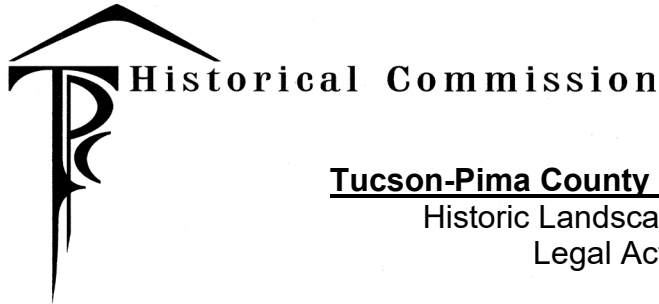




Tucson-Pima County Historical Commission

Historic Landscapes Subcommittee

Legal Action Report

September 25, 2025

The Historic Landscapes Subcommittee of the Tucson-Pima County Historical Commission conducted a meeting on Thursday, September 25, 2025, at 10:00 a.m. hybrid via Zoom and at Pima Community College, Downtown Campus, Advanced Manufacturing Building, M335 Conference Room, 1255 N. Queen Avenue, Tucson, AZ 85709

1. Call to Order / Roll Call

The meeting was called to order by Chair Grede at 10:03 a.m. Those present and absent were:

Members Present:

Steve Grede, Chair

Blake Houghton

J.J. Lamb

Julie Rigoli

Members Absent:

Helen Erickson

Guests:

Jasmine Chan, COT Parks and Recreation Capital Programs Administrator

Matt Chrisman, COT Parks and Recreation Project Manager

Stephanie Kopplin, COT Parks and Recreation Project Manager

Eric Barrett, Arc Studios for Armory Park

Joseph Graff, Arc Studios

2. Approval of Historic Landscapes Subcommittee LAR/Minutes from Meeting of: 8-28-2025 (Discussion/Action)

Commissioner Houghton moved to approve the minutes of the Historic Landscapes Subcommittee meeting of 8-28-2025. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Rigoli and passed by a roll call vote of 4-0.

3. Review Cases (Discussion/Action)

a. Armory Park tree substitution, 222 S. 5th Ave.

Presentation by Eric Barrett. Discussion regarding type of trees to be planted at Armory Park. Arizona ash (*Fraxinus velutina*) was historically present, since 1901.

Project planners looking at a 60-year horizon and thinking that due to drought conditions and climate change the netleaf hackberry, which uses less water, is being considered.

Commissioner Grede discussed the HLS considerations for plantings within a historic landscape. Ideally tree replacements would be of the same species and reflect the historic landscape design. If the historic species is no longer viable, a different species is recommended that has equivalent growth habits (size, shape, branch structure, deciduous nature), texture (density, leaf shape, color, fall color, fruiting, and bark), and tradition within the historic time period. Mr. Barrett clarified that the *Fraxinus velutina* is a native species, and he believes that it is still viable in Armory Park.

Commissioner Grede made a motion recommend that the 23 replacement perimeter tree plantings in Armory Park be Arizona ash (*Fraxinus velutina*), or appropriate subspecies, because it is the historic species and will maintain the most similar historic character of the park. Motion seconded by Commissioner Lamb.

The motion was passed 4-0 by a roll call vote.

b. Rudy Garcia Park Improvements, 5001 S. Nogales Hwy.

This project is to replace existing lighting with LED, new fields for baseball and soccer, installing a new adjacent playground and installing walking paths to make the park ADA accessible. Irrigation would be moved as needed. No existing trees will be removed, and the only turf removal will be for ADA walking paths.

Commissioner Houghton moved to recommend approval as presented. Motion seconded by Commissioner Rigoli.

The motion was passed 4-0 by a roll call vote.

c. Mitchell Park Improvements, 1100 E. Mitchell St.

Ms. Kopplin presented. Project focused on installing shade respite in the park and removing two small areas of turf where it is difficult to irrigate. The community asked that additional trees and understory to support the trees be planted. The 1974 aerial image showed a row of tall trees, perhaps pine, on all three sides. Replacement plantings have been made, and there is now a mix of Aleppo pine, pistache, netleaf hackberry, blue paloverde, desert ironwood, velvet mesquite, and one Arizona ash. The remaining Arizona ash is a favorite with the neighborhood who requested it be retained.

Commissioner Houghton requested clarification regarding the Western Hackberry that is listed on the plan. Ms. Kopplin explained that is in error, and netleaf hackberry is the intended species.

Commissioner Grede noted that the existing landscape no longer has a perimeter planting of a single species but maintains mixed-species perimeter planting. The proposed design fills in the gaps within the perimeter with species that are already

planted in the park. The exceptions are replacements for desert willow in the interior of the park that did not thrive.

Commissioner Houghton recommended approval as presented, noting that the native netleaf hackberry will be used instead of the western hackberry. Motion seconded by Commissioner Lamb.

The motion was passed 4-0 by a roll call vote.

d. List of Historic Parks in the City of Tucson

Commissioner Grede started discussion by asking if this list is/will be useful. Ms. Chan responded that yes, it will be very useful. There is a staff meeting scheduled for next week to discuss this in detail.

4. **Future Agenda Items for Upcoming Meetings**

- a. Two items in Reid Park, including a water feature.
- b. Date for next HLS meeting is 10/30/2025 at 10:00 a.m.
- c. Review of Additional Landscape Guidance for Barrio Histórico HPZ draft Design Guidelines (if requested)

5. **Call to the Audience (Information Only)**

Commissioner Houghton shared that he had attended the Greater Vail Chamber of Commerce Golden Spike Awards Celebration and wanted to recognize that J.J. Lamb had received a Golden Spike award for her historic preservation work in Vail.

No comments were received by the posted deadline.

6. **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 11:07 a.m.