



1st Avenue Citizens' Corridor Planning Task Force

Thursday, January 16, 2025, 5:45 p.m.
Donna R Liggins Recreation Center
2160 N. 6th Avenue, Tucson, AZ 85705

Meeting Minutes

Before Roll Call, it was announced that we have a potential new task force member, Kate Saunders, who introduced herself and her background to the members.

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

Due to the absence of the Chair and Vice Chair at the start of this meeting, the task force members present were asked for a volunteer to act as Chair for this meeting. Melissa (Mimi) Noshay-Petro volunteered to be the acting Chair, prior to the arrival of the chair.

The Acting Chair Melissa (Mimi) Noshay-Petro called the meeting to order at 5:50 p.m., duly seconded by Ruben Robles. The quorum was established through roll call.

Present

Absent

Caroline Bartelme	Jon Barger
Dave Boston	Kathleen (Susan) O'Brien
Ruben Robles	Dana Higgins
Melissa (Mimi) Noshay-Petro	
Karl Peterson	
A.M. Rivers	
Mark Hatchel	
Nancy Reid	
Maxine Dunkelman	
Mindy Gutzmer	
Marci Caballero-Reynolds	

2. Approval of November 21, 2024, Meeting Minutes

Melissa (Mimi) Noshay-Petro asked 1st Avenue Citizens' Corridor Planning Task Force (1ACCPTF) members if they had an opportunity to review the minutes from the previous meeting on November 21, 2024. All 1ACCPTF members had reviewed the minutes, and Mimi moved to approve them, duly seconded by Ruben Robles. The 1ACCPTF reached a Consensus Decision and approved the November 21, 2024, meeting minutes.



3. Call to Audience

No comments were received during the Call to the Audience. No subsequent action was taken.

Vice Chair Karl Peterson arrived and took over as Chair of the meeting.

4. Public Engagement Update: Summary of Survey Responses

Kristi Ross, HDR Communications presented a summary of the Phase 1 public outreach and survey results. There were 588 responses to the survey. Kristi went through how the survey results' final demographic breakdown compares with the corridor demographics.

She then went into the major trends that came out of the final survey results. These are the same trends that we have seen throughout the Phase 1 outreach period. They include safety for all roadway users, bikeability and bike lane condition, and road condition. These will all be summarized in a final report and shared with the CTF.

No action was taken.

Questions from CTF Members

- Perspective member Kate Saunders asked what “safety” in these responses refers to.
 - Kristi answered that it is for anytime a person mentions safety about bike lanes, people crossing outside of crosswalks, no sidewalks, poor lighting, etc.
- Kate also asked if the survey asked if people lived in the corridor.
 - Kristi answered that we asked for zip codes and how people use 1st Avenue.

1. Summary of Current Existing Conditions on the Corridor

Kittelson & Associates' Principal Engineer, Felipe Ladron de Guevara discussed Existing Conditions on 1st Avenue:

- Safety
- Vehicle Operations
- Transit Operations
- Active Transportation

Felipe went back through the 1st Avenue existing conditions in each of the above areas. Keeping the existing conditions in mind will help as we go through the process of setting preliminary project goals.

No action was taken.



Questions from CTF Members

- Karl asked if it would be possible some time to drill down further into what causes crashes on the corridor.
 - Felipe answered, yes, that is possible.
- Perspective member Kate Saunders commented that having a Level of Service of “A” in Vehicle Operations would be great for vehicles but could be unsafe for pedestrians and bicyclists because the vehicles would be traveling faster.
 - Felipe agreed with the comment and added that keeping the Level of Service somewhere in the middle keeps things safer and better for all users.
- Marci asked who is responsible for cleaning the bike lanes.
 - This question was jointly answered by Felipe, Brent, and Patrick. The City of Tucson Department of Transportation & Mobility oversees the cleaning of the bike lanes in the city. Patrick also added that you can contact the department and let them know if you think a bike lane needs cleaning or if there is overgrown vegetation. He stated you can visit the City of Tucson, Department of Transportation website and click on “Report A Concern” or contact Tucson 311.

5. Establish Preliminary Project Goals

HDR Project Manager, Brent Kirkman presented this section by reviewing the stages of the Design Concept Report (DCR), where we are now in Winter 2024/2025 (working on goal development and framework), and where we need to be by the Spring/Summer of 2025.

City of Tucson Department of Transportation and Mobility (DTM) Planning Administrator Patrick Hartley added that 1st Avenue is one of four roadways in the city that account for 14% of all traffic fatalities, the others being Fort Lowell, Valencia, and Grant Road. All four of them are under construction or in design to be upgraded, which will really make an impact on the safety of the community.

