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	AGE	\$250K	\$500K	AGE	\$250K	\$500K
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Capturing the personalities, politics and pulse of Phoenix.

## Nowakowski: Don't delay Loop 202 freeway

Phoenix Councilman **Michael Nowakowski** said he supports efforts to move the proposed [South Mountain Freeway](#) from the Ahwatukee Foothills to tribal land farther south, so long as it doesn't delay planning efforts for the transit corridor.

"While I applaud the efforts to make sure that the most cost effective and least intrusive freeway plan be built, I want to make sure that the entire project is not slowed down while discussions take place," Nowakowski said in a letter this week to **John Halikowski**, [director](#) of the Arizona Department of Transportation.

The District 7 councilman added that his constituents in the Laveen area, through which the Loop 202 extension would pass, have waited since 2001 for [ADOT](#) to conduct a federally required environmental study. And the freeway has been on regional planning maps for decades.

A freeway, Nowakowski said in an interview, would attract movie theaters, a bowling alley, roller-skating rink, hospital and other [entertainment](#) and job centers to Laveen.

"I want to confirm that ADOT will release the draft (study) for public review in 2010 and move forward toward the construction phase quickly," Nowakowski wrote Halikowski on Dec. 22.

Nowakowski's council colleague, **Sal DiCiccio**, has been aggressively pushing to move the alignment from Pecos Road in Ahwatukee to the Gila River Indian Community.

This month, the tribe reversed its previous position and agreed to begin negotiations with ADOT and others over a possible freeway route through the reservation.

ADOT spokesman **Timothy Tait** said the agency remains committed to completing the environmental impact statement and submitting it to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) in 2010.

But before the report is released to the public, it must clear a federal legal review and other hurdles, Tait said.

"This is an important project, but one that must be done correctly and sensitively; however, there is clear need to bring this study to a final decision as soon as possible," said Tait, also a member of the environmental study team. "Moving the environmental report to FHWA in 2010 will be that major advancement."

-- *Scott Wong*

Thursday, December 24, 2009 at 01:46 PM  
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posted by [dalemu](#) on Dec 24, 2009 at 06:23 PM

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I think the indian reservation solution offered by our friend Sal is just a red herring. Keep in mind that the tribe has not reversed its position. They have only made some public noise about a letter which, to my knowledge still has not been delivered. People in power who want to appease the vocal minority in Ahwatukee (read our friend Sal)