



1st Avenue Citizens' Corridor Planning Task Force

Thursday, March 20, 2025, 5:45 p.m.

Donna Liggins Recreation Center

2160 N. 6th Avenue

Tucson, AZ 85705

Meeting Minutes

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

Co-Chair Karl Peterson called the meeting to order at 5:47 p.m. The quorum was established through a roll call.

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

2. Approval of February 20, 2025, Meeting Minutes

Karl Peterson asked 1st Avenue Citizens' Corridor Planning Task Force (1ACCPTF) members if they had an opportunity to review the minutes from the previous meeting on February 20, 2025. All 1ACCPTF members had reviewed the minutes, and a motion to accept was made by Melissa (Mimi) Noshay-Petro; Caroline Bartelme seconded. All approved.



3. Call to Audience

No comments were received during the Call to the Audience. City of Tucson Department of Transportation and Mobility (DTM) Planning Administrator Patrick Hartley updated the task force with some items that the city has moved forward with to make the 1st Avenue Corridor safer.

All the streetlights that were out along the corridor are now back on. The city, along with HDR and Kittleson & Associates, are looking at short-term solutions for 1st Avenue, and one of those solutions is reducing the speed limit. The city's engineering team is running the change through USLIMITS2 to learn what the appropriate speed limit should be and then make a recommendation to reduce it. It must be approved by the Mayor & City Council. This may occur in May, but Patrick will keep the task force informed. The city is continuing to work to keep the corridor safe.

No subsequent action was taken.

Questions from CTF Members

- Nancy asked how the public art process is handled and if the task force members will have any input.
 - Patrick and Brent spoke about the process for public art and how the artist is chosen. Everything is handled by the Arts Foundation for Tucson and Southern Arizona board. Brent mentioned that it is a very interesting process, and he encouraged those who are interested to attend a meeting and find out more. However, the 1st Avenue Citizen Task Force members will not have a say on the public art on the project.

4. Design Strategies

City of Tucson DTM Administrator Patrick Hartley summarized the Project Goals and presented the design strategies again, highlighting the strategies that were updated with feedback from task force members. They are as follows:

Improve Safety:

- Employ the Safe Systems Approach principles in corridor design
- Provide physical separation between bicyclists and pedestrians and motor vehicles
- Manage vehicle speeds to reduce crash severity through using context-sensitive roadway design principles and establishing appropriate speed limits that balance safety and mobility



- Provide and maintain adequate and continuous lighting along the corridor, particularly in the areas with the highest pedestrian activity
- Ensure that pedestrians and cyclists have access to frequent and safe crossings
- Design intersections and upgrade traffic signals to reduce conflicts in space and time, including consideration of protected left-turn phasing as appropriate
- Install raised medians and/or pedestrian refuge islands at appropriate locations
- Coordinate with emergency responders and public safety officials to ensure the 1st Avenue project improves safety and supports efficient and reliable emergency
- Minimize distances between bus stops and controlled crossing locations

Increase Transportation Options:

- 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, safe crossings
- Provide the greatest amount of physical separation between bicyclists and motor vehicles, including through installations of protected bike lanes

Upgrade Existing Infrastructure:

- Upgrade drainage infrastructure to provide all-mode access during more frequent/common storm events
- Replace and upgrade the 1st Avenue bridge over the Rillito River to a structural design life of 75 years and to improve functionality to meet current Complete Streets design practices
- Upgrade intersections and communications to support integration of next-generation smart traffic signals
- Use high-quality, durable materials to reduce long-term maintenance needs on the corridor
- Reconstruct pavement roadway, sidewalks, bicycle lanes, and install bus shelters to improve ride quality, comfort, accessibility, and longevity of public transportation

Support Mobility:

- Upgrade intersections and communications to support integration of next generation smart traffic signals
- Implement Access Management Strategies, including installation of raised medians and driveway consolidation where possible
- Account for current and future traffic volumes and evaluate strategies for improved corridor functionality, efficiently and safely accommodating all modes at major intersections, such as additional turn lanes and improved signal operations
- Incorporate bus pullouts at high-demand locations



Minimize Impacts:

- Align the 1st Avenue corridor to minimize acquisitions of structures and properties
- Support businesses during construction through partnership with the RTA MainStreet program
- Maintain access for residents, businesses, and neighborhoods along 1st Avenue

Visual Character:

- Incorporate Green Stormwater Infrastructure (GSI) best practices to use stormwater as a resource to support long-term sustainability trees and other landscape enhancements
- Use drought-tolerant, locally sourced native landscaping to match the desert environment and improve survivability
- Utilize bridge and other infrastructure elements to enhance the visual character of the corridor by incorporating community-supported public art and other aesthetic enhancements

After the design strategies were presented and discussed, Patrick Hartley asked the task force members if they would like to vote and approve the key design strategies as presented, and Melissa (Mimi) Noshay-Petro seconded. Mark Hatchel said that he objected to approving the key design strategies because he feels that they need to be discussed further. Kate Saunders asked if anyone else was opposed, but no one answered. Caroline Bartelme noted that she feels these were discussed in the prior meeting and with the updates she feels these are good to go. Mark Hatchel noted that he is at a disadvantage due to missing last month's meeting.

There were some back-and-forth discussions about being ready to vote on the design strategies at this time between task force members. Karl Peterson suggested that we look at the Measures of Effectiveness (MOE) first and then come back to a vote. Kathleen (Susan) O'Brien tabled the motion pending the discussion on MOEs.

No action was taken at this time.

5. Preliminary Intersection Alternatives

HDR Project Manager, Brent Kirkman presented possible intersection alternatives for use on the 1st Avenue corridor, including the Channelized Right Turn (Slip Lane) and the Protected Intersection.

Brent presented the examples of the Channelized Right Turn (Slip Lane) and how it would work at the 1st Avenue and Ft. Lowell Road. He discussed how this alternative



would work at the larger intersections along the corridor. Brent presented this intersection's alternative and how it would affect both pedestrian and bicyclist safety while also moving vehicle traffic efficiently.

Brent also presented the Protected Intersection and how it would work at 1st Avenue and Glenn Street. He discussed how this type of intersection would work most effectively at smaller intersections. Brent again noted how this type of intersection would affect both bike and pedestrian safety, while keeping traffic moving smoothly.

Questions from CTF Members

- Mark asked if there is enough room to use the Channelized Right Turn alternative on the corridor.
 - Brent answered that there are at some intersections and not at others.
- Mimi asked if the Channelized Right Turn would work on a single-lane roadway.
 - Brent said no, it can only work on a minimum two-lane roadway.
- Susan asked about the flow. If there is more than one car trying to turn right and there is a pedestrian crossing at the channelized section, will traffic back up into the roadway?
 - Brent said no, we have space for multiple cars in the queue lane.
- Maxine asked about bikes. How do we keep them protected with this alternative?
 - Patrick said that we might be able to give bikes two ways to go with the Slip Lane, one could be the bike on the inside of the right turn lane and the other is to put a ramp and make a larger shared-use path in the intersection. We are not quite there yet, but we are thinking about options we can give cyclists. Brent added that there is a balancing act here to protect everyone and try not to take too much property.
- Caroline asked, in the right turn slip lane will there be a yield sign or a separate light?
 - Brent said we have not yet decided. There are other options like a raised crosswalk, etc.
- Susan brought up the channelized right at 1st Avenue and Wetmore Road, which she uses frequently, and the visibility is very good for pedestrians.
 - Brent said yes, you do have to slow down to make the 1st Avenue and Wetmore Road right turn but the slip lanes we are proposing will not be as fast.
- Kate asked if it is possible for a pedestrian to make it all the way across the intersection on one light?
 - Brent answered yes, it is. Patrick added that this design will help separate the conflict points. It simplifies the decision for the driver.
- Mark asked if the channelized right turn lane design will only be at 1st Avenue and Ft. Lowell Road?



- Brent said this will probably be used at the larger intersections.
- Mark added that this intersection design is great for bikes and pedestrians, but what about vehicles?
 - Brent said that with the channelized right turn lane, it gives more time to get through the intersection for cars and could allow more left turn options, which would also move vehicles faster. Plus, this option gives more capacity to vehicles.
- Mimi asked if we need more width for the Protected Intersection option.
 - Brent said it will need a little bit more.
- Caroline asked when the Protected Intersection be done being constructed at Grant Road and Alvernon Way?
 - Brent said at least a year from now.
 - Patrick added that they are proposing the Protected Intersections for the smaller intersections and without a separate right turn lane.
- Kate asked when considering these intersection options, could they be a combination of these two options?
 - Brent said yes.
 - Kate added that there would be a trade-off if these were combined.
 - Caroline added that she doesn't use the Highland Bike Boulevard because it is scary, but maybe this design at that intersection could help.
- Karl said at the protected intersections, the bike rider comes across there and will need to have something to protect them from pedestrians and cars until you get to the crosswalk.
 - Brent said yes, the separation of the areas for bikes, pedestrians and cars is key.
- Kate asked if you could make a right on red at the protected intersection?
 - Brent said "yes".