Brent then went through the Task Force Schedule for 2025 and the milestones that need to be reached this spring. In April, there will be a Draft Alignment Recommendation, in May we are looking at a public open house, and in August we will have a refined alignment and carry that forward as a design concept.



Questions from CTF Members

- Nancy asked if the city has enough people to work on all the road projects.
 - Patrick said the four roadway projects mentioned are all covered. As for future projects, there is still funding and RTA Next issues to be worked out. They will look at their projects to see where they can find cost savings and where there might be other funding opportunities.
- Marci asked if the 1st Avenue Project is the first project to use the Complete Streets standards and if it will be an example of how well it works.
 - Patrick said yes and no. This is going to be a model project and is the first major corridor project to fall under Complete Streets.
 - Patrick then explained how the project goals were developed, the process of defining goals, and the purpose of those goals for the project. Patrick then discussed the city's "Move Tucson" vision and how this will affect the project goals.
- Ruben Robles asked if the new Super Walmart development at Wetmore and 1st Avenue will affect the project.
 - Patrick said that they have not worked with that developer yet, but the City's development services team will be collecting information like traffic count increases and other items that might influence the nearby roadways. The City is also looking at a new HAWK light at 4th and Wetmore, which is part of the negotiations with the developer. Kristi added that this type of work is normally handled by the City's development services department, which handles the negotiations with developers to decide what type of traffic impacts a development will have and then go from there.
 - Kristi wanted to clarify for the group that decisions like how the new Super Walmart affects local roadways and pedestrian traffic are handled later in the design stage of the project.
 - Brent agreed with Kristi's statement but added that it is good to know about these things early on also.
 - Marci asked if there are any other big projects like the Super Walmart that the project team is aware of now.
 - Patrick said that there is some development going on at the Limberlost intersection on the vacant property that is there.
- Caroline asked if the city owns any of the undeveloped properties along 1st Avenue.
 - Patrick said no, they don't.
 - Patrick added that when they design a roadway project, they use the projections for population growth and development growth for the year 2045. This planning allows them to be ready for development changes that happen in the future so that they do not negatively impact the project.



- Kate asked where the survey questions that were used in the 1st Avenue survey came from. Did they come from best practices or other projects?
 - Patrick answered that they come from a variety of sources, other projects, and knowledge of the project corridor and its unique challenges, The survey was the first tool we used to engage with the community.
 - Kristi added that we did provide people with another option for them to fill in with their comments.

Patrick asked the task force members to look at the draft goals and let the team know how well we reflected corridor needs and community input. Is anything missing? Are there any key concepts that need to be captured within the draft goals? He then asked them to please score each goal based on the level of importance to them personally.

- Marci asked what Goal #3 means “improving the condition of existing infrastructure”. Does that mean streetlights, HAWKs...
 - Other members chimed in with drainage, and sidewalks.
 - Brent answered that infrastructure is a very broad-encompassing term.
- Maxine Dunkelman via Chat on Zoom, said we did well reflecting what the population wants. She is still pushing for buried wires.
- Mark asked what “visual character” means.
 - Patrick said that it refers to making a place a pleasant place to see and a pleasant place to be. We know that right now the corridor does not reflect that, and we need to make changes with our improvements like public art, landscaping, lighting, etc. to create a pleasant enticing place to be. Patrick added that these updates will happen only in the public right-of-way and not involve local businesses, etc.
- Mark added that to him it is nice to have “visual character” but it is low on his priorities.
- Brent added that when we get into strategies, a lot of those strategies overlap. For example, if you want to make it more pleasant for pedestrians besides adding sidewalks, you can add trees for shade which makes it more comfortable to walk and this would lend itself to the visual character.
- Kate asked on question #1 if the most roadway vulnerable users are those considered roadway users.
 - Patrick answered that the most vulnerable roadway users are usually the ones who end up on the worst end of a roadway accident, i.e., pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit users.

Patrick asked the members if they thought anything was missing from these preliminary goals.

- Mark added “what about lighting”?



