Fifth Street Pedestrian Enhancement and Traffic Calming Project

Background: In 1995, Tempe's Riverside and Sunset neighborhoods approached the city of Tempe with concerns about increasing traffic volumes and speeds on Fifth Street. Fifth Street is a major collector street in the middle of this neighborhood, with many important neighborhood destinations, including Scales Elementary School, Jaycee Community Park, Westside Multigenerational Center and a neighborhood market. The neighbors wanted to achieve specific goals:

- ensure that residents would be able to get around their neighborhood easily and safely by bicycle, bus or walking;
- reduce high-speed, cut-through traffic and vehicle emissions;
- maintain the character of the neighborhood.

Goals of Project: One of the goals of Tempe's transit program is to provide a livable community with a balanced transportation system that is environmentally sustainable and helps preserve neighborhoods. In order to enhance and preserve the physical character of Tempe and promote accessible transportation options, the city of Tempe instituted the Fifth Street Pedestrian Enhancement and Traffic Calming Project. More than 5,500 people live in the project area which consists of 1.5 square miles. The overall goals of the traffic-calming project were to:

- reduce traffic volume and speed on Fifth Street to appropriate neighborhood levels,
- improve the surrounding environment by incorporating landscaping in the project,
- upgrade pedestrian and bicycle facilities
- improve street drainage

To achieve these goals, the city obtained a federal grant for designing traffic calming and pedestrian enhancements to the street to reduce the traffic volumes and speeds and improve conditions for pedestrians and bicyclists.

Testing Period: Temporary tests of traffic calming devices were placed on Fifth Street so residents could see how the project would look and operate. In 1995, after widening a major arterial street (Priest Drive) and opening the Loop 202 freeway entrance, traffic counts on Fifth Street were nearly 10,000 autos per day. The test included narrowed lanes, traffic diverters and traffic chokers, which cut traffic by 40 percent to 6,000 autos per day. Following a successful test period, the city designed, with the help of neighborhood input, and constructed permanent traffic calming and artist-designed features.

Neighborhood Input: The Fifth Street Project demonstrates the commitment and dedication between the city of Tempe and its citizens in promoting aesthetically-pleasing, environmentally-friendly transportation alternatives while

making Tempe a more livable community. The city conducted numerous neighborhood meetings to obtain neighborhood input regarding the project. City staff also met with local businesses, schools and property owners.

Art Elements, Traffic Features and Before/After

Fifth and Roosevelt Before

Fifth and Roosevelt After

Light pole banner

Sidewalk design

Mosaic tiling

Traffic Choker

Speed Table

Funding Partners: Funding partners include the Maricopa Association of Governments Pedestrian Improvements Funding and the U.S. Department of Transportation Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act Enhancements Funding Budget. The budget for the project was $3 million.

Results: In certain sections of the project area, automobile traffic was reduced by 6,000 autos per day. Traffic counts conducted after completion of the project indicated significant reductions from 20 to 78 percent in average daily vehicle traffic.

Location	Daily Average Traffic Counts in 1997	Daily Average Traffic Counts in 2001
	(prior to start of project)	(after completion of project)
Fifth St. east of Ash Ave.	9,898	7,789
Fifth St. between Roosevelt and Wilson streets	10,186	3,804
Fifth St. between Robert Rd. and Westfall Ave.	5,822	4,002
Priest Dr. heading south onto Fifth St.	2,204	492