



## Letters to the Editor (12/9)

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### Hard work ahead for DiCiccio

#### Dear Editor:

Best of success with hard work ahead to Councilman Sal DiCiccio and the Phoenix City Council in this challenging economy to provide quality governing service to all citizens.

With regard to his recent comments (*Ahwatukee Foothills News*, Nov. 18) on the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT), the Gila River Indian Community (GRIC) and the South Mountain Freeway (SMF) Pecos Road alignment, DiCiccio boldly stated in this paper during the recent council primary contest that if anyone in the state could get the GRIC and ADOT to agree on a route for this highway south of Pecos, he could. What has been the juggernaut here for 25 years? ADOT and Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG).

DiCiccio was not seen in attendance at innumerable open meetings on the SMF since February 2002, when ADOT began the South Mountain Community Action Team meetings, nor Ahwatukee Village Planning Committee (AFVPC) meetings with these agencies scheduled to update it, nor Protect Arizona Resources and Children meetings. All were open and publicly announced, and his absence at any since he resigned his council seat in 2000 do not reflect well upon his recent stated concern about the SMF and effect upon our community.

At an AFVPC in early 2005, ADOT and MAG representatives were on the agenda to update the committee on the SMF planning to date. Dennis Smith, MAG director, stated clearly that in the preliminary planning on the Pecos routing for the SMF both ADOT and MAG agreed to consult with the GRIC government officials for their opinions. This resulted in GRIC suggesting that the Pecos route be angled southwest from some point in southwest Chandler to Queen Creek Road and thence west to Gila Route 3 (51st Avenue north of the GRIC/county line) and thence continuing north to the originally proposed intersect with I-10.

The ADOT/MAG decision on this suggestion, a 3-mile and 2-minute driving time difference, was "No." Both agencies blew it and exhibited their intransigence to an alternative that would likely have resolved the Pecos ongoing opposition. No mountain would have to be violated with dynamite, a costly unnecessary desecration of an indigenous natural asset to GRIC and Phoenix.

DiCiccio's statement, "I thought that was horrible," referring to citizen statements on his vested interests along the Pecos alignment, "and it harmed our area and our community by giving the state a reason not to try to deal with the Indian community on an alternative route" is baseless. "We need to be smarter," he says. DiCiccio needs to be smarter, to fully educate himself on the history of the SMF, this alignment, MAG, ADOT, GRIC, SMCAT and citizen input since before formal open meeting began February 2002. His broad blandishments on this and other subjects reflect arrogance with ignorance. ADOT/MAG stiffed GRIC and they have to date stiffed SMCAT.

The Phoenix Interstate 10 truck bypass, which the SMF has become a part of for inter-continental (CANAMEX) ICC truck traffic, should be routed west to east and reverse: I-10 to AZ Route 85 (north of Buckeye) south to I-8, east to intersect with I-10 near Eloy.

The now proposed SMF route should some time in the future connect south to north around the southwest end of South Mountain as a limited axle and weight arterial in Phoenix. It should not be a freeway connection. This can be put on Phoenix future planning and bonding funding, and I believe reasonable, respectful discussion on this subject can result in cooperation between Phoenix and GRIC.

**Greta C. Rogers**

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