

Design for traffic signal to be completed

Council approves funding

Bob Burns, Reporter

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The intersection of Palisades Boulevard and Palomino Boulevard/Eagle Ridge Drive has been warranted as a site for a traffic signal. (Independent Newsmedia/Bob Burns)

The funding to complete the design of a traffic signal at the intersection of Palisades Boulevard and Palomino Boulevard/Eagle Ridge Drive was approved by the Town Council at its Aug. 22 meeting. The cost to finalize the design for the project is roughly \$35,000.

This signal project has been the subject of heated debate, as many do not believe it is necessary at this intersection. The council approval was on a split 4-3 vote with Mayor Ginny Dickey, Vice Mayor Sharron Grzybowski and council members Brenda Kalivianakis and Peggy McMahon favoring the agreement. Council members Gerry Friedel, Allen Skillicorn and Hannah Toth opposed.

Staff reported that a traffic study indicates the intersection meets three warrants for a signal including eight-hour volume (1,073 VPH on Palisades, and 75 VPH on Palomino/Eagle Ridge). It also meets the warrant for four-hour volume as well as the peak hour volume. Friedel said he doubts those numbers based on personal observations. Resident Barry Wolborsky also expressed his doubts about the traffic study indicating warrants, also believing the intersection does not experience that much traffic and virtually no pedestrian traffic, although all four corners of the intersection are mature residential neighborhoods.

The estimated cost of a four-way traffic signal is about \$1 million. Construction for the project has not been budgeted or bid. Public Works Director Justin Weldy noted that curves and grade near the intersection will require installation of an emergency vehicle preemption device away from the corner.

It was also reported that development agreements long ago with MCO Properties and what was at the time CopperWynd Resort (now Adero Scottsdale) provided for participating funding for a signal at that intersection. MCO Properties sold the property to Toll Brothers, which is now developing several hundred homes farther north along Eagle Ridge Drive. The Adero Resort was recently expanded, drawing traffic onto the Eagle Ridge Drive leg. Weldy also stated that completion of the signal design will allow the Town to better search for grant funding to assist with construction.

The council approved the agreement with Kimley Horn & Associates for the design work.

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