



Tucson-Pima County Historical Commission

Historic Landscapes Subcommittee
Legal Action Report

February 25, 2026

The Historic Landscapes Subcommittee of the Tucson-Pima County Historical Commission conducted a meeting on Wednesday, February 25, 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 Erickson at 10:01 a.m. Those present and absent were:

Members Present:

Helen Erickson, Chair
Blake Houghton
Tim Hagyard
J.J. Lamb

Members Absent:

Jessica Bassi

Guests:

Stephen Grede, TPCHC Non-Voting Advisory Member
Jonathan Knighton-Wisor, Cultural Resources Manager, City of Tucson
(COT) Historic Preservation Office
Elliot Welch, COT Parks and Recreation
Courtney Rose, Cultural Resources Preservation Manager, Pima County
Cultural Resources & Historic Preservation Office [CRHPO]) – joined at
11:20 a.m.

2. Approval of Historic Landscapes Subcommittee LAR/Minutes from Meeting of: 1-28-2026 (Discussion/Action)

Commissioner Hagyard moved to approve the minutes of the Historic Landscapes Subcommittee meeting of 12-18-2025. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Houghton and passed by a roll call vote of 4-0. (Commissioner Bassi absent)

3. Review Cases (Discussion/Action)

- a. New sidewalk and ramada improvement at David G. Herrera and Ramon Quiroz Park (presentation by Elliot Welch from City of Tucson Parks and Recreation)

David G. Herrera and Ramon Quioz Park is a Category 1 park dating from 1901. The plan includes the addition of an asphalt walking path and a new shade ramada to be located where two picnic benches are now placed. Neither bench is considered to be a historic resource. No trees will be removed, but those along the wall are threatened by the absence of irrigation. In the near future, Storm and Shade will be developing a vegetation and grading plan.

Commissioner Hagyard moved and Commissioner Lamb seconded to approve the outline of the path and the construction of the ramada. The subcommittee requests that the project be returned for additional review when the Storm and Shade plan is available. The motion passed 4-0. (Commissioner Bassi absent)

b. Cottonwood Lane planting at Fort Lowell Park (presentation by Jasmine Chan from City of Tucson Parks and Recreation)

Fort Lowell is a Category 1 park. The plan includes the planting of cottonwood trees to outline the historic parade ground. Due to the placement of the museum as part of the Bicentennial Celebration, there is a discontinuity in the placement of the trees. This plan aligns the trees to follow their original positions, now interrupted by the location of the museum building.

A question was raised about the spacing of the trees: 30' apart to follow the projected spacing of the iron fence or 20'. The logic behind the 30' spacing is not known. A second question was raised about the distance spanned by the allée of trees on the south side of the east section of the parade ground.

Commissioner Lamb moved and Commissioner Hagyard seconded that the comments of the Fort Lowell Advisory Board were appropriate with regard to the alignment and spacing of the trees. The subcommittee commends the efforts made by private and public entities to maintain the overall geography of this historic space and to ensure the survival of the proposed additional trees. Continuity between the east and west sides of the parade ground (divided by a major road) is to be encouraged. The motion passed 4-0. (Commissioner Bassi absent)

Ms. Chan will provide additional information via email with regard to the 30' spacing of the trees and the width of the allée for documentation purposes.

4. **Potential Options for the Interpretation of the Butterfield Trail in Tucson and Pima County (Discussion/Action)**

Dr. Rose provided information on the designation of the Butterfield Trail as a Pima County Priority Cultural Resource (PCR). Since the Sonoran Desert Conservation Plan was first put in place, Pima County has moved toward a proactive approach to the maintenance of significant cultural resources, both tangible resources and heritage values (past, present, and future), which supports inclusivity. The goal is to share historic sites with the public while ensuring their protection.

The Seneca stage station site will be mapped over the course of several semesters in collaboration with the Archaeology Centre, Pima Community College. Social trails

on land owned by Pima County Regional Flood Control District (RFCD) will be analyzed to see which access areas should be gated to prevent unauthorized entrance. Dr. Rose's office (CRHPO) is also collaborating with RFCD to post signage regarding state and county laws to protect historic resources, avoiding visual intrusion but obvious to those who have entered the area illegally.

Site Stewards will continue to monitor sensitive sites in the area.

A discussion of how to define the Butterfield Trail in a more inclusive way – recognizing the indigenous human trails and wildlife corridors on which the route is based – was initiated with the goal of providing a broader foundation for protection.

5. **Next Meeting: March 25, 2026, at 10:00 a.m.**

This subcommittee will hold a hybrid meeting at 10:00 a.m. on the fourth Wednesday of each month.

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

Future agenda items must be communicated to Chair Erickson no later than the third Wednesday of the month preceding the meeting.

Discussion of the protection and interpretation of historic Pima County transportation routes such as the Butterfield Trail will be discussed on an ongoing basis.

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

No public comments were received by the posted deadline.

8. **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 12:16 p.m.