



# Destinations

TUCSON DEPARTMENT OF  
*Transportation*  
Bringing Life To Transportation

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The latest news and information from the Tucson Department of Transportation  
[www.dot.ci.tucson.az.us](http://www.dot.ci.tucson.az.us)

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Operation Freeze Heats Up

## TDOT Crews Keep You From Slipping and Sliding

**E**ver wonder why you rarely, if ever, see ice on our roadways on cold Tucson mornings? It's because someone's been there before you - TDOT Streets and Traffic Maintenance crews.

Ice on streets and bridges can be very dangerous for motorists - especially when we're not used to it. So when a rare cold snap hits southern Arizona, TDOT's Operation Freeze goes into action.

Twenty-one maintenance personnel are on the road in the early morning hours to spread Magnesium Chloride on areas where ice most likely will form. "It works by lowering the freezing temperature of water," says Joe Plasentilla, an administrator with Streets and

Traffic Maintenance. "That means any rain or condensation that forms on the street or bridge can't freeze and turn into black ice." Crews also put up signs that warn motorists of possible ice.

But don't most cities use sand on icy roads? Not anymore, says Joe. "Magnesium Chloride is easier to use because you don't need as much of it as you would sand. It's biodegradable and more effective because it actually prevents ice from ever forming."

So on the next really cold morning when you're driving to work, drive with care as always, but remember - you can be confident that your Transportation Department has been there before you to make sure your morning commute won't include slipping or sliding.

# TransFacts

## The Numbers Behind Tucson's Transportation System

**300,000** Trips for disabled and elderly citizens on Van Tran

**40** Cars taken off the street by one Sun Tran bus running at capacity

**347** Traffic signals on Tucson's streets

## Why Don't You Synchronize the City's Traffic Signals?

**A**t TDOT we hear this suggestion from citizens every week. The fact is that all the City's traffic signals are synchronized. Computers operated by our Traffic Engineering Division change the signal operation based on the time of day and the amount of traffic on the streets. It may seem like the signals are not synchronized at times because:

- When more than 500 vehicles per lane per hour are on a street, the synchronization system begins to break down, unable to move that number of vehicles through the intersection.
- When motorists drive faster (or slower) than the posted speed limit, they negate the computer's timing structure. Signals are generally set to match the posted speed limit.
- The effectiveness of synchronization is reduced dramatically by additional signals that are placed near a major intersection. Such signals at hospitals and other locations are necessary for the public good, and can't be removed, even though traffic flow would be improved.

- Emergency vehicles responding to a call use an on-board system that changes traffic signals to green to allow for their swift passage through intersections. When this occurs it throws that intersection's signal out of sequence and disrupts synchronization for a period of time until the system can readjust to the unplanned change.
- Left turn signals, although they are essential to getting us all where we want to go, add to traffic congestion by reducing the amount of time the through signal at the intersection can be green.

Despite these issues that challenge our traffic signal synchronization system, we want you to know our traffic engineers are always working to keep our traffic signal system synchronized, and always looking for new and creative ways to keep traffic flowing smoothly.

## CTAC Meets Twice Each Month and You're Invited

**T**he Tucson Department of Transportation Citizens' Transportation Advisory Committee (CTAC) is appointed to provide citizen input on a host of transportation issues including planning and funding transportation improvements. CTAC meets every other week, usually on the first and third Tuesday of the month. These meetings are open to the public and are held at the Mayor and Council Chambers in City Hall, 255 West Alameda, beginning at 5:30 PM.

## Learn More About Tucson's Bike Programs

**T**DOT's new BIKE brochure will tell you all about the City of Tucson's bicycle programs. It also contains a form to report safety or maintenance problems in your neighborhood or on streets you ride or drive. Pick up a copy at City of Tucson offices, or call 791-4372.



Avoid Delays Where Improvements are Underway

## Getting Around Town

Whether you're walking, driving, or riding, street improvements have a way of adding time and stress to your trips around Tucson. You can often avoid this if you know where construction work is going on. You can find all of TDOT's current projects at [www.cityoftucson.org/transportation.html](http://www.cityoftucson.org/transportation.html). Here are some of the current major City projects in progress.