No action was taken.

6. Draft Intersection Measures of Effectiveness (MOE) Evaluation Matrix

Kittel & Associates Principal Engineer, Felipe Ladron de Guevara presented the Measures of Effectiveness (MOE) Decision Matrix for the draft intersection alternatives presented earlier in the meeting. He then presented intersections that have adopted these alternatives in Portland to provide real-world examples to the task force. Felipe



presented before and after images of a protected intersection and then assigned the project's goals and design strategies matrix to them to give a score to the before and after intersection treatments showing that the protected intersection is more desirable and has a higher score than the conventional intersection.

Felipe presented an example of how they took the intersection components and put them into the matrix to come out with metrics and then assigned points on how the intersection treatments would meet the goals and strategies adopted by the task members and the team.

Questions from CTF Members

- Kate asked how the benefits gained in the matrix affect the score. As an example, the more safety you have will affect traffic scores, but it is a better trade-off because the overall goal of the project is safety improvements.
 - Felipe said that we need to make sure the level of service is still good with more safety. Also, the safer intersections may have more impact on the property around it. So, you must look at both scores.
 - Brent added that there will be trade-offs along the project as we make decisions.
 - Felipe added that we will use future traffic volume estimates when creating the matrix and will ensure that the decisions we make will be the best for the corridor now and in the future.
- Mark said that he is concerned about the right-of-way impacts.
 - Felipe said yes, we have to take that into account.
 - Patrick said we can put hard limits on some of these decisions. For example, if we can avoid taking a full property instead of just taking some frontage.
 - Brent illustrated that at 1st Avenue and Ft. Lowell Road Intersection, he would probably not do the same treatment on every corner because on the northwest corner there is a building close to the roadway.
- Mimi said, "What about the 1st Avenue and Prince Road Intersection?"
 - Brent said yes, that is one of the hardest options.
 - Patrick added that do we give up landscaping to get more space, etc.

Patrick asked if the task force was ready to go back and accept the revised Key Design Strategies? (Item 4).

Melissa (Mimi) Noshay-Petro moved to accept the key design strategies as presented, Maxine Dunkelman seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.



Questions from CTF Members

- Kate asked, “we are just voting on the key design strategies, not the matrix, correct?”
 - Patrick answered “yes”.
- Mark added that he would have an issue with raised medians throughout the project. He is good with protected intersections, but not happy with the raised medians throughout.
- Caroline added that these are just guiding principles, we haven’t decided on raised medians all the way down the corridor, we still have time to decide on the final.

7. Preferred Bridge Alternative

HDR Project Manager Brent Kirkman went over highlights of the Bridge Selection Report that was prepared for the 1st Avenue bridge to educate the task force on the alternative selected and the decision-making process.

Brent presented a brief synopsis of the Bridge Selection Report that HDR submitted and was selected by the City of Tucson. He promised to send out a copy of the entire report to the task force members after the meeting.

Brent presented images of the preferred bridge design, explaining why this design was chosen and the fact that the bridge will be taller to accommodate the Loop path, and the choice of a separated bridge design will allow them to maintain access throughout the construction period. The bridge is designed to last at least 75 years.

Questions from CTF Members

- Karl asked how long construction will take.
 - Brent answered that it will probably take around 18 months but that a lot depends on when they can begin construction, to make sure it is done in the correct season, due to monsoon rains. He also added that the part of construction that will take the longest will be the 12 very large shafts that need to be built.
 - Patrick added that the city wanted to make sure that there is access throughout the construction. He also said that this design was chosen because it provides a large, protected area for bikes and pedestrians, along with a shoulder for emergency vehicles and safety.
- Mark asked, "What about the bats?"
 - Brent added that they do have to wait until their migration before they can build. Once the bridge is completed, they will be adding bat boxes under the bridge for the bats to make their new homes in. He told the task force that if they want to see a bridge that is built in a similar design, you can look at the bridge on La Cholla Boulevard over the Rillito River.



8. Future Agenda Items

DTM Administrator Patrick Hartley updated the off-agenda field visit of the corridor. He has secured a vehicle from Sun Tran, and staff will be sending an invite for the end of April for this event.

9. Adjournment

Co-Chairperson Karl Peterson adjourned the meeting at 7:39 p.m.