blasting, as this long-awaited project will be back into full swing this fall. Completion of this project is expected by Fall 2024.

Another project update you may find interesting is our Uptown Roadway Northbound Improvements Project. While our southbound project dramatically improved traffic flow coming into town from Oak Creek Canyon, the northbound project will help with the backups if you're traveling northbound from the Y. We are already seeing increased efficiency from the first phase of the project, which is a newly built dedicated right hand turn lane onto Amara Lane so that those wanting to turn right and needing to wait for pedestrian traffic, no longer stop all northbound traffic. The second phase of the project includes a permanent left-hand turn barrier on State Route (SR) 89A for those turning onto Forest Road, and an additional northbound lane from L'Auberge Lane to Forest Road to add more queuing space between the Y and Forest Road, allowing cars in the Y roundabout to move more freely. Additionally, we will be improving the adjacent sidewalk by widening it into a separate shared use path. This project will kick off this Fall, and is expected to take nine months to complete.

One last project I want to mention is the work being done on the Pedestrian Crossing at Oak Creek. Initial kick off work was completed this summer and major construction will begin in the coming weeks, with project completion expected in Spring 2024.

It brings me great pride to see all these projects come to fruition as we try to fit all the puzzle pieces together to come up with a comprehensive traffic solution. There are so many other projects in the works, including continuing the build out of transit, and I invite you to read more at our website: www.sedonaaz.gov/sim.