1st Avenue Citizens' Corridor Planning Task Force

Thursday, September 17, 2026, 5:45 p.m.

Donna Liggins Recreation Center

2160 N. 6th Avenue

Tucson, AZ 85705

Meeting Minutes

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

Chairman Karl Peterson called the meeting to order at 5:48 p.m. The quorum was established through roll call.

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

2. Approval of June 18, 2026, Meeting Minutes

Karl Peterson asked the members of the 1st Avenue Citizens' Corridor Planning Task Force (1ACCPTF) if they had an opportunity to review the minutes from the previous meeting on June 18, 2026. All 1ACCPTF members reviewed the minutes, and Ruben Robles made a motion to accept, seconded by Mimi Noshay-Petro. All approved.

3. Call to Audience

No comments were received during the Call to the Audience.

4. Update Phase III Outreach Effort and Preliminary Summary Report

HDR Project Manager, Brent Kirkman provided a summary of the most recent community outreach for Phase III:

Outreach Summary:

- An in-person open house event was held on August 5, 2026. There were between 50 and 60 attendees. Feedback gathered at this event was almost exclusively positive.
- The online public meeting was held from August 5 – September 5, 2026. As of this meeting, there were a total of 170 views, 112 total users, and 112 engaged sessions.
- Carrie attended two Rillito Heirloom Farmers Markets on Sunday, August 9, 2026, and Sunday, August 23, 2026. They spoke with approximately 20 people on the 9th and about 30 people on the 23rd. Almost all of those they spoke with were happy to see the proposed improvements.
- The RTA MainStreet professionals visited, called and emailed businesses along the corridor.
- They had several people thanked them for making the proposed improvements to 1st Avenue; this seems to be the predominant theme.
- People are happy to see that the city is improving this vital north/south artery.
- There are a lot of comments about the consistent issues around drug use and the unhoused along the corridor. People feel that these factors have made 1st Avenue an unattractive and unsafe corridor.
- There were several comments about bus riders and bus stops. Concerns around drug use and unhoused populations were prevalent. A few comments were expressed around the channelized right-turns, claiming that they are dangerous for cyclists.
- 73% of individuals who commented on the project voted to remove the median at Limberlost Avenue.
- Key themes that were shared in the comments during Phase III were presented.
- The final numbers for the Limberlost median alternatives were also presented.
- The team added that the Phase III Community Outreach Summary Report is in progress and will be shared with the task force members upon completion.

No action was taken.

Questions from CTF Members

- Mimi asked what kind of negative comments were received.
    - Brent and Carrie told the group that most of the comments were positive and very grateful for the safety improvements. The only negative comments they saw were about the channelized right turns or slip lanes. There appears to be one or two people who have repeated the same negative comment about not using them on this project.

No action was taken.

5. Recommendation on Removal of Existing Median at Limberlost

HDR Project Engineer Brent Kirkman noted many members of the community have requested the removal of the median on Limberlost Drive to allow left turns out of the Rillito Crossing Marketplace. A poll was conducted on the topic of removing or keeping the median through the online meeting portal and at the in-person open house. The results are as follows:

- 16 votes for removing the median (73%)
- 6 votes for keeping the median (27%)

Karl asked for a motion to vote on removing the median on the east side of 1st Avenue at Limberlost Road. Susan O'Brien moved and Mimi Noshay-Petro seconded.

The vote was 6 yea and 1 nay from Ruben Robles. The motion passed.

Questions from CTF Members

- Ruben asked about the fact that removing the median here would leave an unsafe issue with drivers exiting left from the Circle K.
    - Brent added they have investigated this and that they may need to leave a small curb in the area where the median is to keep drivers from turning left out of the Circle K. He also added the project team needs to investigate the design here and make a few more tweaks before finalizing this change.
- Karl commented that the primary CTF project goal of safety does suggest leaving some of the median like a curb to block left out of Circle K makes sense.
    - Brent said yes, they need to do more research and come back to the CTF with a new design.
- Susan added that she is very nervous due to the fact that Limberlost is so skinny in this area around the median.