- Patrick said it would fall under both Improve Safety and Improve Condition of Existing Infrastructure.
- Mark said he feels lighting should be high on the priority list, that is why he asked for more information on when accidents happen most often because if it is at night, the lighting could be why. He added that the lighting is currently horrible on 1st Avenue.
- A.M. asked what kind of bandwidth we have for upgrades in the future as things change with development and growth.
- Marci asked about the houseless community and the bad issues, especially at Fort Lowell Rd. and 1st Avenue.
 - Patrick spoke about the City of Tucson's VIVA (Violence Interruption and Vitalization Actions) program. They have started to reduce violence and crime.
 - Ruben added that in the Fort Lowell and 1st Avenue area, the old Chinese restaurant area is especially a bad spot.
- Patrick asked City of Tucson Transit Services Manager James Castenada to speak more about Tucson's VIVA program and how it is focusing on areas like the Fort Lowell and 1st Avenue area.
- Mindy asked where in the city the VIVA program lives.
 - James answered that it is housed in the City Manager's office.
- The group then talked about other areas of homelessness along the corridor like the area behind the Walmart.
 - Kate added that there are other partners in the community to help with reaching out during the design phase.
- Karl asked how we implement green infrastructure when we can.
 - Patrick said it is not a goal now, but we should add it.
 - Caroline said that maybe we can implement it into visual character and Kristi said we could add it to existing infrastructure.
 - Maxine Dunkelman added via Chat on Zoom, that we should try and cool the street, capture water runoff, and use cement that has more sustainable sources. The best thing we can do is to get people walking and biking instead of driving.
- Ruben asked how much space is needed between the sidewalk and the street for trees.
 - Patrick said that a minimum of 32 square feet is needed.
 - Mark added that so many trees get blown down during the monsoon.
 - Maxine Dunkelman added via Chat on Zoom, that the cause of lots of blown-down trees is watering too often, which leads to shallow roots. They need longer and less frequent watering to get roots deeper. Plants do have ages at which they die.
- Brent added that Palo Verde trees are not good in the wind and that the city has gone back to using more native trees with larger root systems to prevent losing them in windstorms.
- Mark asked why the overall traffic count on the corridor has reduced by 19%.
 - Patrick answered that traffic is down throughout the center of Tucson and there is more growth towards the edges of the city. He said this can be for a variety of



reasons, including aging neighborhoods, fewer kids, people working from home, and bigger delivery options.

Patrick then presented the six project goals that the team drafted that the task force members would give feedback on tonight:

- 1) **Improve Safety** for all users on 1st Avenue, particularly for the most vulnerable roadway users.
- 2) **Increase transportation options** and reduce barriers on 1st Avenue by improving comfort, convenience, and accessibility for people walking, biking, and using public transportation.
- 3) Improve the condition of **existing infrastructure** to ensure that 1st Avenue meets community needs now and into the future.
- 4) Enhance the **visual character** of 1st Avenue to support economic and community vitality.
- 5) **Support mobility** along the corridor through the efficient movement of traffic, including transit, personal and commercial vehicles.
- 6) **Minimize the impacts** of 1st Avenue improvements on adjacent properties and businesses.

Examples were then given on how the project goals will influence the key design strategies for the project. One of the examples presented was how this process was used on another local road project.

Patrick then asked for discussion on the goals presented (Do they reflect corridor needs and community input? Is anything else needed? Are there any key concepts needed?) He then asked everyone to score each goal with their level of importance on their provided worksheets.

The task force then was asked to give comments on each of the six preliminary project goals and those comments were captured in real time.

Goal 1: Improve Safety for all users on 1st Avenue, particularly for the most vulnerable roadway users. (Average Rating by CTF Members – 5)

Comments (Collected during CTF meeting):

- Who is the most vulnerable roadway user? Can we define it better? Yes, spell it out
- Consider protected left turns
- If you lower the width of lanes drivers go slower – take these behavioral strategies to support decisions here



- Medians in strategic places
- Pedestrian bridges as an option? May not be the best option due to the space needed and extra effort
- The key concept is separating users in space and separating users in time
- Utilize things like HAWKs

Comments (Collected from written comments):

- Define vulnerable
- Rate, time, method of crash data
- Protected left turns
- Median frogger islands
- Manipulate behavior
- Separating users, space and time
- Inlaid lights – buildouts
- Coordination of the bus schedules with the transfer points to offer commuters more time to cross roadways and make bus transfers
- Lanes
- Lights
- Lighting
- Width of lanes
- Define user better
- Separation of roadway

Goal 2: Increase transportation options and reduce barriers on 1st Avenue by improving comfort, convenience, and accessibility for people walking, biking, and using public transportation. (Average Rating by CTF Members - 4.5)

Comments (Collected during CTF meeting):

- Bus pullouts
- Reducing barriers makes sense but what does it mean to make more transportation options?

