



1st Avenue Citizens' Corridor Planning Task Force

Thursday, February 20, 2025, 5:45 p.m.
Donna R Liggins Recreation Center
2160 N. 6th Avenue, Tucson, AZ 85705

Meeting Minutes

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

Due to the absence of the Chair, Co-Chair Karl Peterson called the meeting to order at 5:50 p.m., duly seconded by Kate Saunders. The quorum was established through roll call.

Present

Caroline Bartelme
Dave Boston
Karl Peterson
Melissa (Mimi) Noshay-Petro
A.M. Rivers
Nancy Reid
Maxine Dunkelman
Kathleen (Susan) O'Brien
Marci Caballero-Reynolds

Absent

Ruben Robles
Mindy Gutzmer
Dana Higgins
Mark Hatchel

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 January 16, 2025. All 1ACCPTF members had reviewed the minutes, and Melissa (Mimi) Noshay-Petro moved to approve the minutes, duly seconded by Kate Saunders. All approved.

3. Call to Audience

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

4. Project Overview and Task Force Schedule



City of Tucson Department of Transportation and Mobility (DTM) Planning Administrator Patrick Hartley presented where we are in the project and the Citizens Task Force schedule for 2025. 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.
 - Kittelson & Associates Principal Engineer, Felipe Ladron de Guevara answered, yes, that is possible.

5. Establish Preliminary Project Goals

(DTM) Planning Administrator Patrick Hartley recapped how the project goals were developed, the process of defining goals, and the purpose of those goals for the project. Patrick then went through the City's "Move Tucson" vision and explained how this will affect the project goals. Patrick then presented the six updated project goals, which included all the comments and rankings given by the task force members in the January meeting. Patrick then asked for a discussion on the goals presented. He also asked if people were ready to vote on accepting these goals as the official project goals. The task force members asked to go through the design strategies that are tied to each goal before making a final vote. No action was taken.



Questions from CTF Members

- Karl mentioned that during last month's meeting, we discussed including sustainability in some of these project goals.
- Susan said she thinks sustainability should be one of the most important pieces of this project. She said because the city is investing so much money in this project, it only makes sense to make sure we take this into account. She mentioned seeing landscaping and other features along roadways across the city fall into disrepair over time. She would like sustainability to be a "Mission Statement" for this project to ensure the investment is well cared for in the future.
- Dave agreed.
- Caroline suggested maybe wrapping this into #3 of the Project Goals.
 - Patrick said these types of things can be added in our key design strategies to reach the project goals.
- Dave said maintenance should be part of a mission statement and Nancy agreed.
- Susan said as we work to achieve these goals, maintenance is a part of keeping true to these goals.
 - Patrick added that the project goals are a subset of the Move Tucson vision, which is a part of the entire project and all future projects, and that they fall under the goal of sustaining the investments that are made into these types of projects.
 - HDR Project Manager, Brent Kirkman added that the City's standards have changed and are constantly being updated to include more sustainable pieces of the projects they are building, including the bridge, pavement standards, and how they try to recycle as much on projects as possible. Sustainable practices are already built in by default.
 - At this time, Patrick suggested looking at the Key Design Strategies and then coming back and looking at the goals and trying to approve them.

6. Design Strategies

HDR Project Manager, Brent Kirkman, City of Tucson DTM Administrator Patrick Hartley, and Kittelson & Associates Principal Engineer Felipe Ladron de Guevara presented the design strategies the team created for each of the project goals.

Key Design Strategies by Project Goal:

1. **Improve Safety** for all users of 1st Avenue, particularly for the most vulnerable road users, such as pedestrians, bicyclists, people with disabilities, motorcyclists, and others.

Strategies:



- Employ the Safe Systems Approach principles in corridor design
 - Provide physical separation between bicyclists/pedestrians and vehicles
 - *Comment from David Boston: Cannot rely on maintenance to clean (sweep) a separated bike lane.*
 - Manage vehicle speeds to reduce crash severity
 - *Comment from Kate Saunders: This one seems vague and does not show much of the “how” like the other items do. It could include things like limit vehicle speed, reduce posted speed limits, making the narrowest lane width possible the default instead of the exception, etc.*
 - Provide adequate and continuous lighting along the corridor, particularly in the areas with the highest pedestrian activity
 - *Comment from Susan O’Brien: Add “Provide and Maintain”*
 - Ensure that pedestrians and cyclists have access to frequent safe crossings
 - Design intersections and upgrade traffic signals to reduce conflicts in space and time
 - *Comment from Mimi Noshay-Petro: I don't think the wording needs to change, but for implementation, it sounds like fewer permissive left turns would reduce accidents. Not sure where that language goes, but I assume it's part of the later process.*
 - Minimize distances between bus stops and controlled crossings
- 2. Increase transportation options** and reduce barriers on 1st Avenue by improving comfort, convenience, and accessibility for people walking, biking, and using public transportation.

