

The Grand Freeway

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Grand Avenue bisects Sun City, a “small-town feel” senior community. Seniors, afraid to cross it, deprive themselves of services and facilities available on the other side, thus negatively impacting their quality of life. Commuter cheaters, who speed through our quiet neighborhoods to cut ahead of rush hour traffic on Grand Avenue, present additional dangers.

Currently, there are plans to widen the stretch of Grand Avenue running through Sun City between 99th and 111th Avenues, which will bring more traffic at intersections than ever before. Instead, ADOT should make this stretch of Grand Avenue into an elevated rubberized freeway with sound-buffering walls. Doing so would eliminate commuter four-way traffic lights on 99th, 103rd, 107th, and 111th Avenues, and the accompanying deadly fumes and wasted gasoline from idling cars and trucks. *Think*: commuter traffic flying unimpeded *over* Sun City to the massive westward developments and beyond to Wickenburg.

On-and-off ramps are best utilized on 99th and 111th Avenues, which are used by the Fire Department. Additionally, 99th is already a higher speed arterial north-south road; 111th serves Youngtown. Interior streets are best left to locals with frontage road access to businesses on the south side of Grand. Slower speed limits on local roads allow pedestrian, bicycle, motorized-wheelchair, and golf cart/automobile traffic to proceed *under* the freeway out of the dangers wrought by high-speed commuter cross traffic. Traffic lights at these local intersections under the freeway could then be controlled by fire trucks and ambulances, which is *not* the case now.

Without ramps, 103rd and 107th would not be considered north-south arterial boulevards that bring outside traffic *through* Sun City to other destinations. High-speed arterial boulevards are undesirable locations for single-family homes.

Widening Grand Avenue is ambitious and funding is tight, especially when high-paid lobbyists successfully garner the Lion's share of available funds for their wealthy East Valley clients. However, we unpaid Sun City volunteers ask for ADOT's approval, anyway. No one could have imagined the population explosion in the West Valley when the current plans for Grand were approved so many years ago. The plans need updating before proceeding. Eliminating four (4) four-way commuter traffic stops in Sun City would benefit all Arizonans, as well as Sun Citians. Any ADOT planner voting to refuse us will have to live with his/her conscience when these death-trap intersections cause the inevitable loss of life and property that is to be expected.

Direct-route Grand Avenue (Hwy 60) is destined to be a freeway to relieve traffic congestion on I10, Loop-101, and 303. ADOT should not waste resources making things worse and delaying the inevitable.

I urgently ask for the public's support of this proposal. It is imperative that you comment on ADOT's http://www.azdot.gov/Highways/valley_freeways/US60/Grand_Avenue/index.asp or call **480-890-3055 (ask for Sue)** and just say “I agree with Anne Stewart's proposal.” Thank you.