

ADOPTED BY THE
MAYOR AND COUNCIL

August 10, 2021

RESOLUTION NO. 23386

RELATING TO PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY: DECLARING AND REAFFIRMING MAYOR AND COUNCIL'S OPPOSITION TO CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW INTERSTATE HIGHWAY (INTERSTATE 11, "I-11") THAT BYPASSES THE CITY OF TUCSON AND TRAVERSES PRISTINE AND INVALUABLE SONORAN DESERT AREAS; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

WHEREAS, the City of Tucson (Tucson) works to advance goals of sustainability, equity, economic growth, and vibrant, livable neighborhoods; and

WHEREAS, in November 2013 Tucson voters adopted Plan Tucson, the City of Tucson General Plan & Sustainability Plan; and

WHEREAS, Tucson has established a Sustainability Program that recognizes the detriment of petroleum-fueled car and truck travel because of their greenhouse-gas and pollutant emissions; and

WHEREAS, Plan Tucson seeks to create, preserve, and manage biologically rich, connected open space; wildlife and plant habitat; and wildlife corridors, including natural washes and pockets of native vegetation, while working to eradicate invasive species; and

WHEREAS, on June 18, 2019, the Mayor and Council adopted Resolution No. 23051, opposing the proposed alignment of I-11 that would have had the effect of bypassing the existing Interstate 10. The Mayor and Council found that any proposed

route that would result in the construction of a new interstate highway in or through Avra Valley would produce enormous adverse impacts to economic, environmental, historic, cultural, and archaeological resources that could not be adequately mitigated and that are contrary to the interstate design standards and criteria that must be applied to this project; and

WHEREAS on September 9th, 2020, Tucson Mayor and Council unanimously endorsed a declaration of a “Climate Emergency” which among other measures calls for “developing and enhancing land use patterns that foster safe, multimodal, accessible, equitable, intelligent, and clean motorized and non- motorized travel options, infrastructure, and community connectivity; and

WHEREAS, an interstate highway in the Avra Valley would degrade the Sonoran Desert, sever wildlife corridors, impede washes and flood prone areas, open new areas to intense residential and commercial development far from existing urban centers, and encourage more car and truck travel at time when climate change and air pollution are growing concerns; and

WHEREAS, Tucson strives to protect night skies from light; and

WHEREAS, Tucson believes in an urban form that conserves natural resources, improves and builds on existing public infrastructure and facilities, and provides an interconnected multi-modal transportation system to enhance the mobility of people and goods; and

WHEREAS, I-11 poses a water contamination risk to Tucson Water’s CAP water recharge facilities in Avra Valley, which provides drinking water to Tucson Water customers; and

WHEREAS, the City of Tucson and Tucson Water seek to protect their groundwater, surface water, and stormwater from contamination; especially during a time of historic drought and increased reliance on CAP water due to PFAS contamination of other water sources; and

WHEREAS, in April 2012 the Mayor and Council passed a resolution to adopt the Downtown Gateway Redevelopment Area and central business district; and

WHEREAS, Tucson seeks to capitalize on Tucson's strategic location by maintaining and enhancing Tucson as an international port and center for commerce and logistics; and

WHEREAS, Tucson supports the expansion of passenger and freight multi-modal transportation services to better connect Tucson to regional and international markets and destinations; and

WHEREAS, the Interstate 11 Final Tier 1 Environmental Impact Statement Recommended Alternative route would run through the Avra Valley, negatively impacting Tucson Mountain Park, Saguaro National Park - West, Ironwood Forest National Monument, Bureau of Reclamation's Central Arizona Project mitigation parcel, and severing linkages between important habitat areas and disturbing an unknown number of archeological sites; and

WHEREAS, the cost of building a new highway in Avra Valley would be enormous, would promote urban sprawl, and would divert cars and trucks away from existing businesses in Tucson; and

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WHEREAS the state of Arizona could reduce highway traffic congestion, reduce the cost of highway maintenance, and save on the costs of rights of way purchases and concrete and asphalt production and installation - while reducing air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions – by instead investing in I-19 & I-10 and developing multi-modal transportation facilities in existing transportation corridors to sustainably accommodate projected increases in freight while providing for much-needed passenger rail traffic.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF TUCSON, ARIZONA, AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. The Mayor and Council strongly oppose the currently proposed alignment “West Option” alignment of I-11, that would have the effect of bypassing the existing Interstate 10. The Mayor and Council support the Preferred Alternative “East Option,” which proposes the expansion and reconfiguration of the existing I-10 and I-19 corridor as the only acceptable alternative for the proposed I-11 highway. The Mayor and Council find that any alternative route that would result in the construction of a new interstate highway in or through Avra Valley would produce enormous adverse impacts to economic, environmental, historic, cultural, and archaeological resources that could not be adequately mitigated and that are contrary to the interstate design standards and criteria that must be applied to this project.

SECTION 2. WHEREAS, it is necessary for the preservation of the peace, health, and safety of the City of Tucson that this Resolution become immediately

effective, an emergency is hereby declared to exist, and this Resolution shall be effective immediately upon its passage and adoption.

PASSED, ADOPTED AND APPROVED by the Mayor and Council of the City of Tucson, Arizona, August 10, 2021.

MAYOR

ATTEST:

CITY CLERK

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

REVIEWED BY:

CITY ATTORNEY

CITY MANAGER

MR/dg
8/2/21