Strategies:

- Install wide, continuous, and accessible sidewalks
- Separate sidewalks from the roadway to the greatest extent feasible with a planting/amenity zone and bicycle lanes
- Ensure that pedestrians and cyclists have access to frequent and safe crossings
- Maximize physical separation between bicyclists and motor vehicles, including through installation of protected bike lanes
 - *Comment from David Boston: Evaluate resulting hazard created from method of separation.*
- Upgrade transit stops to be accessible, shaded, safe and comfortable
 - *Comment from Kate Saunders: Could we add a strategy that is about a space to “be” while waiting for transit instead of just the elements that support us on the move? Can we have drinking fountains, charging stations for wheelchairs, greenspace at the bus stop to cool the area, etc.? These are the types of things that would make a transit stop more comfortable and convenient.*



3. Improve the condition of **existing infrastructure** to ensure 1st Avenue meets community needs now and into the future.

Strategies:

- Upgrade drainage infrastructure to provide all-mode access during more frequent/common storm events
 - Comment from Mimi Noshay-Petro: *I don't see the need to add sustainability language; I think it's captured here, but we had a good robust discussion about it so others might feel differently.*
 - Comment from David Boston: *No gutter pans for entire project.*
- Replace the 1st Avenue bridge over the Rillito River
 - Comment from Mimi Noshay-Petro: *Perhaps include "and install wide, continuous, and accessible sidewalk," although I'm not sure that is necessary. And I'm not sure how the bike lane fits in the bridge.*
 - Comment from David Boston: *No gap between edge of pavement and raised bridge sidewalk.*
 - Comment from Susan O'Brien: *"Replace and Widen the 1st Avenue Bridge."*
- Upgrade traffic lights at signalized intersections with adaptive and transit signal priority technologies
- Reconstruct pavement roadway, sidewalks, and bicycle lanes and install bus shelters to improve ride quality, comfort, accessibility, and longevity of public infrastructure

4. **Support mobility** along the corridor through the efficient movement of traffic, including transit, personal, and commercial vehicles.

Strategies:

- Upgrade traffic signals with Adaptive and Transit Signal Priority Technologies
- Implement access management strategies
 - Comment from Kate Saunders: *Can this be more specific? Like to reduce the number of driveways and curb interruptions through Action Management Strategies.*
- Evaluate strategies to efficiently and safely accommodate all modes at major intersections
 - Comment from Kate Saunders: *This part seems vague. What is the actual strategy after evaluation? Perhaps "identify and utilize strategies." There is also 2 verbs within this one strategy that seem to put things a bit at odds with each other – Efficiency and safety. Could we separate these into their own strategies to make it more clear and specific?*
- Incorporate bus pullouts at high-demand locations



5. Minimize the Impacts of 1st Avenue improvements on adjacent residents and businesses.

Strategies:

- Align the 1st Avenue corridor to minimize acquisitions of structures and properties
 - *Comment from Mimi Noshay-Petro: This is only during construction, right? I don't know if there are other entities to connect with besides RTA Mainstreet. I would love to see connection between the business and homeowners and other non-profits and financing geared toward green infrastructure and upgrades to front facing businesses. I am on the City of Tucson IDA and we have loan programs that might dovetail into this. We don't need to add any language here, but I would be glad to connect whoever communicates with the businesses with the IDA and some of its partners*
- Support businesses during construction through partnership with the RTA MainStreet program
 - *Comment from Kate Saunders: This seems strange to me that this group has already been chosen to this work instead of having an open sort of RFP process for community engagement with the businesses in the area. For example, Rail CDC in Mesa did powerful work with businesses in Mesa on anti-displacement strategies during and after development.*
- Maintain access for residents, businesses, and neighborhoods along 1st Avenue