LOCATION	EXPECTED COMPLETION DATE
6 <sup>th</sup> Avenue <i>President St. to Rodeo Wash</i>	February 2003
Harrison Road <i>Speedway Blvd. to Old Spanish Trail</i>	March 2003
Mountain Avenue <i>Grant Rd. to Ft. Lowell Rd.</i>	March 2003
Campbell Avenue <i>Grant Rd. to Elm St.</i>	August 2003

### Safety First!

While driving in construction zones, please remember to obey the speed limit and watch for heavy equipment and workers in or near the roadway. There are substantial fines for speeding in construction zones.

Thanks for your patience as we work to improve Tucson's transportation system.

Historic Downtown Depot to House Restaurant and Museum

## Depot On Track to Restoration



A train museum, a new restaurant, office space, and retail shops – those are just some of the plans for the renovation of Downtown Tucson's Historic Train Depot on North Toole Avenue.

Work to bring the building up to standards and to prepare it for occupancy began in January. The contractor is Lloyd Construction.

"We hope to have the Depot ready for business by this fall," reports Kim McKay, Project Manager for TDOT. "With an old building like this, you never really know what you're going to find, but we think we've built time into the schedule for any surprises."

The Historic Depot was built in 1907 and subsequent renovations obscured many of the attractive design elements of the original architecture. "We'll restore it to the 1941 appearance," McKay says, "including the columned arcade on the west side."

Redevelopment of the property across Toole will also add to the ambiance of the Depot and surrounding area. A proposal is being considered to construct multi-family residential housing, retail space and an open space plaza between Congress Street and Toole, across the street from the Depot.

## Questions? More Information?

If you have a question about Tucson's transportation system or if you would like to be added to the *Destinations* mailing list, call 791-4371 or email [mgraham1@ci.tucson.az.us](mailto:mgraham1@ci.tucson.az.us).

# Jesse Morales Makes a Difference

**J**esse Morales knows quite a lot about bicycle safety – including the rules of the road and what can happen when people don't pay attention to them. That's because Jesse is a retired police officer who's lived in Tucson for more than 50 years. He's also the chairperson for the Tucson Pima Bicycle Advisory Committee (BAC) – the group that advises local governments on issues of bicycle recreation, transportation, and safety.

A former avid runner, Jesse switched to bikes some time ago. He says the more he rode around town, the more issues he saw that needed to be addressed. When a friend introduced him to the BAC, he saw it as a perfect opportunity to help

deal with some of those issues. As a BAC member, he especially enjoys the involvement in road projects that the City of Tucson offers to the Committee.

Jesse's goal for his tenure on the BAC is to help create an even better cycling environment in the metro Tucson area – especially in the areas of safety and more and better bike lanes and paths. It's through working toward goals like this that Jesse is making a difference for all of us.



Jesse Morales and Shellie Ginn are bicycle enthusiasts.

## Shellie Ginn Pedals Bike Safety

**S**hare the Road. That's not only the title of a new education pamphlet that Shellie Ginn is preparing for the benefit of citizens, it's also the "song" she sings to anyone and everyone who will listen. As TDOT's Bicycle Program Coordinator, Shellie's number one concern is bike safety education – for bicycle riders and motorists.

"Tucson is ranked as the third best community in the nation for bicycles," she says. "But we need to do a better job of sharing the road between vehicles and bikes." Shellie works closely with the bicycle organizations in Tucson and with other government entities to promote safety and the idea that the streets belong to all citizens.

She also works to promote the use of bicycles as alternative modes of transportation and to improve the bike trails, paths, lanes, and routes that make it easy to get around town on a bike. "There are

about 400 miles of routes for bicycles in Pima County and 300 miles of them are inside the City limits," Shellie says. Improving bike access and trail connections are second only to safety on her list of goals. She would like to see more projects like the new bike crossing at Stone Ave. and University Blvd. and the 3<sup>rd</sup> Street Bike Corridor.

Shellie earned a bachelor's degree in communication from the University of Arizona and has worked in the transportation field for 11 years. And yes, she's an avid bike rider.

To get a copy of "Share the Road", the bicycle and motorist safety education pamphlet that Shellie has produced in association with other local jurisdictions, call 791-4372.