- Brent said that this area will be a little wider after the updates.

6. Recommendations to Support DCR and 30% Design

HDR Project Engineer Brent Kirkman and City of Tucson DTM Administrator Patrick Hartley asked the task force to give their final approval of the 30% design. The RTA PAG board will be giving the 30% design final approval at the end of October. There was a brief review to go over the challenges that were raised in the previous task force meeting. The project team went through each issue and updated the task force on how each of them were resolved and answered further questions. The task force was pleased with the resolutions to prior challenges.

Karl Peterson asked for a motion to accept the 30% design. Mimi Noshay-Petro moved to accept the 30% design, Ruben Robles seconded. Six members approved and one did not approve. The motion passed.

Questions from CTF Members

- Ruben asked what the team decided to do about right turns at the northwest corner of both Prince Road and 1st Avenue and Fort Lowell Road and 1st Avenue intersections.
    - Brent answered they decided to go forward with a Smart Channel Right Turn at Prince Road and 1st Avenue and a Shared Right Turn Lane at Fort Lowell Road and 1st Avenue. This means the city will need to probably take the entire car dealership and billboard at Prince Road and 1st Avenue intersection. This also will not affect the lighting store at the corner of Fort Lowell Road and 1st Avenue.
- Ruben asked if having no separate right turn lane at Fort Lowell Road and 1st Avenue would be an issue for traffic.
    - Brent and Felipe both discussed the fact that due to the right turn volumes at this corner there is no need for a separate right turn lane here.
- Ruben asked if there would be any safety issues for pedestrians crossing Fort Lowell Road at this intersection without a separate right turn lane.
    - Brent said they will be moving the crosswalk farther away from the intersection and adding the leading interval walk signal, which will make it safer for pedestrians.

7. Next Steps and Project Phasing

HDR Project Engineer Brent Kirkman and City of Tucson DTM Administrator Patrick Hartley asked task force members to decide between two options: continue with periodic meetings, email updates, and outreach invitations until concluding in June 2027, or dissolve the group immediately.

There were discussions and questions from task force members on how much they will be needed going forward. Patrick and Brent explained that most of the work going forward will be refinements on the design. Patrick also noted that if anyone on the task force is interested, the public art portion of the project will have a committee and that he will share information with the group when that begins, to see if anyone would be interested in participating. Brent added that by the end of 2027 they should be ready to go to construction and hopefully by mid-2028 they will start the north section of the project.

After discussion, it was decided that they will leave the task force in place and if anything warrants a meeting between now and June 2027, the project team will let them know. The project team will also keep the task force members updated with materials as needed between now and June 2027. The task force will conclude in June 2027.

No action was taken.

Questions from CTF Members

- Ruben asked what was happening with the Navajo wash drainage.
    - Brent answered that most of the water will drain into underground pipes and move towards the wash. It won't alleviate all the flooding in heavy rains, but it will greatly diminish it.
- Mimi asked about the TEP powerlines that sag down near the Rillito River, will they go underground.
    - Brent said yes that could be done, but the project would have to cover the costs of this, and it is very expensive.
    - Patrick added that the city has some places where they can force TEP to go underground at their cost, but those are limited and this is not one of those places.
- Ruben asked if there would be a HAWK crossing in the north section of the corridor near the bridge.
    - Patrick answered that there will be a HAWK crossing at Croydon, which is just north of the bridge.
- Ruben asked what the decision is about cars turning left out of the Rillito Farmers Market just south of the bridge on 1st Avenue.
    - Brent said there will be a median added here that will force drivers to turn right only out of this venue.

8. Adjournment

Karl Peterson called for a motion to adjourn. Melissa (Mimi) Noshay-Petro moved to adjourn the meeting; Susan O'Brien seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 7:30 p.m.