6. Enhance the visual character of 1st Avenue to support economic and community vitality.

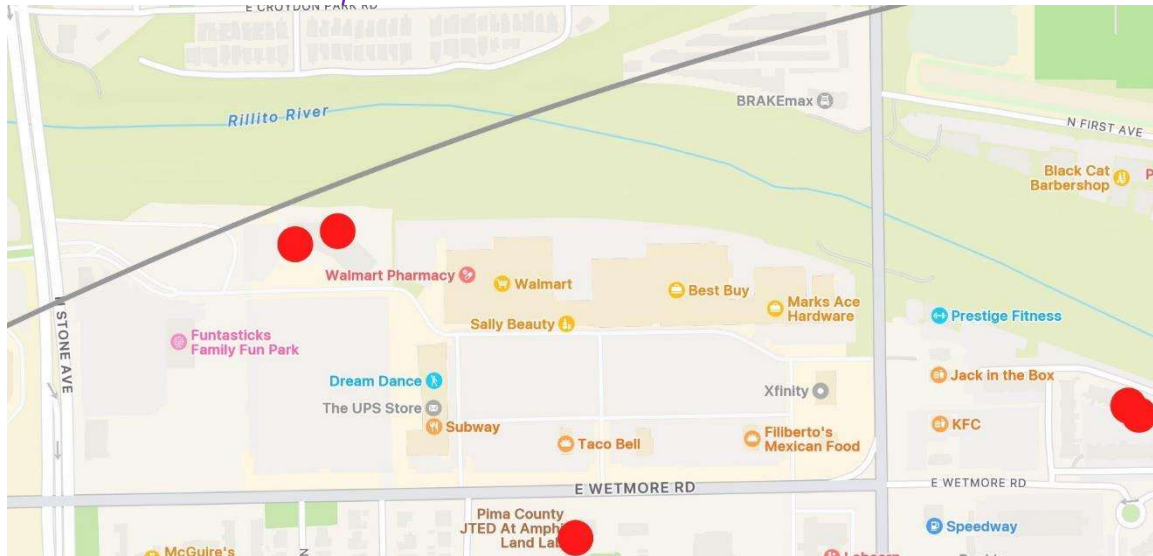
Strategies:

- Landscaping: Incorporate Green Stormwater Infrastructure (GSI) to use stormwater as a resource
 - *Comment from Susan O'Brien: Suggest addition of wording to incorporate locally supplied native landscaping green materials.*
- Public art: Utilize bridge and other infrastructure elements to enhance the visual character of the corridor
 - *Comment from Kate Saunders: Is there a community engagement aspect of this item? This is the tangible outcome of the strategy, but wondering if there will be space within the Task Force for us to comment on the process as this piece gets moved forward?*

Additional Comments from A.M. Rivers:

- In keeping with evolving FIRE/EMS curves, how about the possibility of two locations that could be in compliance (with ALL of the acronyms F.A.A. C.D.C FIRE...) as helipads.....infrastructure underground and ...markings drawn on the ground (justifying specialty speeding limits, and overlapping maintenance resources for the bridge... a helipad bridge
- AND in the event of another pandemic/ critical incidents the parking lot at Limberlost is a staging area with the Bus Depot is also engaged be FIRE/EMS.
- She added this comment a few days later: I had the wrong street. I meant a helipad bridge...AND in the event of another pandemic/critical incidents the parking lot at East Wetmore is a staging area with the Bus Depot is also engaged be FIRE/EMS.

She also included this map:



After the design strategies were discussed, Patrick asked task force members to take an official vote to approve the six project goals as presented in the meeting. Melissa (Mimi) Noshay-Petro moved to accept the project goals as presented, duly seconded by Karl Peterson. The project goals were approved by the task force members present.



Questions and Comments from CTF Members about Key Design Strategies

- Kate asked about protected left turn lanes.
 - Brent said that one of the options does include protected left turns.
- Nancy said she does not understand what a protected left turn means.
 - Patrick answered that protected left turns include a defining barrier between cars, pedestrians, and bikes.
- Mimi asked about ensuring people have a safe place to pull over for emergency vehicles.
- Kate asked about vehicle speeds and how to slow them down.
 - Patrick said intermittent medians throughout the corridor and adding curvature to the roadway can assist with slowing down vehicles.
- Kate said bike lanes should be protected if curvature is added. She doesn't believe that the curves on Broadway slow people down and she will not ride her bike along Broadway.
- Karl said changing the speed limit may not be as effective.
 - Patrick said you design the road to the speed limit you want.
- Caroline said she would like to see a separate push button for bicyclists at major intersections. She said Mountain and Grant is a good example of this.
- Karl would like to see the protected bike lanes continue to the intersection so that cars don't use the bike lane as a vehicle lane.
- Kate asked what ADA-compliant bus stops look like. She said they need to be consistent on the corridor. She would also like to see the use of Braille.
- Marci asked if there is something we can do about bikes riding the wrong way in bike lanes.
 - Patrick said a vertical separation with the bike lane should help with this.
- Mimi asked what is meant by "Upgrade traffic signals at signalized intersections with adaptive and transit signal priority technologies."



