

**El Paso & Southwestern Greenway Master Plan
Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) Kick-off Meeting
Monday, Aug. 9, 2010, 3 p.m.**

Meeting Summary

In Attendance

Design Team

Sandy (Tolley) Bolduc, Kimley-Horn and Associates
Rebeca Field, Kimley-Horn and Associates
Chuck Flink, Greenways Incorporated
Katie Gannon, Drachman Institute
Pat Marum, Wood Patel and Associates
Adriana Prieto, Gordley Design Group
Paki Rico, Gordley Design Group

Technical Advisory Committee

Present

Melissa Antol, City of Tucson, Department of Transportation (TDOT)
Jennifer Donofrio, TDOT
Tom Thivener, TDOT
Mick Jensen, City of South Tucson (COST)
Irene Ogata, City of Tucson, Conservation and Sustainable Development
Jonathan Mabry, City of Tucson, Historic Preservation
Maria Gayoso, City of Tucson, Housing and Community Development
Peg Weber, City of Tucson, Parks and Recreation
Howard Dutt, City of Tucson, Parks and Recreation
Jim Rossi, City of Tucson, Real Estate
Gabe Thum, Pima Association of Governments

Absent

Jim Glock, TDOT
Andy McGovern, TDOT
Gary Wittwer, TDOT
Jessie Sanders, City of Tucson, City Manager's Office
Deputy Chief Pat Quinn, City of Tucson, Fire Department
Julie Parizek, City of Tucson, Parks and Recreation
Chief Roberto Villaseñor, City of Tucson, Police Department (TPD)
Sergeant John Buckley, City of Tucson, Police Department (TPD)
Diana Rhodes, City of Tucson, Ward 1
Joel Gastelum, City of South Tucson
Daphne Madison, Greenway Coalition
Jim DeGrood, Regional Transportation Authority

Introductions

The design team and TAC team members were introduced.

Project General History

- The project will span six miles, three of which would be along the old railroad. The six-mile area is owned by public and private entities, including the City of Tucson, the City of South Tucson and Union Pacific Railroad.
- Mayor and Council hired the Drachman Institute to conduct a greenway study of the northern end, approximately four miles, of the greenway.
- In 2006, the Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) committed to funding \$3.2 million for planning, construction and acquisition for six miles of greenway.
- In 2006, federal funding in the form of a Transportation Enhancement (TE) grant, was dedicated to construct the segment from Cushing Street to 22nd Street. Subsequent to that award, the City of Tucson and the Tucson Fire Department partnered together to fund the Fire Central project which includes the portion of the greenway that falls between Cushing Street and Simpson Street. Construction was completed in 2009
- In 2007, SAGE was hired to conduct a site analysis of the entire El Paso & Southwestern Greenway alignment, which has been completed. This contract included the 15 percent design of the Simpson Street to 22nd Street section of the TE grant contract.
- In 2009, the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) agreed to reduce the scope area of the TE grant to include only the Simpson Street to 22nd Street section. SAGE Landscape Architecture & Environmental (now Kimley-Horn and Associates, or KHA) is currently working on the design for this section.
- The SAGE/ KHA project team is now working on the Greenway master plan.
- The project team is applying for additional funding and is currently working on a grant to fund a portion of the City of South Tucson segment.

Alignment Overview

- Wherever possible, the Greenway will support the Divided Urban Pathway per Pima County Parks and Recreation design standard. Unless there is a space restriction, the asphalt pathway will be 12-feet wide, with a landscaped buffer to separate it from an 8-foot “soft” decomposed or gravel path.
- The master plan will provide alternative alignments in areas that have restrictions for access and will contain a full analysis of all arterial and railroad crossings. Depending on the existing conditions, overpasses, underpasses and at-grade crossings will be considered.
- The team would like to embrace the history and culture of the railroad, as well as individual neighborhoods that are adjacent to the alignment.
- During the site analysis phase, feedback was received from stakeholder meetings and two public meetings, as well as through other communication and participation from the community.
- Additional outreach will continue.

Site Specifics (PowerPoint presentation)

- Dunbar Springs/Barrio Anita Neighborhoods
 - No at-grade or underground access will be allowed at the Union Pacific railroad and University Boulevard intersection. An access overpass or detour may be required, although there are many neighborhood, utility and railroad logistic issues to consider.
- Downtown Links
 - The Downtown Links roadway project team coordinated with the TDOT and the Greenway team to devise a solution for the crossing at St. Mary's Road. The Downtown Links project will include a High Intensity Activated Crosswalk (HAWK) or Toucan pedestrian crossing for the Greenway project. The Greenway team will determine appropriate elements, such as bike boxes, to interface with the roadway.
- El Presidio Neighborhood
 - Several areas in this segment will require site-specific design.
 - Inn Suites would like to acquire property east of the frontage road walls. The paperwork is pending finalization. Their proposed site plan includes the Greenway alignment using the Divided Urban Pathway.
 - La Entrada apartment complex has minimal space available and does not currently have an agreement to include the Greenway in the future. Inclusion of the Greenway may reduce their parking count but the spaces appear to be overflow/gravel.
 - The Manning House property has space available by losing some parking along the Frontage Road wall. There is currently no agreement to include the Greenway in the future.
- Downtown/Rio Nuevo
 - The existing historic railroad track will be preserved from Congress Street, passing along the west face (original front face) of the historic El Paso & Southwestern train depot, to Granada Avenue/Cushing Street
 - Granada Avenue
 - The Greenway will intersect the Modern Streetcar route.
 - Great multimodal opportunity.
 - The streetcar will dissect the path.
- Barrio Viejo Neighborhood
 - Currently, the 15 percent design of the El Paso & Southwestern Greenway from Simpson Street to 22nd Street is underway. As an objective of this transportation enhancement project, the railroad track will be preserved, displayed and described with signage.
 - There is plenty of right-of-way (ROW) for the full Divided Urban Pathway.
 - There is space for a potential park.
- Barrio Santa Rosa
 - Opportunity to bridge the wash and provide access from the neighborhood to the Greenway.
 - There is space for a potential park.

