Design Review Board
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DESIGN REVIEW BOARD (DRB)

MEETING NOTICE AND AGENDA

Pursuant to A.R.S. § 38-431.02, notice is hereby given to the members of the **Design Review Board (DRB)** and to the general public that the DRB will hold the following virtual meeting which will be open to the public on:

Friday, November 20, 2026, 8:30 AM

If a member of the public wishes to join through the remote format on a computer, mobile app room device, or telephone:

Join the meeting now

Meeting ID: 297 127 991 943 13

Passcode: 3WG7UU6K

Dial in by phone

+1 213-293-2303,,770001117# United States, Los Angeles

Find a local number

Phone conference ID: 770 001 117#

For materials in accessible formats, and/or materials in a language other than English, please contact María Gayosso at *(520) 837-6972, Maria.Gayosso@tucsonaz.gov, no later than Monday November 16, 2026.*

Para solicitar materiales en formatos accesibles, y/o materiales en español, por favor comuníquese con María Gayosso al (520) 837-6972, Maria.Gayosso@tucsonaz.gov, a más tardar el Lunes 16 de Noviembre de 2026.

AGENDA

1. **Call to Order / Roll Call**

Paige Anthony
Rosemary Bright (Vice Chair)
Caryl Clement
Cade Hayes
Daniel Maher
Grace Schau
Chris Stebe (Chair)

2. **Review and approval of the 10/2/2026 Draft LAR and Meeting Minutes** **Action**

3. **Call to the Audience**

4. **SD-0926-00128 – Empire Pizza Expansion**
Related Activity #s: TC-COM-0726-01208
Addresses: 137 E CONGRESS ST & 145 E CONGRESS ST
Parcel #: 117121290
Zoning: C-1
Rio Nuevo Area (RNA) Review **Action**

The Applicant's Request:
A23 Studios, on behalf of the property owner, 145 E Congress LLC, is proposing exterior renovations to two structures to allow for the expansion of the existing Food Service use, addressed 137 E Congress St, into the southern portion of the adjacent building, addressed 145 E Congress St. modify the north façade of the existing storefront of the former Food Service land use at 110 E Congress St.

The two buildings are in the Downtown Tucson National Register Historic District, with the building addressed 145 E Congress St, at the northwest corner of Congress Street and 6th Avenue, designated as a contributing structure.

Tucson Pima County Historical Commission's Plans Review Subcommittee (PRS) Review:
The proposal was reviewed on November 12, 2026 by the PRS, who recommended approval as presented by the applicant.

The DRB's Purview:
In accordance with UDC Section 2.2.6.C.14 and 5.12.7.F.3, the DRB reviews and forwards a recommendation of all requests in the Rio Nuevo Area (RNA) to the Planning & Development Services (PDSD) Director, as provided in UDC Sections 5.12.2.C.1 and 5.12.4.D. In formulating its recommendation, the DRB shall apply the design standards in UDC Sections 5.12.7.C. and 5.1.7.D (See Attachment A).

MOTION: THE DESIGN REVIEW BOARD (DRB) HAS REVIEWED THE APPLICANT'S PROJECT FOR COMPLIANCE WITH RIO NUEVO AREA DESIGN CRITERIA AND RECOMMENDS TO THE PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT SERVICES DIRECTOR (APPROVAL) (DENIAL), FINDING THE PROJECT (IN COMPLIANCE) (NOT IN COMPLIANCE) WITH THE DESIGN STANDARDS SET FORTH IN UDC SECTION 5.12.7.C 1-15 AND 5.12.7.D (SEE ATTACHMENT A) (SUBJECT TO THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS).

5. **Staff Announcements** **Informational**

6. **Adjournment**

ATTACHMENT A:

RIO NUEVO AREA (RNA) DESIGN CRITERIA

In accordance with UDC Section 2.2.6.C.14 and 5.12.7.F.3, the DRB reviews and forwards a recommendation all requests in the Rio Nuevo Area (RNA) to the Planning & Development Services (PDSD) Director, as provided in UDC Sections 5.12.2.C.1 and 5.12.4.D. In formulating its recommendation, the DRB shall apply the design standards in UDC Section 5.12.7.C and UDC Section 5.1.7.D.

UDC § 5.12.7.C Rio Nuevo Area - Building Design Standards

Development within the RNA is required to comply with the following building design standards:

1. The proposed buildings shall respect the scale of those buildings located in the development zone and serve as an orderly transition to a different scale pursuant to Section 5.12.8.B, *Development Transition Standards*. Building heights with a vastly different scale than those on adjacent properties should have a transition in scale to reduce and mitigate potential impacts. In areas undergoing change, long range plans should be consulted for guidance as to appropriate heights;
2. All new construction must be consistent with the prevailing setback existing within its development zone except that the PDSD Director may approve a different setback than the prevailing setback upon a written finding during the review process that a different setback is warranted by site conditions or applicable development design goals consistent with Section 5.12.1, *Purpose*, and the proposed setback will not be incompatible with adjacent properties, as defined in Section 11.4.2.A;
3. All new construction shall provide scale defining architectural elements or details at the first two floor levels, such as windows, spandrels, awnings, porticos, cornices, pilasters, columns, and balconies;
4. Every commercial building frontage shall provide windows, window displays, or visible activity within and adjacent to the building at the ground floor level, with a minimum of 50 percent of the building frontage providing such features;
5. A single plane of a façade at the street level may not be longer than 50 feet without architectural relief or articulation by features such as windows, trellises, and arcades;
6. Building façade design shall include pedestrian-scaled, down-shielded, and glare controlled exterior building and window lighting;
7. The front doors of all commercial and government buildings shall be visible from the street and visually highlighted by graphics, lighting, marquees, or canopies;
8. Modifications to the exterior of historic buildings shall complement the overall historic context of the Downtown and respect the architectural integrity of the historic façade;
9. Buildings shall be designed to shield adjacent buildings and public rights-of-way from reflected heat and glare;
10. Safe and adequate vehicular parking areas designed to minimize conflicts with pedestrians and bicycles shall be provided;
11. Adequate shade shall be provided for sidewalks and pedestrian pathways, using shade structure or vegetation, where permitted by the City;
12. Colors may conform to the overall color palette and context of the Downtown area or may be used expressively to create visual interest, variety, and street rhythms. The rationale for an expressive or idiosyncratic use of color shall be described in the site plan submittal;
13. New buildings shall use materials, patterns, and elements that relate to the traditional context of the Downtown area;
14. Twenty-four-hour, street-level activity is encouraged by providing a mixture of retail, office, and residential uses within each building; and,

ATTACHMENT A:
RIO NUEVO AREA (RNA) DESIGN CRITERIA (Continued)

15. Primary public entries shall be directly accessed from a sidewalk along a street rather than from a parking lot. Public access to commercial and governmental buildings shall be provided at sidewalk grade. The primary floor of, and access to, residential structures may be elevated. Secondary access may be provided from off-street parking areas.

UDC § 5.12.7.D Rio Nuevo Area – Site Design Standards

Development within the RNA is required to comply with the following site design standards:

1. **Vehicular Circulation**
   a. All parking area access lanes (PAALs)adjacent to buildings shall have pedestrian circulation paths between the PAAL and the building, with a minimum width of six feet.
   b. The locations of all points of vehicular ingress and egress shall be perpendicular to the intersecting street. Points of ingress and egress points shall be designed to minimize vehicular/pedestrian and vehicular/bicycle conflicts. Adequate storage for vehicular queuing at parking facilities shall be contained on site. Right turn bays are strongly discouraged. Points of ingress and egress shall be minimized wherever possible. Additional temporary ingress and egress locations may be permitted for parking structures when occasional high peak period traffic flows (i.e., parking facilities for event venues) are anticipated.
2. **Parking**
   a. General Parking standards are listed in Section 7.4. Some properties in the RNA may also be located in the Downtown Parking District, which allows a reduction in the number of parking spaces as provided in Section 7.4.5.B.
   b. Screening of Parking All new parking shall be designed so that vehicles are not visible from the adjoining street level, through incorporation of pedestrian arcades, occupied space, or display space.
   c. Employee Parking Employee parking for all uses should be provided at remote locations in order to maximize the availability of space for development.
3. **Plazas and Open Space**

   The fundamental objective of the design standards in this Section 5.12.7.D.3 is to encourage public and private investments to enhance the character and function of Downtown's pedestrian environment.

   a. **Plazas and Pedestrian Nodes**

      Five percent of the gross floor area of new construction shall be provided in public plazas or courtyards. Open space plazas, courtyards, and patios are landscaped outdoor areas designed to accommodate multiple uses, from large gatherings of the people for performing arts to smaller gatherings. The plazas and courtyards will be one of the ways that spaces and uses can be linked. The requirement of this section may be waived or reduced by the PDSD Director upon a written finding during the review process that the development enhances the downtown pedestrian environment even with a smaller percent or elimination of the requirement.

ATTACHMENT A:
RIO NUEVO AREA (RNA) DESIGN CRITERIA (Continued)

b. **Viewshed Corridors**

Views of all historic properties and all natural elements surrounding the Downtown should be considered during design. Plazas, courtyards, and open spaces shall be sited to include views to other public spaces, where feasible.

c. **Linkages (Physical and Visual)**

Neighborhood linkages shall be maintained throughout Downtown.

4. Streetscape

a. Streetscapes must be consistent with the Streetscape Design Policy. In streetscape design, priority is given to pedestrians.

b. **Shade**

Shade shall be provided for at least 50 percent of all sidewalks and pedestrian pathways as measured at 12:00 p.m. on June 21 when the sun is 82° above the horizon (based on 32°N Latitude). Shade may be provided by arcades, canopies, or shade structures, provided they and their location and design characteristics are compatible with the prevailing and design context of the street and the architectural integrity of the building. Deciduous trees, as proposed in the Downtown Comprehensive Street Tree Plan, are encouraged to supplement existing evergreen trees. The use of plantings and shade structures in the City right-of-way are permitted to meet this standard with the approval of the Department of Transportation. The shade provided by a building may serve to meet this standard.