- Patrick explained this is the use of technology to control traffic signals to move traffic more efficiently. Instead of just timing the lights, these work with the current traffic flow and react accordingly, maximizing the capacity.
 - Brent added that this is part of “futureproofing” the corridor.
- Susan said she feels the bridge needs to be widened to make bicyclists and pedestrians safer.
 - Patrick agreed and said they would update the language to reflect “upgrade the bridge to current standards”.
- Nancy asked about flooding along the corridor. She mentioned that the grates and screens that are on the corridor now get clogged and the water backs up. Nancy also brought up an area near the BK on 1st Avenue where the water collects and then moves west on North to a catchment area full of weeds. She is curious as to where this water empties into.
 - Brent answered that when these roads were originally built, they were not designed for flooding and when big storms hit, the road grates clog because they are not the correct size. Now we can plan better for this. Brent added that the water off North probably empties into the Navajo Wash and then into the Santa Cruz.
- Susan asked if the grates would be out of the bike lane and up on the curb.
 - Brent said that there will be a combination of both.
- Marcy asked what would happen with the telephone pole replacement.
 - Patrick said they will work with the utility companies to discuss relocation and replacement. He said sometimes they upgrade them and sometimes they don't. Tucson Electric Power (TEP) owns all the poles along the corridor, and they make the decision. Brent said he thinks that they will probably be replaced.
- Caroline said the driveways in front of some places on the corridor are worse than others. She cited Circle K and said those are scary driveways.
 - Patrick said they will work on driveway placement to make traffic move more smoothly. Reducing the number of egress and ingress along the corridor will also make it safer for all modes.
- Kate asked if there would be more discussion on bus pullouts because she is not a proponent.
 - Patrick said this would be a conversation further down the road, but bus pullouts have been used successfully on other projects.
- Nancy asked Kate why she dislikes bus pullouts. Kate said she believes they slow down bus movement because they have to pull out into traffic. She feels bus service efficiency is very important.
- Karl suggested using Gabion baskets or another passive feature along the roadway to keep pedestrians more channeled and away from crossing in the middle of the street.



7. Measures of Effectiveness (MOE)

Kittelson & Associates Principal Engineer, Felipe Ladron de Guevara, presented the Measures of Effectiveness (MOE) Decision Matrix, including examples of how it will be used. Felipe noted that the weighting on the matrix was created using input from the task force members. He said this is a starting point, and we will take input from task members and adjust as needed.

DTM Administrator Patrick Hartley said that this matrix will help the team prioritize as we get into areas along the corridor where we may not have the same amount of room to do all the desired features.

HDR Project Manager, Brent Kirkman, noted that this matrix will help us at conflict points along the project.

At this point in the program, the roll plot of the entire corridor was rolled out and presented to the task force members, who were allowed to ask questions and make comments.

No action was taken.

Questions from CTF Members

- Marci asked if “most desirable” on the scale also meant “best practices”.
 - Felipe said yes, but we should also take into account the impacts.
 - Brent added that he would love to have enough space to do everything but that is not feasible, and this decision matrix will help with conflict points to help the team make final decisions on items.
- Kate asked if the budget is a part of the decision process.
 - Brent said that it informs the process. Pima Association of Governments Transportation Services Director Rick Ellis said the budget is part of the decision as we go along, but we don’t want to compromise the decision with budget factors.
- Maxine (via Zoom Chat) said this was very well explained and not complicated or confusing. She added the staff is doing great.
- Mimi asked how the team can get to 100 feet in the tighter areas along the roadway. (Brent mentioned the area is the tightest from Grant Road to Roger Road. He mentioned some properties may need to be taken)
 - Brent said there is more space on the east side of the road than the west, so they may need to move the roadway over in some areas.
- Karl asked if they would try to keep the trees in those areas.
 - Brent said yes.



- Caroline asked if having 100 feet available along the roadway was expected.
 - Brent said no, this is better than they thought.
- Susan asked how they created the roll plot map.
 - Brent explained that they flew over the entire corridor and surveyors were out on sight taking measurements.

8. Future Agenda Items

DTM Administrator Patrick Hartley asked the group if they would like to do an off-agenda field visit on the corridor. It would be an additional meeting. It was a consensus that a Sunday afternoon would work best.

No formal action was taken.

9. Adjournment

Co-Chair Karl Peterson moved to adjourn the meeting, duly seconded by Caroline Bartelme. The meeting was adjourned at 7:34 p.m.