- Coordinating with the City of South Tucson and exploring options.
- West Ochoa Neighborhood
 - ADOT owns a large open parcel of land used as detention basins that could become a park.
 - The historic Round House is located here.
 - This structure was used for storage and maintenance of locomotives and currently is in use by a materials supply company.
- 25th Street to 29th Street has no designated neighborhood.
 - The historic Auction House is located here.
 - Privately owned.
 - City of South Tucson is seeking funds to improve this building.
- City of South Tucson
 - In the process of writing a Transportation Enhancement Grant application – the Greenway team will provide support.
 - Possible HAWK at 11th Avenue.
 - Transfer of the alignment ROW from UPRR to COST will be needed.
- South Park Neighborhood
 - Has been difficult to meet with this neighborhood.
 - The Bridges Development: Agreement with Costco to develop a small piece of the Greenway on the northern part of their property. Currently under construction.
 - Potential space for soccer field.
- Las Vistas and Western Hills II Neighborhoods
 - Has been difficult to meet with this neighborhood.
 - Portion of alignment may follow surface streets or northern edge of Juvenile Detention parking lot.
 - At the Ajo Detention Basin, a connection will be made to the James Thomas Park at the northern edge of the basin.

National Trends (PowerPoint presentation)

- Despite the current state of the economy, planning and construction of greenways and trails has been increasing. Good examples include:
 - San Antonio River Park, San Antonio, Texas
 - One of the best greenway projects.
 - Started as a flood control project and is now the number one economic engine for the City.
 - American Tobacco Trail, Durham, North Carolina.
 - Reedy Rivers Falls Historic Park, Greenville, South Carolina.
- There are many economic and health benefits resulting from greenway development:
 - Employers consider greenways when deciding to relocate or open new offices due to rising obesity and health care costs.
 - Job opportunities increase.
 - Bicycling contributes up to \$13 billion per year to the national economy.
 - Bicycling supports 1.1 million jobs.

- Property values tend to go up.
- Health and wellness increases.
- Safety and security increase after construction of greenways:
 - Greenways attract families, community events and celebrations.
 - Greenways do not attract crime, and in some cases drive out crime.
 - Greenways tend to be valued by communities, so they embrace and protect them.

After the presentation, the team discussed the following:

Role of TAC

- The team would like feedback from the TAC on key issues, such as the preliminary master plan/Design Concept Report (DCR) and the final master plan/ DCR document.
- A meeting notice will be sent sometime in November after the TAC has had time to review the preliminary master plan/ DCR.
- The TAC is welcome to send comments via e-mail to Paki Rico at paki@gordleydesign.com and Paki will disseminate the information to the project team.
- The design team will gather input from neighborhoods for guidelines and unifying themes.

Schedule – Key Dates

- August – TAC kick-off and field visit
- September – progress report
- October – progress report
- November – preliminary master plan/DCR review
- February – final master plan/DCR document

Discussion

Jonathan Mabry pointed out that federal, state, and possibly RTA and county funds will likely be sought to complete various segments of the Greenway. To be eligible to receive funding from any of those sources, certain cultural resource compliance steps need to be completed. Because the compliance process does not allow "artificial segmentation" of the project, these steps cannot be done incrementally for each segment – they must to be taken comprehensively for the entire corridor. Jonathan recommended that those steps be completed as part of the master planning process, but emphasized that each step needs to produce stand-alone documents. Funding for these steps is usually built into project budgets. The steps are as follows, and apply to the entire Greenway corridor:

1. Cultural Resources Assessment – includes a records check and inventory of all known historic and archaeological resources in the project corridor, a walking survey to check for unrecorded resources, and management recommendations.

2. Historic Properties Treatment Plan – describes the potential project impacts to historic and archaeological resources in each segment, and describes the specific ways those impacts will be mitigated, including, but not limited to, a combination of: avoidance, preservation in place, interpretation with signage or other media and a multiple property nomination to the National Register of Historic Places.
3. Multiple Property National Register nomination for surviving structures related to the El Paso & Southwestern Railroad – includes a historic context for the railroad, and descriptions and plans of historic structures such as the roundhouse, bridge, raised section of track, auction house, office building, etc. (this could be included as part of the Historic Properties Treatment Plan).

Jonathan is unable to give cost ranges for these various steps, but one of our on-call consultants can provide estimates after they are provided maps and plans for the corridor. Tom Thivener has taken the first step of requesting a cost estimate for the Cultural Resources Assessment.