Comments (Collected from written comments):

- Bus pullouts – Location
- Spacing of HAWK lights to be more efficient – Ped Xing, spacing, safety, rumble strips – passively detection



- Protection – lighting, shade, pullouts for buses (spacing)

Goal 3: Improve the condition of existing infrastructure to ensure that 1st Avenue meets community needs now and into the future. (Average Rating by CTF Members - 4.375)

Comments (Collected during CTF meeting):

- What about the sewer lines? This is included in “infrastructure”
- Futureproofing is important
- Are we looking at any natural disasters?
 - Yes, looking at flooding near the bridge
 - This can be found in climate action plan

Comments (Collected from written comments):

- Sustainability – climate action
- Placemaking – community representation, organized visually for users
- Bandwidth for future technology
- FEMA
- Fiberoptics
- Fire mitigation tech
- Grate on Wetmore Rd. – drainage
- Lighting – how can we make it sustainable
- Sustainability – native and resilience

Goal 4: Enhance the visual character of 1st Avenue to support economic and community vitality. (Average Rating by CTF Members – 3.375)

Comments (Collected during CTF meeting):

- Native and resilient plants
- Visual character – seems frivolous
 - Should we use better terminology – enhance visually; placemaking; create connections; vibrant, pleasant?
 - No more froggers
- What does this bring to the community?
- This could mean:
 - Art



- Bus stop design
- Bike lane protection
- Landscaping

Comments (Collected from written comments):

- Sustainability
- Trees, location
- Information at each bus stop to bring the commuter updated info via QR codes, maybe?
- Placemaking – community representation, organized visually for users

Goal 5: Support mobility along the corridor through the efficient movement of traffic, including transit, personal, and commercial vehicles. (Average Rating by CTF Members – 4)

Comments (Collected during CTF meeting):

- We must fulfill functionality; how do we ensure this?
 - Truly timed stoplights
- 1st and Fort Lowell – can we coordinate bus schedules for those differently abled?
- Protected areas for all users; dedicated spaces

Comments (Collected from written comments):

- Protected areas for all users – organize and designate dedicated spaces
- Emergency vehicle use
- Bus pullouts
- Timed buses
- Functionality

Goal 6: Minimize the impacts of 1st Avenue improvements on adjacent properties and businesses. (Average Rating by CTF Members – 4)

Comments (Collected during CTF meeting):

- YES
- Comes down to overall design and the decisions we make here – this impact lives every day for the next 20 years
- Can we incorporate residents?



- Can we include more business assistance?
- **Comments (Collected from written comments):**
 - Include residents
 - You need to add the word residents
 - Could we add native species here?
 - Residents
 - Your 100 ft. cuts into my playgrounds!
 - Buses for Handi services

No action was taken.

6. City of Tucson Preferred Roadway Cross-Section

HDR Project Manager, Brent Kirkman and City of Tucson DTM Administrator Patrick Hartley presented the City of Tucson's Section 14 100-ft right of way, urban five-lane, two-way street, pedestrian island/median-divided, curb-protected bike lane to the task force members. This cross-section gives us the space to include everything that we have been discussing as needs for the project. The members were asked if this was an acceptable starting point for the project and after discussion, it was unanimously agreed upon as a good starting point

Questions from CTF Members

- Marci asked how this 100 ft. cross-section would affect the businesses along the corridor.
 - Brent answered that at this time he does not know because it will affect some areas but not others. He just needs a place to start from.
 - Patrick added that we are not set in stone with this cross-section, and we will go through the corridor section by section to see how this 100 ft. works.
 - Brent added that one portion of the corridor may look very different from other parts.



- Karl asked if 10 feet is the minimum size the lanes can be.
 - Brent answered yes, for the inside lane, it is 10 feet minimum, but the curb lane must be a minimum of 11 feet for buses.
- Maxine Dunkelman via Chat on Zoom: Interestingly in Korea, they have umbrellas at large intersections. Put bikes closer to pedestrians and further from the road. Less median and more vegetation. Most of the bike/vehicle world has 5 or 6 feet between vehicles and bikes, not 3. The bike should be able to pass another bike or crash and not be hit by a vehicle or a vehicle mirror. Can we make the bike lane height higher than the pavement?
- Mark asked if a shared-use path like the Rillito River Path is a viable option here on the corridor. Instead of trying to create a bike lane and a sidewalk, this could cover both.
 - Brent said that it is possible. But the shared-use path needs 12 feet and there will be give and take to make this happen.
 - Patrick added that there are some places in Tucson where there is a shared-use path, but we just want to start with the 100 ft option and then we will make edits to it as needed along the corridor.
 - Ruben added that if you have a shared-use path you would need to consider bike and pedestrian courtesy, because some are courteous, and some are not.
 - Patrick said now that we have an agreement on the 100 feet, we can look at places where we don't have the 100 feet and what options we have in those areas. Same for places where we have additional space.

7. Future Agenda Items

Kristi asked the group if they would like to have the city's MainStreet department make a presentation to the task force in the future. Everyone agreed.

Other topics mentioned for possible future agenda items were:

- Unhoused population and how the city is dealing with this.
- Maybe a future walk and talk along the corridor.

No formal action was taken.

8. Adjournment

Vice-Chair Karl Peterson moved to adjourn the meeting, Caroline seconded and Ruben Robles third. Karl Peterson adjourned the meeting at 7:44 p.m.